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PostScript

SPRING 2022



Cover: Spring Flowers by BCRTA member Diana Dugas

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Submission guidelines at bcrta.ca/postscript-submissions

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As you turn these pages, all around you there is a gentle rustling, too quiet to hear, too complete to ignore. The seeds of ten thousand species found their starting places months ago. Dropped by birds, blown by the wind, or driven into the ground by an implement, the germs of a new growth are in the soil. They will stir to life in the days ahead, their new roots curling into the earth, a new life that is a memory of its own kind, eager to grow again. How good it is.

And just as the earth has received the seeds of the last season, so too our thoughts for good or for ill. Let's say it aloud: thorny problems have taken root, and all is not well. Our country and our world have endured a prolonged time of crisis which is now flowering to schisms, distrust, alarming patterns of conflict. Whether it be politics, public health, world affairs, we have entered a time where people retreat into an "anxious certainty" – a phrase that captures the fearful blaming that is no longer curious about others, but set on defense against them. This enfeebled spirit of self-protection does not have the emotional resources to listen. Instead, it labels all of "them" as dangerous to "us".

**Stanley Fukawa** doesn't write anymore. Alzheimer's has left its mark on him. But his wife **Masako** has preserved the stories he wrote in his seventies, looking back on his youth in a time of war. In "My Internment Stories" (p. 22) we learn that Stanley's personal war was with the image that our society created for him and those close to him. War came and his family was driven from their home to a place far away, where they were questioned, confined, belittled. A child, he was defined by our government as an "enemy alien." The meaning was made clear to him: "not like us" and inherently evil. They could see the danger in the shape of his eyes.

In these pages we read Stanley's story and it moves me to say that through all that pain we also see something else: hope in its smallest form, something that appears in a moment in time where one child sees another for who he is, and will not stop seeing.

In times like these, there is much fearful talk. I have heard it, and if I am honest with myself, I have voiced it, too. But we can learn from the experience of a child who has lost much, yet has found a friend. Like a seed from a boy's pocket, his hopeful message is offered to us. May we take it and let it grow.

Yours truly,

The Editor postscript@bcrta.ca



#### POSTSCRIPT MAGAZINE | SPRING 2022





### **40** HIDDEN AND INVISIBLE: THE SENIORS ADVOCATE REPORT



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We got up early to board a sixteen-seater van. I thought we were heading to Wuhan but soon realized we were driving around Yichang. The van would stop, a finely dressed woman would step off the bus and call out, encouraging additional passengers. I eventually realized that we would not proceed until all the small plastic stools in the van were occupied. The seats along the aisle gradually filled up, and at last we were on the way.

One of my own daughters leaned in and asked, "Do you have any paper?" I dug around in my purse and managed to come up with a used envelope and two pencils. My two girls began a game of X and O.

In the aisle next to us two local pre-teen girls sat quietly alongside their grandmother. The locals gave my daughters' game some sidelong glances which soon turned to unabashed interest. No words were needed. A pencil was handed over and a new grid was drawn. My daughter placed an "X" and waited for her new partner to place her "O". Soon the younger girls were taking turns with the pencil. When every corner of the paper had been covered with X and O, the four girls moved on to the universal game of rock, paper, scissors. Soft chuckles of delight could be heard as each round produced a winner. As we reached our destination the girls' grandmother smiled and handed me a bottle of water. Our two new friends happily clutched an envelope covered in "Xs" and "Os" as they stepped out of the van with a story to tell and a new game in their repertoire.

This memory causes me to reflect on BCRTA's journey and friends we have made along the way. There is something about the bonds that form as we travel that remain special. Just two years ago our very successful group travel to Portugal had just ended and planning for future travel events was underway. Then came the sudden intervention of circumstances which forced us to adapt.

Our pension committee has sponsored educational retirement workshops for active teachers around our province for many years. Suddenly we could not travel out to meet those teachers, and this created a rush of preparation to develop and deliver virtual presentations. And we have done it. In the school year prior to the pandemic just over 1,000 active teachers attended our retirement workshops in person. Last year, close to 2,000 active teachers were able to use our workshop website to book a date and time to attend these workshops online. Feedback from the online workshops has been extremely positive and we are using this new way of doing business with a smile.

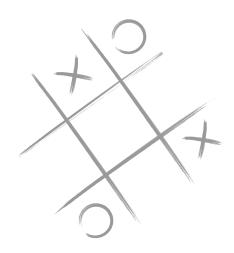
The next challenge revolved around the BCRTA conference. With encouraging and supportive staff, along with a good technology team, willing participants moved from in-person to virtual. This shift invited all members to view conference presentations at their convenience. Our last inperson BCRTA conference in 2019 was attended by 119 delegates. By contrast, in the fall of 2021 some 1,968 retired teachers were able to view the online conference content. Once again we were smiling despite circumstances.



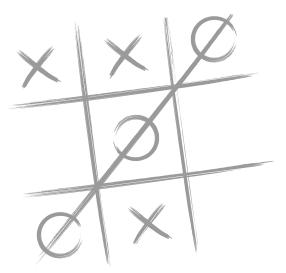
Much has changed since BCRTA's 2019 AGM.

While we have been reaching out to you it has been heartening to know that our members have been reaching back. Here are some stats for you. A whopping 96,371 visitors viewed our web page in 2021. It was used by members to update personal information, participate in our various conference giveaways, view Web sessions, link to Johnson our BCRTA member insurance partner and to access the many other benefits of membership offered by our BCRTA Advantage Partners.

Zooms and webinars will be an element of some future BCRTA activities and underlying these will be the patience and kindness we have extended to each other in the learning process of making use of these new pathways to connect. Is it the same as before? No. Perhaps it is better in some practical ways, but no substitute for the in-person contact we have always enjoyed.



# There is something about the bonds that form as we travel that remain special.



Sometimes it is true that a crisis can make us stronger. In many ways, the last two years have proven that for our organization. The future of BCRTA will be built on the successes of this part of our journey, but there is something comforting about maintaining the best traditions of the past. We recognize the need to come together. This is part of who we are as an organization as well as human beings. We look forward to in-person Committee and Board meetings and hope to see in-person delegates at our BCRTA Conference and AGM this year. After two years of successful adaptation to difficult circumstances our fervent hope is that the time has come where we will resume gathering.

In the meantime, a cheerful "see you soon" reflects both our goodwill to colleagues and our best hopes as we travel this road together. •

GRACE WILSON is President of the BCRTA



#### Articles Really Fly, Says Gogo

I finally stopped running around long enough to read the latest issue of 'Postscript'. It was WONDERFUL! I always enjoy my magazine when it comes but this issue was outstanding. I am a Gogo from New Westminster, so I really enjoyed revisiting our 'Flashmob' in Ariel's article about the work of the Grandmother's Campaign. I love Ikebana and have visited Tokyo several times, so loved that article as well. 'Wild Roses' was a great piece of writing and the artwork brought it to life. I love reading so am always glad of good recommendations. It is not the first time 'Thursday Murder Club' has been recommended so I'll be sure to pick it up soon.

Many thanks to all of the folks involved in the publication of Postscript. You do a spectacular job!

Delora Harper

The Winter 2021 issue was outstanding. We loved all the well-written book and art reviews. Can't wait to get some of the Josephine Tey books!

Thanks so much for a great publication, again.

Heather and Richard Cooper

#### A Solution for Puzzle Solvers?

I wonder if it would be possible to put the answers to the crossword in the same magazine as the crossword itself. I realize that that would mess up the contest but it frustrates me to have to wait for months and keep my puzzle and then find the puzzle to see where I went wrong. It almost makes it pointless to do the puzzle. Maybe two puzzles?

#### Jan McLean

Editor's Note: Our puzzlemaster David Squance does a masterful job with these crosswords. For those who don't know, we award a cash prize to three crossword solvers and three Sudoku solvers for each issue of PostScript Magazine.

You are right, Jan, that giving the answer right away would be odd for intrepid submitters to our crossword contest who have completed the puzzle on their own. But as a quarterly magazine, it is a while to wait to get the solutions you can't work out on your own.

Readers, what do you think? Would you rather have the solution in the same magazine?

#### **Remembering Special Places and People**

#### Dear Editor,

As soon as I took the Postscript from my mailbox I knew it was Lake O'Hara Lodge where my wife and I spent our honeymoon in June 1967. Prior to coming to Canada in 1965, Anne Haselton taught at Kingsbury Grammar School in London, UK. and I taught at Doncaster Technical Grammar School in Doncaster in Yorkshire. We met in Northern Alberta having answered a call from Northland School Division #61 in The Times Educational Supplement to,

> Come to the Land of the Mighty Peace and Athabasca, the Land of the Moose -No Weaklings Need Apply

152 teachers were recruited and met in Edmonton in August 1965 for an orientation programme before being shipped out to our teaching positions across the wilds of Northern Alberta. Anne and I ended up in Grouard and in 1967 were married in Moosehorn Lodge, which was the residency of Grouard Vocational School. The newly formed school band supplied the music! My family back in England were stunned at my letters home of –30C temperatures and student names like Joseph Ghostkeeper, Rosanna Brighteyes and James Yellowknee.

We moved to teaching positions in The David Thompson High School in Invermere BC and had twin sons, Owen & Evan. When the boys were in their last year at university Anne and I went on Exchange to Perth in Western Australia and on returning home we found we still had the travel bug and in 1994 I was appointed lecturer at The University of Papua New Guinea.

Anne died in 2017 but the front cover of Postscript sure brought back many reminiscences of the incredibly adventurous 50 years we had together.

May I also compliment you on the Josephine Tey article, Her book, The Daughter of Time would be an excellent book for Lit. 12 study.

Sincerely,

**Ray Picton** 

#### Comment? Article spark a memory?

Write us at postscript@bcrta.ca

important dates

#### **Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security**

Includes the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) retirement pension and disability, children's and survivor benefits.

#### Upcoming payment dates

#### 2022

- March 29
- August 29
- April 27
- May 27
- June 28
- July 27

- October 27

September 27

- November 28
- December 21

#### **Teachers' Pension Plan**

Here are upcoming dates that pension payments are directly deposited to accounts.

#### Upcoming payment dates

#### 2022

- March 30
- April 28
- May 30
- June 29
- July 28

- August 30
- September 28
- October 28
- November 29
- December 22



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### One Room Schools: My Adventure

#### TEXT AND PHOTOS BY PATSY NAGEL

Why would anyone choose to teach in this type of school? I attended one from grades 1-8; my last practicum, with a very experienced teacher, was in a one-room school; and I'm just not a city girl—I've never liked being around lots of buildings and people and traffic. So, at the tender age of 19 years, after only a year of teacher training at the Provincial Normal School in Victoria, I thought I was ready for this big adventure!

Pat and I had been friends in High School, then went to Normal School together, and wanted to find a place to teach together, too. So "Pat and Patsy" began the search for our first school. We settled on two schools south of Quesnel, thinking "south of Quesnel" would mean somewhere like Hickson. In fact, they were located across the Fraser River Canyon from the main highway. When my Dad drove me up, we had to cross the river by ferry, and once on the other side, drive along first country roads and then one-lane logging roads. It was all a bit daunting. We were in a logging community with many small sawmill operations. Our mailing address was Buck Ridge, B.C. At least we got an extra \$20 per month for an isolation bonus!

In 1951 there were three small one-room schools on the logging road adjacent to the river. A small school bus took students to the Buck Ridge School for grades 1 to 3 then on to Narcosli Creek for grades 4 to 6 then on to the last school, located at the ferry, which took grades 7 and 8. Quite efficient...while it lasted! After Christmas they told us the school board didn't have enough money and couldn't afford the bus, so the children were required to attend the school nearest them. Now all three schools were teaching grades 1 to 8 and the adventure took another turn into something I wasn't expecting!



Narcolosi Creek School. Photo courtesy of Patsy Nagel.

My school, Narcosli Creek, was a log building located in a small clearing in the woods. Inside the school, the logs were covered with plywood sheeting, with blackboards hung on the front and sides. This at least helped to resist some of the mice, but we could still hear them running around behind the plywood. It had very little area for outdoor facilities such as a ball diamond, skating rink, etc. So, at noon and recess breaks the main outdoor entertainment was Ante-I-Over. A team would line up on either side of the school house, smallest kids closest, larger kids at the back, and begin throwing the ball over the school house. The person catching the ball would then attempt to tag someone from the other team with it. In winter it was Fox and Geese, using a pie shaped pattern in the snow.

Classroom work was centered on the individual. With all grades present, the teacher had to prioritize the needs of each student. Thus the infamous "jellygraph" was put to work, making work sheets, outlines for assignments, and



A hectograph or "Jellygraph". Illustration by Adobe.

many other items needed for keeping each grade on track. Each assignment was written or drawn by hand, using special paper and inks, then transferred to the jelly surface. One by one the needed sheets were placed on the jelly pad to take up a copy, When all were done, either a new gelatin pad had to be prepared, or, if we had several hours, a special grey cover could clear the surface for the next job. Workbooks were well-used in both arithmetic and reading in the primary grades. The one-room school taught cooperation, since the higher grades were allowed to work with the younger children, listening to reading, doing flash cards, and helping with numbers.

Good planning was essential. I used a large scrap book with squares marked for the grades and times for each subject. This helped to keep track of how we were progressing. A red star indicated where the teacher would be working with a certain grade or group.

Living accommodations posed another challenge for a one-room school teacher. Was there a teacherage or did she have to board with one of the parents? How would she get to town for shopping or to attend the annual Teacher's Convention? In our case, we were assured in advance that a teacherage was being built for Pat and me to live in. On arrival, however we found that it was not yet completed, so



The teacher's cabin. Photo courtesy of Patsy Nagel.

we boarded with the owners of the store and post office in Buck Ridge. This worked out well for us; we made great friends of the family, including with the daughter of the house, who was just our age, and who happily gave us a ride to Quesnel when we needed to go. Once the teacherage was ready, we enjoyed living there and often had company from some of the young loggers in the area. After Christmas, Pat began boarding with a family nearer to her school, and I was left living alone in the cabin.

Holidays and special events such as Halloween, Easter, and Valentine's Day were very important. And, of course, Christmas! The Christmas Concert was an important event and efforts were made to include each student. Teachers searched for suitable plays, marching drills, recitations, and songs. Starting in October, students had time each day to choose what they would like to do and as Christmas came closer, plans were made for a stage, curtains, and decorations for the tree. Ahead of time, parents were in charge of choosing Santa gifts and setting up the tree. On concert day, dads would arrive to set up the stage and seating, moms would come to do the curtains and make the snacks for after the concert, when Santa (one of the dads) came to dole out presents. Excited students were sent home early to have their hair curled, don their best clothes, and eat an early supper—if they could eat. It was an exciting event for the teacher too, as the community would be judging her performance. Luckily for me, they loved it!

Making all these decisions contributed to a young teacher's education. By the time we got to Summer School, we knew what we didn't know, or needed to learn more about. Did this exciting year change my mind about one-room schools? I guess not, since my next two schools were also one-room schools, the first in a farming community, with kids coming from as far as five miles away on horseback (or in the winter, by sleigh), and my second at Bear Lake, at another logging district school. There were new adventures in each one. •

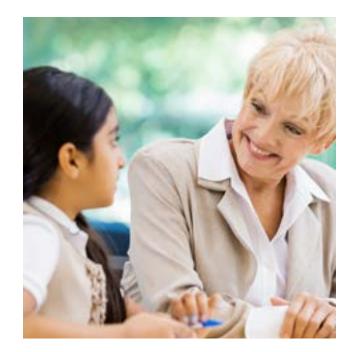
**PATSY NAGEL** has been a member of BCRTA for 28 years. She lives in Dawson Creek.

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# A UNIQUE CLIMBING EXPERIENCE

#### **BY MARTIN CONDER**

At the time, I thought it was a good idea. I sold it to Rob and he agreed. Mount Sir Donald is a magnificent peak. Sitting at the head of Rogers Pass, its classic triangular shape dominates the landscape. The summit tops out at over 3,000 metres above sea level and due to the nature of the beast, strong parties reckon that from a high camp located under the face, it takes 12 hours for a successful round trip.

Of course, Class 5 climbing assumes significant training, and knowledge of the rock climbing techniques and gear that are required for this level of climb. But we would blitz this low 5th-class classic from the road by starting early and travelling light. Shouldn't be a problem, we thought, since many early ascents had been achieved from the alpine hut by climbers just wearing nailed boots, carrying wooden axes, and toting hemp ropes. But Rob and I were outfitted with wonderful modern gear from our heads to our toes. My calculations allowed for two to three hours for an approach to the start of the technical climbing. This would leave us a dozen hours to touch the top and return to the notch adjoining Uto Peak, where flat ground would welcome our triumphant return. Another couple of hours downhill would get us to the parking lot. The project would take 18 hours so we would get underway at about 4:00 am. Planning is so important for the success of an alpine experience.

My legs began to cramp as we neared the start of the ridge line. Perhaps I didn't drink enough or maybe I had pushed too hard on the approach but the result was a humiliation of the worst order. Massage, rest, food, and water did not resurrect my desire or ability to ascend the towering challenge.

While we jointly moaned about the unfair situation, a lone climber arrived. His partner had decided to abort in the parking lot and he was gung-ho to climb.

I was relieved that my failure would not deprive Rob of the reward for his labors. They left with energy and enthusiasm.

I spent the day among the boulders at the base of the climb, my penance being the cold, cutting wind and the scurrying rats who obviously prospered on granola bars and peanut butter left by other foolish humans. Rob's recently acquired partner returned as the sun began to slide behind the peaks. He had started to downclimb before Rob had been willing to turn around and descend.

The sun had set when Rob reappeared and we shuffled off to locate the downhill trail. The last obstacle we encountered on the approach that morning had been a steep cut leading to the top of a bench trending to the base of Sir Donald. Trying to locate the top of this narrow, unmarked passage in the dark was dangerous and unsuccessful. Our headlamps were dead. The only alternative, to spend the night on the sidehill and wait for the sun to provide the necessary light, entailed risks of exposure and hypothermia. The word "cold" became meaningful after just a few minutes. Any distraction, even wordplay, was better than being aware of rigor mortis setting in.

At sunrise we staggered down to the tenting area where (lo and behold) we encountered a couple from Colorado. When they realized that we had spent the night without shelter or sleeping bags they offered Rob and me the use of their tent and bags while they were off attempting to climb the famous peak.

We didn't get warmer. Sleeping bags only keep body heat from escaping. We were hypothermic and remained cold even while buried under major amounts of goose feathers. After a futile hour we dragged ourselves out to greet the day. Two hours of stumbling and falling got us back to the parking lot where we drank coffee and ate breakfast and lay down in the sun. That state of bliss didn't last long.

"Martin! I am so glad you are here." It was Earl, an American who writes nature and outdoor articles for magazines. We had met somewhere a few years previous, and I had told him that I would proof-read some of his writing about areas and climbs that I had experienced.

Earl was operating on overdrive.

"There are missing climbers up on Sir Donald who haven't been accounted for. The park rangers are away extricating some hikers caught up in a heavily crevassed area. There are a couple of people here willing to assist in finding the missing party but they need someone like yourself who knows the trails and terrain to lead." What could I say?

An hour later the four of us set off on a mission of mercy to connect with some foolish individuals who had failed to sign in at the ranger station and then gone wandering off heaven-knows-where.

With irritation I turned to Rob and complained how much I was peeved that some people just didn't know their limits or have the experience to attempt major climbs, and on top of that didn't sign in.

At that moment, we looked at each other and our shoulders slumped. We gazed at the those heavens.

We were searching for ourselves. •

**MARTIN CONDER** is a BCRTA member who has previously written for PostScript Magazine about climbing and lessons learned.

Images by istockphoto/Getty



# ARE NOW ENTERING FREE DERRY



#### **TEXT AND PHOTOS BY GORD YAKIMOW**

O God what have they done To the town I loved so well?

Phil Coulter

"Stay out of the Bogside if you go to Derry," warned a friend who had roots in Belfast City. "It's not safe."

His concern came when I mentioned to him that I would be spending a bit of time in Ireland that summer. About seven weeks was the plan.

My late mother had been a Gilligan from County Mayo in the remote west of The Republic of Ireland (ROC), and there were first cousins and first-cousins-onceremoved and second cousins and, and, and... spread throughout Erin's Green Isle.

The first cousins I had always kept in touch with directly, the others through word-of-mouth. One of the first cousins still lived in the farmhouse where my mother had been born and raised. I'd been retired for five years, and this would probably be my last opportunity to connect face-to-face with cousins there. I hoped to visit as many relatives as I could and do a bit of traveling in the magical land of the leprechaun, a land which had produced four Nobel Laureates for Literature: William Butler Yeats, George Bernard Shaw, Samuel Beckett, all from Dublin, and Seamus Heaney (born on a farm not far from Derry, and educated in the town).

The highlight was a "Gilligan Reunion" in the Squealing Pig, one of three pubs in the tiny village of my deardeparted mother's Ballyglass. Relatives came from all over Ireland. Some even came from England.

I did a fair bit of travelling in the ROC and various parts of Northern Ireland. In County Donegal (ROC),



in the remote west corner of the island, a majority of inhabitants still speak Gaelic. The area boasts spectacular cliff walks, the ruins of intriguing castles, and the Giant's Causeway, a unique geological rock formation, part of Ireland's mythological history, is just 50 miles away.

The region has multiple links to famous historical events. The aviator Amelia Earhart landed in a field near Derry in 1932, on the first solo transatlantic flight by a female. She was aiming for Paris, but lost her way. The Titanic was built in and launched from Belfast. Dublin, founded by Vikings in the 800's, was the repeated focus for the battles between the British and the Irish over control of the island.

But the day that I walked the walls of Derry, in Northern Ireland, and then ventured down into the Bogside district, will forever be etched into my memory. For many years, during what the Irish called the "Troubles," Derry (for the Catholics) or Londonderry (for the Protestants), was a city divided by sectarian violence and military patrols, murders and bombings, and internments and hunger strikes. The Bogside district of Derry, a Catholic area, bore the brunt of the brutality. In one such incident, in January of 1972, fourteen people were shot dead when the British Army opened fire on a civil rights demonstration; half of those killed were teenagers. The Irish pop star Bono (born in Dublin) and his band U2 sang of the tragic event in their signature song, "Sunday, Bloody Sunday."



I spent a full day in Derry, the better part of that day wandering through the Bogside, taking a few photos here and there, especially photos of the murals which dot the neighbourhood, and which show scenes of heartbreak (children killed) and of valiant resistance (by Bernadette Devlin and others) from the time of the "Troubles."

Graffiti slogans on the Catholic side of the fortified city wall still demand justice. Toward the end of the day, I came across a trio of young teens in a field, hanging around, smoking cigarettes. "What is 'Maghaberry'?" I asked, pointing to graffiti on the fortified wall which read, "End torture in Maghaberry now."

"It's a gaol," one responded. "A gaol for political prisoners."

In the late afternoon, I pointed my vehicle towards Donegal. As I was driving out of Derry, I was stopped by a police blockade. A suspected car-bomb was just ahead, and a bomb-detecting robotic vehicle had been dispatched. I was forced to detour around the area to go on my way.

When I arrived back home to Canada, I immediately put a checkmark and a smiling emoji alongside "Trip to Ireland" on my 'To-Do' Bucket List."

Nevertheless, I am haunted by a phrase coined by Yeats in his poem, "Easter 1916". As he observes Ireland's turbulent drive toward independence, he writes: "A terrible beauty is born." •





**GORD YAKIMOW** is a retired teacher from Chilliwack District #33 and a frequent contributor to PostScript. His children's book, **The Grod Family's Christmas Lights**, will be released for Christmas 2022.





#### SURREY SCHOOL DISTRICT HISTORY PROJECT

Last year was a time for milestones. It was the 30th anniversary of the Surrey Retired Teachers' Association (SRTA) and the BCRTA's 75th. To mark these events, the SRTA's Heritage Committee undertook a project which focused on the history of the Surrey School District. We planned to draw upon the memories and stories of our members and compile them into a magazine of recollections which we would share with our branch.

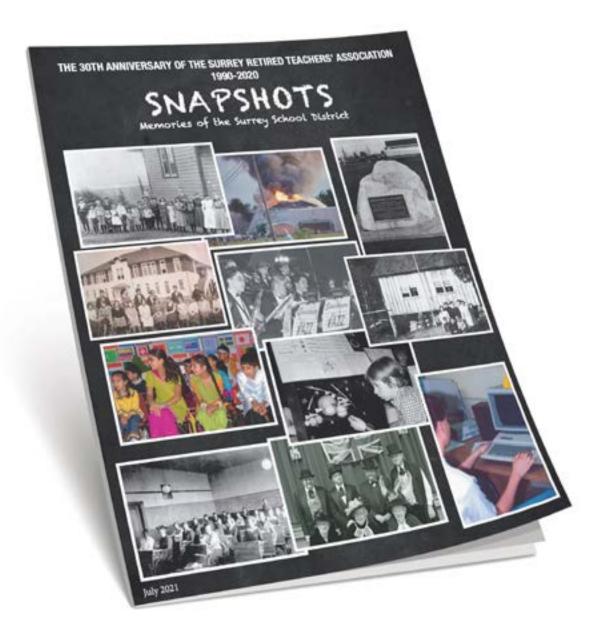
The project proved to be a wonderful opportunity to reach out to our members during the pandemic. Invitations to contribute were sent through our newsletter, "The Chatter". Due to COVID restrictions, information was gathered by email, written submissions, and phone conversations. At first contributions trickled in, but soon momentum grew and many amusing, insightful, and interesting stories were collected. Communications flew back and forth and new information sources were located. Community groups, such as the Surrey Historical Society and the Surrey Archives, were great sources of information. With financial assistance from the SRTA, we were able to hire a graphic designer.

After countless hours of work over seven months, "Snapshots", a 36-page magazine, was finished. It went out online to SRTA members and community supporters. Feedback was immediate, enthusiastic, and positive, with invitations to distribute the magazine district-wide.

This project took longer and involved more work than anticipated, but we feel it was worthwhile. We have learned a great deal about the evolution of the school district and appreciate the contributions of the many teachers, administrators, and support staff who, over time, helped Surrey grow from a handful of one-room schools to the largest school district in the province.

For more information contact srtaheritage@gmail.com

**The SRTA Heritage Committee**: Alice Tiles, Karen Susheski, Karen Bentzen



You did an absolutely outstanding job on the "Snapshots" project! I enjoyed every bit of it, especially seeing many names that I recognized from the past. I loved the layout, hearing the stories, seeing history pass before my eyes. I enjoyed every bit of it. A job well done!

Arlene Laing (SRTA member)

ΠΤΞΖΓ STORIES

MУ

A rare childhood photo of Stanley Fukawa from 1945. Cameras were often seized from interned families to prevent espionage by "enemy aliens".

Masako Fukawa: Stanley, my husband, started writing about his childhood experiences eight years ago before Alzheimer's began destroying his memories. He and his parents were relocated from their farm in Mission to Vernon in 1942 until 1949. He recorded his stories primarily to share with his children and grandchildren. This year is the 80th anniversary of the internment. Teachers, especially, may find it of interest to read two of Stanley's recollections of his childhood in Vernon.

During our banishment period, from my family's forced move from Mission, B.C. to Vernon, B.C. in the Spring of 1942, to our move back to the Pacific coast in the fall of 1949—a period of seven-and-a-half years—we were designated "enemy aliens" and were at the mercy of the powers assumed by the Canadian federal government under the War Measures Act and the Emergency Measures Continuation Act. The government did not go to the trouble and expense of trials in a court of law to do this. They just used their "common sense" and assumed that anyone who was of the Japanese race must be guilty of treasonous intent and carried out the measures necessary to protect the "obviously good people" from the "obviously bad." This included the confiscation and disposal of our farm and truck and our banishment from territory within a hundred miles of the Pacific Ocean.

Part of the justification seemed to be that if it was good enough for the USA, it ought to be good enough for Canada.

It was personally distressing that our family was included to be among the nasty, squint-eyed enemy in the propaganda ads distributed in school who were shown wielding guns and threatening the lives of patriotic Canadians who were encouraged to fight back by purchasing government Victory Bonds and in school the Victory Stamps. And of course, we ethnic Japanese in Canada were bullied into purchasing the same bonds or risk being called the traitors we were considered of being anyway. They had us coming and going.

The racial abuse was not a constant 24/7 and the teachers I had were quite scrupulously careful not to accuse Japanese Canadians of improper behaviour or traitorous thoughts in class although they had to distribute the War Bonds and Stamps with the racist imagery of the treacherous enemy. The academic side of school was a welcome respite from any subject matter which included racial overtones. During wartime, a lot of time was taken with what was happening at the front and the horrible behaviour of the enemy which was explained by their racial origins.





Left: Stanley the cub scout. Right: The cub pack. Below: Stanley with his parents.



#### TEACHER MAKES ME SANITIZE DAD'S IMAGE

I learned several important lessons on the first day of school. I had just been enrolled at Coldstream Elementary outside of Vernon, BC in September of 1944.

I do not remember the incident which led to my calling someone a "bad name," but the first lesson was that pupils were not allowed to swear in school. It puzzled me because I had merely repeated what I had heard my father say when he was angry. This was reported to my teacher. When the teacher asked what I had said, I told her honestly that I had called a harassing classmate, a "son-a-ka bitch."

This turned into a brief argument between the teacher and me about whether my father had actually used those words. Her steadfast assertion was that he would NEVER use such language. She kept saying, "He would NEVER say that!"

And I kept responding, "Yes, he did!"

As a punishment for swearing and then lying about my father's use of foul language in such situations, I was made to stand in front of the class with my hands on top of my head, fingers interlaced, until I was ready to recant my version of the situation and apologize. I was surprised at how unpleasant and tiring it was to be in that posture for even a few minutes. I quickly understood how experienced teachers can discipline uncooperative students and make them fall into line. I had to agree that "No, indeed, my father could NEVER have used such ungentlemanly language." And, so, with my own father's reputation now also arrayed against me, I succumbed.

The important lesson for this Asian working-class kid was that I had to learn the middle-class ways of the school in order to be acceptable in that polite society. We all had to pretend that the world was one in which even immigrants who had learned their English in the uncouth environs of sawmills staffed almost entirely by men who had never spent a day in a Canadian school could actually converse without using any swear words.

The incident also pointed out that despite the existence of a student culture that encouraged all students not to "rat" on other students, in this case, it was more important for mainstream students to see the Jap kid put in his place. This one had, after all, called another mainstream student, a bad name.



#### MY CLASSMATE, MY HERO (HEROES COME IN ALL SIZES)

Looking back over my 76 years of life, I'm still awed at the moral authority of a friend—still a child—who stood up to defend me when I was about to be attacked by schoolyard bullies. They felt justified in ganging-up on a "Jap-kid" who represented to them, the enemy races that their country had fought and just defeated. There were still constant reminders in the media about the atrocities committed by the Nazis and the Japs against whom all good people could freely vent their hate. They saw in me an opportunity to act out some of the revenge which was only a pay-back for being born of an evil race.

I was in the schoolyard playing with my usual play group, the boys who, most days, walked together to the school from the Coldstream Ranch side. I was the only Asian kid in the group.

I was surrounded by a menacing group of boys whose antagonism had been aroused by some of their number. When I was pushed, the unofficial leader of our group, Bob Schram, asked the standard schoolboy question, "What did he do to you?" The response was, "He's a Jap, you know that," implying that all Japs were fair game for vengeance for being bad people.

Bob's voice was authoritative. "So, what. He's just as good as you are. Leave him alone." They backed off.

I still marvel at the status that Bob conferred upon me without hesitation—that I was as worthy as the other kids who were white. Having been exposed to anti-Japanese propaganda in the Hollywood movies, on the radio, in school in the Victory Bonds and Stamps campaigns, war propaganda films, and in the print media, although I knew inside that I was a good person, as were members of my family, I did not have confidence in the goodness of all ethnic Japanese I did not know personally. I was not immune to the racist propaganda





Wartime propaganda. (Image in the public domain)

that I saw and heard all around me. Like most children, I learned early how minorities were viewed by the majority and largely accepted the biases in the public mind. Before that moment my own mind was not independent enough to believe and assert what Bob had said about my own worth.

It was a huge boost to my self-confidence and sense of self-worth to be supported publicly at a crucial time. A friend and respected schoolyard leader had spoken up to say that I was a good person.

It was just an incident in Grade 3 in a country schoolyard but I have always remembered it, felt grateful for it and tried to follow the example of my heroic friend by speaking out in similar situations. In our multi-ethnic society with its racial and religious diversity, it constantly surprises me how we seem to be able to find any number of reasons to dislike or be suspicious of those who are even the slightest bit different to ourselves. It taught me that even one child's opinion, simply stated, can make a huge difference in our lives. I have remembered this for a lifetime. •

**STANLEY FUKAWA** taught Sociology and Japanese at Malaspina University College (Vancouver Island University) and was in administration before retirement.

**MASAKO FUKAWA** was an elementary school teacher and principal in the Nanaimo School District and retired as the founding principal of the high school at Vancouver Island University.

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- ACT QUICKLY ONLY A FEW SEATS LEFT!

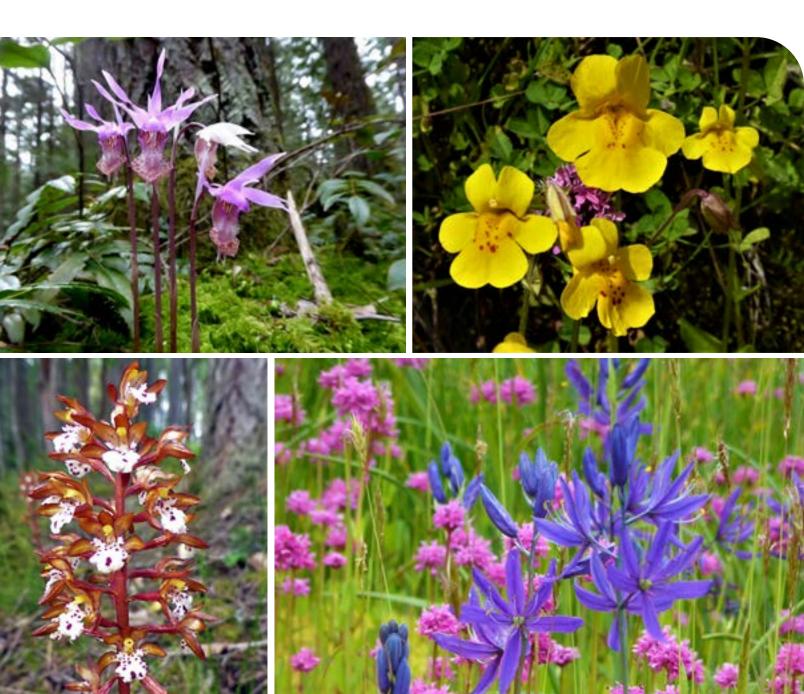
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**PHOTOGRAPHS BY DIANA DUGAS** 





Speak of the spring, and foison of the year; The one doth shadow of your beauty show, The other as your bounty doth appear, And you in every blessèd shape we know. SHAKESPEARE



#### A COLD DAY IN SMITHERS



A backyard visitor. Photo by Elaine Thompson

As I gaze out my window on fresh snow on a cold and clear day, the carpet before my eyes sparkles like the most precious of diamonds. Birds come to the feeder or the suet in our backyard looking for a quick feast to appease their hunger. If I am really lucky, I see a flicker or a blue-jay or a small sapsucker or redheaded woodpecker joining the smaller winter birds to share their hearty meal. The Bohemian and cedar waxwings especially love the mountain ash berries as they quickly swoop in and gorge and as quickly swoop out, well fed. I have even been blessed to see a moose in the yard hunting out the grasses by the fence, if we have accidently left the backyard gate open. No one really goes hungry with the feast provided by us and by Mother Nature.

If you are brave enough you will put on your warm clothes and well-treaded winter boots and venture out into the magic for a brisk winter walk. You will hear a noisy conversation as the snow creaks and croaks with each step taken; everyone should experience talking snow at least once.

If you are really lucky on your walk, you might even see a moose or a deer. Respect social distancing with these wonderful creatures as you are definitely in their domain. They are majestic rulers on a day filled with magic.

**ELAINE THOMPSON** is a BCRTA Director for the Northern Zone and President of the Bulkley Valley Retire Teachers Association.

#### EARLY APRIL: PRINCE GEORGE, BC

The bristle tops of spruce Scour the sky's blue surface, Wielded by a wind that shakes With the intensity of its concentration. Spring clean or bust! And the sky is as good a place to start as any. The sun glints on the soft Green tips at each bristle's end. Gently, wind! Be gentle with the new-born things, The fronds and fuzz and feathers of innocence. Be gentle as you scrape and scrub, With flakes of snow and hailstones, The ancient hide of earth and sky - Swishing and swilling with storms and showers. Remember, in the midst of all this

Wild preparation of the birthplace, That the gentle midwife sun needs time. Be sure to give her time enough To draw out the fragile things of birth, foetal and flowering, Into your boisterous purity, And warm them – so they may survive The caring, cold caress of your loving welcome.

VALERIE SINCLAIR lives in Prince George.

### If birds could tweet colours

If birds could tweet colours, The rose, I am told, Would surrender its claim To a history of fame. Even rainbows, I fear, Would turn shamelessly clear. So imagine the glee With each tweedle-dee-dee When a motley of hues From reds, greens, and blues Flows from the trees Like some art jamboree. So never despair With bland winter fare, For the birds will play host To what hearts need the most. Thus, dear friend, here's your mission, To listen with vision And trust you've just heard The brush strokes of a bird.



**PAUL DESJARDINS** taught English and French for 34 years. He retired in 2006.

Birds on page opposite, clockwise from top left: House sparrow, Evening Grosbeak, White-crowned sparrow, Goldfinch, Rufous hummer, Goldfinch with teacup. All bird photos by Paul Desjardins.





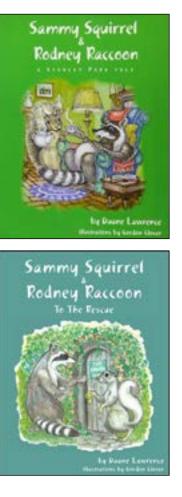












#### Sammy Squirrel and Rodney Raccoon: A Stanley Park Tale

Sammy Squirrel and Rodney Raccoon: To the Rescue

#### by Duane Lawrence

When best friends Sammy Squirrel and Rodney Raccoon decide to explore the world beyond their Stanley Park home in Vancouver, an adventure is what they are after, and it is certainly what they get. Swept out to sea in a little boat, the woodland creatures embark on an unexpected journey to a mysterious new land. Their courage and ingenuity are tested every step of the way. Sammy and Rodney are introduced to exciting new friends and help resolve a crisis they never expected to encounter.

In this second Stanley Park Tale, Sammy Squirrel and Rodney Raccoon, intent on finding their 'crow-napped' bird friend Judy, leave the safety of their park home to search for her in the big, busy city of Vancouver. Encouraged by old park friends like Renee Rabbit and Squirty Skunk, the two woodland creatures step boldly into the unknown. The two park dwellers' courage and determination are sharply tested as the search becomes more challenging than they ever could have imagined.

Author's website: www.duanelawrence.ca

Available at Indigo and Amazon as ebooks or paperbacks

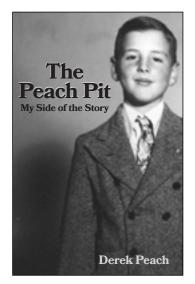
#### ZIP by Roxsane Tiernan

There will always be secrets. There have always been secrets. Sometimes the secrets are there because our knowing minds just don't want to remember. Sometimes we don't want to go there - period. Some of my life has been like that but I have been blessed with an amazing memory from age two and a half-forward with very rare gaps. I constantly hear "I wish I had your memory." Would life be easier if I didn't remember? Maybe but it wouldn't come near the rich to overflowing life I've had.

Available from Amazon as e-book or in print.







#### The Peach Pit by Derek Peach

Derek Peach has written a memoir of his life as he remembers (or pretends to remember) it from his beginning in war-years 1941 to this pandemic. If you lived through these times or stayed more awake than he did in history class, you will not learn anything new about world affairs, but you can possibly learn how to dazzle toddlers with magic tricks or teenagers with poetry lessons or how to survive in a construction crew in a subway tunnel. You might even be mildly interested in his travel vignettes from China or Peru or Australia. And then there's the sex.

Available for \$20, direct from the author at rdpeach5@gmail.com

#### Saturday at the Garage by Nancy Hundal

What could be better than a Saturday spent with Dad at his gas station? There are floors to sweep, customers to chat with and gas to pump. Sometimes when Dad is working under the hood of a car, he even asks for help finding the right wrench or socket. This girl is watching carefully, because she knows her dad is magical at fixing cars, and she intends to learn that magic and follow in his footsteps one day.

*Saturday at the Garage* is published by Midtown Press and illustrated by Angela Pan. It is based on Nancy's childhood memories of days spent with her dad at the family garage in the 1960's in the Marpole area of Vancouver. The text and pictures take the reader back to that time, when cars had fins and glass pop bottles clanged noisily out of shiny machines.

For more information about Nancy's ten picture books and two novels, check out her website at nancyhundal.com

*Saturday at the Garage* is available at Chapters Indigo, Vancouver Kidsbooks and on order from any local bookstore in BC.



### SMARTPHONE OR TABLET?

For the first time in history, we now use mobile devices more than computers to access the internet. But a smartphone is not always the smartest way to connect.

Gluu People often hear, "Mom, you need a new phone." Or "What! You're still using a flip phone?" Today, a mobile device is almost required if you want to be part of the modern world. When (younger) people think mobile, they automatically think smartphone. But smartphones are not the only mobile device. Tablets are mobile devices, too.

It is expected that almost 19% of the people in the world will use a tablet by the end of this year-that's 1.28 billion tablets. According to GlobalStats, 56.31% of tablets today are Apple iPads, 43.56% are Android, and only .09% are Windows.

If you want a bigger screen, a faster device, the latest security features, consider a tablet. It can do most of what a smartphone and computer can do and has loads of added benefits for older adults. See sidebar article.

A tablet runs the apps that run our world and can successfully replace an aging computer. Using a tablet, you can send video calls, voice calls, text, email, shop, play games, watch TV, and get on the internet wherever you are — in the simplest way possible.

Maybe that smartphone upgrade can wait.

#### **3 REASONS TO CONSIDER A** TABLET

#### **#1 LESS EXPENSIVE**

Tablets are less expensive than most high-end smartphones and computers, yet they are often packed with similar features. Plus, they don't need an expensive cellular data plan, as they can use Wi-Fi to access the Internet.

#### **#2 BIGGER SCREEN**

Size matters when it comes to screens. The beautiful big tablet screen makes reading newspapers, magazines, and books a joy. Reading, even on the largest smartphone, can be difficult for older eyes. Tablets are also great for watching TV and movies. Almost 30% of people use tablets and smartphones to watch Netflix.

#### **#3 GOES EVERYWHERE**

A tablet can be used from a chair, bed, or anywhere you want to go. It can replace a computer and does much of what a smartphone does. Some say that they are the future of computing.

#### WITH A NEWER TABLET, YOU CAN:

- Use apps
- Make Wi-Fi audio calls and video calls
- Email and send text messages
- Access the Internet and websites
- Take pictures and shoot videos
- Watch news, TV, sports, and movies
- Read ebooks, newspapers & magazines
- Listen to music, audiobooks, podcasts
- Write letters or create spreadsheets
- Print whatever is on your screen
- Use a keyboard or mouse on some models

#### **TECH for RETIREES**

# WI-FI IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

Wi-Fi one of the most significant technological developments of the modern age, and it's about to cover the entire planet. Let's look at how it works.

Think of Wi-Fi as a two-way conversation between your device and the internet using radio waves. Wi-Fi uses radio frequency signals to broadcast a high-speed internet connection to your wireless device. No cables or wires are required.

Wi-Fi is everywhere. It's in many homes, most public spaces, airports, hotels, stadiums, and even on the International Space Station. It lets you watch videos from the couch, explore the internet from bed, read your emails in the park, all at lightning speed. It's a convenient way to connect to the internet. And it's about to cover the whole planet.

Wi-Fi doesn't stand for Wireless Fidelity. Wi-Fi is a meaningless yet catchy word that plays on the idea of Hi-Fi and is easier to remember than its real name, IEEE 802.11b Direct Sequence.

There are over 26.6 billion Wi-Fi devices connected to the internet today. That's 3.5 devices for every person on Earth. By 2025, it's estimated there will be over 75 billion Wi-Fi connected devices worldwide.

#### **IS WI-FI A HEALTH RISK?**

It doesn't take much digging to find scaremongering articles about Wi-Fi's health risks. Here are the facts. Wi-Fi signals live right in between the radio waves that let you listen to a radio station and those that make a microwave work. Here is what the World Health Organization has to say about Wi-Fi safety: "Considering the very low exposure levels and research results collected to date, there is no convincing scientific evidence that the weak radio frequency signals from base stations and wireless networks cause adverse health effects."

Enjoy your radio station, microwave popcorn, and Wi-Fi.

#### **WI-FI IS HEDY LAMARR'S BABY**

Hedy Lamarr (pictured above), the 1940s Oscar-nominated actor, was also an avid inventor. On June 10, 1941, she applied for a patent that became a precursor to secure Wi-Fi, GPS, and Bluetooth – the technologies that wirelessly connect the planet today.

On her 101st birthday on November 9, 2015, Google honoured her scientific achievements, featuring Ms. Lamarr as the Google Doodle, a big nod of respect from the GooglePlex.

The TECH FOR RETIREES feature is courtesy of **LINDA FAWCUS**, Founder, Gluu Technology Society and keynote speaker at BCRTA's 2021 Conference. To learn more visit gluusociety.org





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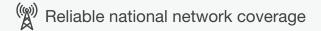
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# A NEW YEAR, WITH PURPOSE

#### FINDING OUR WAY IN CHALLENGING TIMES

- Today's Top 40
- This Year's Best Sellers
- Groceries
- Update my e-mail contacts
- My To-Do's

These are a few of the lists I have created in the last week. I began to make lists about 5 years ago when I realized that I wasn't remembering some of the things in my life that were needing to be done immediately or those that could be left for a week or even a month.

Today I'm sitting comfortably in my family room with quiet music on in the background. Outside the temperatures are unusually cold, the snow piling up on the back deck, with holiday celebrations left well behind. I'm trying to look forward to what BC, Canada, and the world will be like this time next year, even as I read an endless stream of tragic stories.

What to do to help? I've donated my Save-On points to ease flood and fire victims, donated extra blankets for emergency centres, and continued to call members who are aging and often alone. Somehow that just doesn't seem enough; I'm left wanting something.

Checking my e-mail inbox, two new messages: One brings me another ready-made list! CBC chose to compile their top 10 Moments of 2021, those segments that brought joy and laughter to conclude each day's National broadcast. The other is a poem, *This New Year*.



#### This New Year © Aleena Originally Published: February 2011

Even during the worst of times When I feel the years go slipping by Life seems rife with possibilities When the New Year arrives.

Buoyed by hope at the New Year coming I feel renewed and want to start living. This year I'll travel and see the sights, I'll be bold, I'll be courageous.

I'll reach out and go beyond. I might even try being flirtatious! I'll be a new fish in a brand-new pond. This new year I'll be brave and I'll be strong.

Even though time does fly, I won't let this year be wasted. I'll look forward to new adventures And be open to opportunities I am graced with.

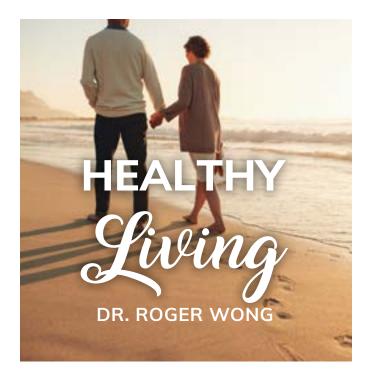
I'll learn and laugh and have good times. I won't dwell on years gone by. I'll start each new morning a brand-new way. I'll pretend it is New Year's Day!

Source: https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/this-new-year

Between them, these two emails help me reframe my list for the New Year. I'm not going to make empty resolutions; I'm going to have a purpose. And it's going to be in the form of a list that can last all year and beyond and be augmented as things come up. Here are the first few items on my New Year's list:

- Be kind to my soul
- Slow down, breathe and listen to my own inner voice
- Appreciate who I am
- Practice compassion for everyone
- Be open to broadening my perspective
- Laugh at least once a day

**PAT THIESEN** is a BCRTA director and Chair of the Well-being Committee. She lives in Delta.



### NEW ROLES FOR TEACHERS

This article is adapted from a interview BCRTA Executive Director Tim Anderson had with Dr. Roger Wong.

#### **OUR IDENTITY AS RETIRED TEACHERS**

Q. You have spent a great deal of your career teaching, and I know it is an important part of your identity. Throughout their lives teachers cultivate an openness to learning and a curiosity for new horizons. Let's talk a little bit about that sense of identity and habit of curiosity and how that plays out through our retirement years. **A.** Absolutely. That growth mindset continues to be helpful and for us educators you can almost say that it is a second nature. It is a personal approach that we take in almost everything that we do. Particularly as we go through life transitions in retirement, my advice is to use that attitude of lifelong learning and curiosity. We need to remind ourselves of the importance of an open mind and mental flexibility in accepting new things, be it technology, new ways of doing things, or new ways of thinking.

A great way to keep those learning channels open is to stay engaged at a social level. That engagement is of central importance to flourishing in our golden years. There's now good evidence to support that staying interactive with others can be helpful to health. The contrary to that: we see that social isolation and loneliness can have significant detrimental effect on our health. Social isolation and loneliness have potential harmful effects, equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day based on the psychology literature, reducing average life expectancy by eight years.

For individuals who are already involved in group activities, then continuation of that engagement will make sense. But we also realize that there are many seniors who live alone and for a variety of reasons may not have that social network. This is where I think as a community, we need to be thinking about the ways we can create some opportunities for seniors to stay involved with others, such as those living in the same neighbourhood.



Use that attitude of lifelong learning and curiosity...



#### A ROLE FOR RETIRED TEACHERS

Q. As you know, the BCRTA's membership is comprised of thousands of retired educators and they've spent their entire life in this prosocial activity of building capacity in other people. Now many of them continue to be engaged in their communities, often leading efforts to educate their peer group about healthy aging. We do that through our branch meetings, online events, conference and PostScript Magazine.

Do you see a particular role for retired educators--members of BCRTA or other retired educators across Canada? How do you see their role in stepping forward to educate their peer group?

A. This is a very important opportunity. How can we empower community leaders to cooperate alongside medical and health professionals who care for seniors, but also to equip those people with tools for translating that knowledge into action more broadly. For example, your members could be sharing knowledge about the essential lifestyle choices and ways of living that support aging in a healthy manner. Seniors around us need more support in developing those behaviours than just professional counseling during an appointment. For a holistic approach to aging, we need to communicate at multiple levels throughout our society. It can be during personal conversations in community connections right in our neighborhoods. We have learned that one of the most effective strategies of creating awareness is actually through what you just described: peer-topeer conversations and encouragement. There is a lot

of good evidence to support the importance of those relationships; a 'from the ground up" approach is going to be more sustainable, much more so than only dealing with the issues of aging via health professionals caring for patients.

This approach also is going to add another layer of meaning to all those personal activities, because in each different community the activity may be unique but the goal will be the same-the flourishing of people in their golden years. It is good for everyone!

This whole concept is really important. As a geriatrician and medical educator, I often talk about knowledge transfer and exchange. A peer-led approach is one that can affect a wide circle of people on multiple levels at the same time. As educators, we understand how important it is to understand our target audience and how we can empower them along their journey towards healthy aging using education as a powerful enabler. All of those considerations are addressed in the model of seniors showing compassion for their peers and sharing their knowledge with them. •

**DR. ROGER WONG** is Vice Dean (Education) in the Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia, a geriatrics specialist doctor, clinical professor of geriatric medicine, the 13th President of the Canadian Geriatrics Society, and a TEDx speaker. He tweets at @RogerWong10.

The content of this article is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your doctor or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

# HIDDEN AND INVISIBLE

UNDERSTANDING ELDER ABUSE IN BC

The Seniors Advocate, Isobel Mackenzie, published her latest report, *Hidden and Invisible: Seniors Abuse and Neglect in BC*, in early December. The report "examines current legislative protections, assesses reporting practices, reviews five years of existing data, consults with 144 stakeholders in 25 communities throughout BC, and surveys over 1,500 British Columbians."

The report provides:

- 1. Definitions of abuse, neglect, and self-neglect, identifying Physical Abuse, Psychological or Emotional Abuse, Financial and Sexual Abuse, Neglect, and Self-Neglect.
- 2. Potential risk factors, who are abusers, and how to recognize when abuse has occurred.

- 3. What designated agencies, the office of the Public Guardian and Trustee, Police/RCMP, SAIL, and BC211 are mandated to do, and
- 4. How to access those agencies and organizations.

#### **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

Overall, the Report identifies serious deficiencies and concerns in both the reporting of and the responses to seniors abuse and neglect.

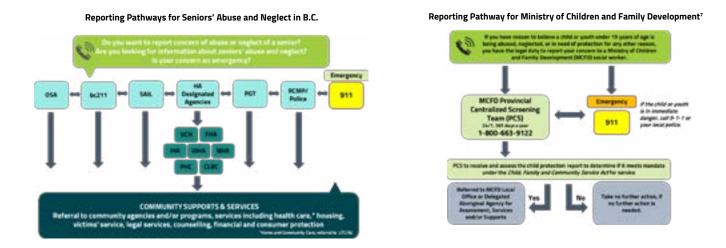
Under the Criminal Code of Canada, protection from assault, fraud, theft, or property damage is a policing matter that falls to the RCMP and other regional police forces. But in BC, seniors abuse and neglect matters are adult protection concerns carried out under provincial legislation (Adult Guardianship Act). A number of agencies (such as Health Authorities and Community Living BC) are tasked to investigate (and if necessary, to follow-up) any incidents of adult abuse, neglect, or self-neglect. Other tools and mechanisms are available using other BC legislation to aid in the protection of an individual.

The Office of the Seniors Advocate (OSA) gathers data annually from the designated agencies, the RCMP, Vancouver Police, the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee (PGT), the Seniors Abuse and Information Line (SAIL), and BC211. The report highlights several areas of concern. Reported cases were up 49% over the last 3 years. A significant number of reported cases are still considered "open". Of the closed cases, 53% were confirmed to be abuse, neglect, or self-neglect.

This report points out many challenges with the current methods for responding to and reporting neglect and abuse of seniors. The current system is a complex patchwork and not user-friendly. With as many as 10 different points of contact, getting the appropriate help for seniors or resources for those who are concerned about seniors is often difficult and confusing. In addition, there is "no uniform system of maintaining records or reporting abuse and neglect of vulnerable seniors of BC" (p. 2), nor is there a duty to report.

As agencies become overwhelmed, increased use is made of police to respond to concerns about senior neglect and abuse by conducting "wellness checks". The police are not necessarily equipped with the "appropriate knowledge, skills and training in responding to age-related health challenges in seniors, such as cognition and mobility issues." Further, reporting on these checks suffers from the fact that "wellness checks for seniors are not a distinct category of police reporting."

Compare this to the process for a concern over a child's welfare, which now has its own 1-800 number available to the public, with the legislated duty to report. BC's population has about the same number of children up to age 18 as seniors over 65. Generally, there are six times as many reports for child protection in a year compared to reports concerning vulnerable adults (60,000 youth to less than 10,000 elders), but as the report makes clear, senior abuse is almost certainly under-reported.



Illustrations from the Seniors Advocate's report show that there are up to ten pathways to report abuse of seniors versus a more direct process to report issues concerning vulnerable children. The lack of clarity contributes to a serious under-reporting of cases of senior abuse and neglect.



The primary recommendations are to:

- 1. Establish provincial standards of practice, policies, and front-line training to respond to seniors' abuse and neglect.
- 2. Create province-wide public awareness initiatives and training on seniors' abuse and neglect.
- 3. Develop a central, single point of contact to report calls of concern of seniors' abuse and neglect.
- 4. Ensure consistent data collection, methods, and definitions to record, track and monitor abuse and neglect cases.
- 5. Undertake a full comprehensive review of the Adult Guardianship Act.

As a result of reading the report, I now have a better understanding of how to help a vulnerable BC senior. Until these recommendations are put into action, contact with the OSA is a good first step for getting information about the services and possible support available to vulnerable seniors in your family or community.

Ultimately, it would benefit all of us to be able to simply contact one phone number to report any suspected abuse of a BC senior. If you agree, please consider sending an email or letter to your MLA, advocating for them to enact the recommendations from this report. •

**PAT THIESEN** is Chair of BCRTA's Well-being Committee.



#### HIDDEN AND INVISIBLE: SENIORS ABUSE AND NEGLECT IN BC

https://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/app/uploads/sites/4/2021/12/Hidden-and-Invisible-Report.pdf

#### Brief Summary of Hidden and Invisible

https://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/osa-reports/hidden-and-invisible-report/

Helpful "Decision Tree" to consult if you are concerned about a Senior:

https://www.trustee.bc.ca/Documents/adult-guardianship/Decision%20Tree.pdf

# cooking with Gas

While all cooking methods can pose potential hazards, gas cooking can have added risks. Seniors need to be aware that gas applicances can also be a source of danger under certain circumstances.

All cooking creates particulate matter (PM), when frying or deep-frying food, broiling, sautéing, toasting, or when food is accidently burnt. A Health Canada study revealed that PM levels can be sixty-five times higher than background levels after cooking foods. Lengthy periods of boiling water on stoves can create excessive water vapour which can then lead to mould growth.

Cooking with gas adds to these risks by creating combustion by-products such as nitrogen dioxide (NO2) and carbon monoxide (CO). Young children, older adults, and people with existing heart and/or lung conditions including asthma are more susceptible to adverse effects. Symptoms for exposure to PM, NO2, or CO, include irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat, breathing symptoms such as wheezing, shortness of breath, or coughing, headache, fatigue, flu-like symptoms, and the worsening of lung and heart conditions such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and heart disease.

#### **REDUCING THE RISKS**

Using a microwave, steaming, or boiling to cook food produces far less PM, for example. Gas

ranges require an adequate range hood that covers the entire cooking area. Always use the fan when cooking, preferably on the high setting. Using your fan can reduce exposure to cooking-related pollutants by 80%. If you do not have a range-hood then it is recommended that a nearby window be opened to allow proper ventilation to help dissipate pollutants. Other things that can help include using the back burners instead of the front and running the fan on your furnace or ventilation system while cooking.

#### **OTHER SAFETY MEASURES**

It is strongly recommended that you install and maintain at least one carbon monoxide alarm on the same floor level as your stove or gas range. That alarm should be located as near the floor as possible as carbon monoxide is heavier than air and tends to settle to the floor level.

You should have close at hand a fire extinguisher appropriately rated for using with gas stoves. Never try to use water to put out a fire involving cooking oils or greasy food as this will just spread the fire plus the splashing of the water and grease may cause serious burns. Fire blankets (available for purchase) smother the flames of a stove-top fire by depriving the fire of oxygen.

If you know someone in your house is becoming forgetful or is beginning to show signs of dementia, you can purchase safety knobs to prevent them turning on the gas burners when you are not there. Sometimes, a person may think they have turned the gas off from a burner but in fact the knob is not fully in the off position. You can purchase a gas alarm that will plug into any outlet and will sound an alarm if there is a gas leak in the kitchen.

More expensive measures include an automatic gas shut-off system that includes a motion sensor device that will shut off the gas supply if there is no movement in front of the stove after a set number of minutes. These devices can also be set up to inform you of problems on your cell phone and may give you the option of turning the gas shut off remotely, even when you are not in the house. A fire suppression system attached to a stove or range hood can automatically dispense dry chemicals to smother a fire. It is important to make sure you consult a qualified, trained gas fitter when thinking about these options.

Finally, here are safety tips for when you are cooking with gas:

- Never leave a stove or range unattended when cooking
- If you are called away, turn off all burners first
- Turn pot handles away from stove edge
- Keep flames from extending beyond the bottom of cooking pots
- Wear tight fitting sleeves while cooking
- Keep stove/range/range hood clean and clear of grease



- Ensure smoke alarms in the home are updated and working
- Never use cooking appliances as a heat source for your home
- Make sure the flame on a burner or an oven does not go out while cooking

If you detect a rotten-egg smell that gas companies add to natural gas, particularly if you have not been in the home cooking or are just getting up first thing in the morning, leave the house immediately, call 911 and ask for assistance from the nearest fire department. Call your gas company, and ask them to come to check your service.

DO NOT TURN ON OR OFF LIGHT SWITCHES AS THIS CAN CREATE SPARKS THAT MAY IGNITE ANY LEAKING GAS AND CAUSE SERIOUS AND LIFE-THREATENING EXPLOSIONS. DO NOT RETURN TO THE HOME UNTIL YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD IT IS SAFE TO DO SO. •

#### SOURCES

#### GOVERNMENT OF CANADA FACTSHEET: COOKING AND INDOOR QUALITY:

https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/fact-sheet-cooking-and-indoor-air-quality.html

#### SENIOR SAFETY ADVICE:

https://seniorsafetyadvice.com/can-gas-stoves-be-safe-for-the-elderly/

#### COOKING SAFELY WITH GAS:

https://esv.vic.gov.au/safety-education/gas-safety-at-home/cooking-safely-with-gas/

**TERRY GREEN** is Chair of the BCRTA Communications Committee.



"Uh-oh, an eccentric one!" I thought as the woman thoroughly scrubbed her plane seat and offered me wipes to do the same. I was returning home, happily out-of-touch, from my annual visit with my Mexican family. It was March 3, 2020; like many of you, I spent the remainder of the month regretfully cancelling future trips.

But good news! COVID turned the next eighteen months into an enforced opportunity to travel in my own land. The East Kootenays had always been just a route for expediently reaching the Calgary airport or exotic Banff. They became my new goto destination, offering high plains, magnificent Rockies, and extensive sky, so different from my familiar West Kootenays. To memories of sunsets from the Aegean, I added sharing a sunset from Fairmont Hot Springs with a granddaughter. We soaked in warm silence as a blazing burst of orange sizzled into the profile of the mountains. "Remember this. Remember this." I told us both.

I may never reach the Nile, nor may she, but we did hike into the source of the Columbia River, a tiny green oasis of bubbles in Canal Flats. We did not go hunting for shells in Cuba, but she did walk upon a greying glacier. Yosemite might not happen, but she did experience an old growth forest in Rossland's Hundred Acre Wood, where we recited our favorite lines from Winnie the Pooh. The San Diego Zoo was inaccessible, but there are bears, raccoons, and deer in my own back yard, and a zip line in Kokanee Park is nearly as much fun as one in Costa Rica. Not even Rick Steeves can say, "I've been to Yahk and Back"!

Closer to home, instead of exchanging information on world tours, folks were now swapping the location of hiking trails, some so secret they were not to be posted on Facebook! Finding the perfect hotel was no longer of concern, but a great picnic spot was. Local playgrounds closed, but, at a littleused trail head on the Columbia, I found a group of young mothers gathered with puddles of blankets and bag of snacks, a tailgate party for toddlers.

Book clubs moved from living rooms to shady lawns; fancy drinks and desserts became bottled water and wrapped ice cream bars. Time saved cleaning and baking now went into sprucing up the garden. Discussions of books morphed into exchanges of COVID articles, sharing of our fears and consolations, or discussions of COVID controversies.

My Grands to Grands finally met in Gyro Park. Upon arrival, I was confused at first, as there were four separate gatherings of grey and white heads; the Catholic Women's League, a local choir, and Hospice volunteers in addition to our group.

Everyone stayed home. I became friends with wonderful next door neighbors who had typically spent summers at their cabin across the line, and winters traveling. With little structure in our lives, it was easy to do a spontaneous walk. The lane outside my door became a highway of baby strollers, and the new dog owners who were in training themselves. Both beasts and babies sparked spontaneous chats; the atmosphere of an oldfashioned neighborhood prevailed.

I expect that many of you are beginning, tentatively, to think about resurrecting your bucket list. By January our pickleball courts may be emptying as snow birds once again flap their wings. I will not be travelling this year but, with my saved funds, I can fly my Mexican family to me. I very much look forward to introducing them to some marvelous walks, new outdoor cafes, and the magnificence of both the West and the East Kootenays.

VIRGINIA CLOVER is a BCRTA Member.



Since 1988, thousands of British Columbians have participated in the BC 55+ Games, held in communities throughout the Province. The most recent Games in 2019 had over four thousand participants in over 30 events. The 2020 and the 2021 Games were cancelled due to COVID.

The British Columbia Seniors Games Society has announced its intention to resume the 55+ Games in September 2022 in the Greater Victoria area. Preparations, practise, learning, fundraising, and organizing memberships and participants have begun in each of twelve Designated Zones in BC. There will again be more than thirty events including bridge, tennis, hockey, soccer, swimming, golf, lawn bowling, and a wide variety of other sports.

Participants come away with stories to tell. After a recent Games, one participant mentioned playing golf for three enjoyable days, participating in the playoffs on the fourth day and just missing a medal because of an over par. Meanwhile, one of their swimming companions from the same zone finished a 25-meter swim in 20 seconds, earning the gold medal.

In addition to participation in the Games, opportunities for volunteer leadership, making new friends, and helping with organizing are available in each Zone.

For more information about these opportunities and participation in the Games go to:

https://55plusbcgames.org/

For a complete list of sports and games:

https://55plusbcgames.org/sports/

To find your Zone, visit:

vent

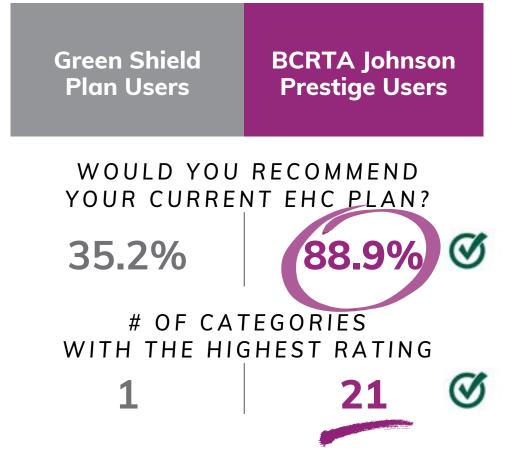
https://55plusbcgames.org/zones/ •

**D.N. CASKEY** is a member of BCRTA's Well-being Committee.

## THE RESULTS TELL THE STORY

## BCRTA MEMBERS' EXTENDED HEALTH CARE INSURANCE

tisfaction Survey



Since 1998, BCRTA has been offering insurance options to our retiree members. Thousands of BCRTA members now enjoy friendly, reliable coverage at a reasonable price. Prestige EHC and Travel by Johnson has much higher satisfaction levels than competing plans. Visit <u>https://bcrta.ca/ehcsurvey</u> to see the peace of mind the right plan can give.

# Is it the right choice for you?

GET A FREE NO OBLIGATION CONSULTATION Visit <u>bcrta.johnson.ca</u> or call 1.877.989.2600

# CLASSIFIEDS

#### ELDER DOG

ElderDog Canada supports seniors in the care of canine companions. Volunteers help with dog care activities like dog walking, basic grooming, feeding, administering medication, and transportation to and from the vet or groomer. We provide foster care when a senior is temporarily unable to care for their dog and re-homing. Vancouver Pawd provides services to the Lower Mainland at no charge.

Phone 1.855.336.4226 or visit www.elderdog.ca

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

The Seniors Health and Wellness Institute (COSCO) www.seniorshelpingseniors.ca has free workshops geared to senior issues. We are seeking retired teachers as facilitators to present the prepared workshop materials.

Contact mikulec@telus.net.

#### CRRTA PUBLICATION

To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the BCRTA, the Campbell River RTA is publishing a photo journal of the early School District 72 schools (1893-1993). Included are photos, anecdotes from the first teachers and students and stories of our own retired teachers, elders of the three native reserves and their early schools.

The history encompasses the Discovery Islands, Phillips Arm, Sayward, Oyster River, Strathcona Park and Campbell River. Fifty contributors with 100 pictures from the archives of the Campbell River Museum, and the Cortes Island Museum.

To purchase contact Bonni Roset, CRRTA President: crrtapresident@gmail.com



# CLASSIFIEDS

#### TRAVEL

#### DISCOVER CUBA WITH CUBA1TOURS

Starting January, 2022 cuba1tours is offering the best guided tours to the most intriguing parts of Cuba with a personal touch and excellent local guides. All tours operate through Square1travel of Courtenay, BC, a licensed travel agency. Contact Tom Robertson at: tom@cuba1tours.com or tomcr@shaw.ca or use the contact form on the website www.cuba1tours.com

#### COHOUSING

Imagine... ALL who live in your new multigenerational, environmentally sensitive, apartment building in Sechelt, are not just your neighbours - they're your FRIENDS! Rentthen-purchase in The Coastal Village – A Community-Based Neighbourhood. https://www.thecoastalvillage.ca

#### ACCOMMODATION OFFERED

France - Heritage house in Alsace-France, Vosges Mountains, three bedrooms, modern kitchen, wifi, located on wine route, close to Germany (Freiburg) and Switzerland (Basel). Cleaning included, CA\$700 per week. mano936@gmail.com

WATERFRONT 2-bdrm cottage at Deep Bay (north of Qualicum) overlooks Denman and Hornby Islands. Quiet, relaxing and private. Sleeps up to 6 people, n/s, internet, cable TV, owned by a retired teacher. Retired Teacher special rate for May, Jun, Sep and Oct: \$840/wk, limited time available in July and August at peak season rates. E-mail joyce.buckham@shaw.ca, or 604-939-0121.



#### ACCOMMODATION OFFERED

Crete, Greece: Small family hotel. Studios and Villa right on a sandy swimming beach. 7k west of Chania, short drive to villages. Fully equipped kitchens, each unit sleeps 1 to 6 guests. Wine, olive oil and fresh fruit always available. Authentic Greek hospitality. 500€-1000€ per week. Contact mjtglenabbey@gmail.com

July-Sept Sunny Okanagan–explore the Okanagan Rail Trail, lakes, wine, pub trails, golf, pickleball, tennis. 10 min. from Vernon. 1200 sq ft house, sundeck, garden, 3 bedrms, 1 bath, fireplace, kitchen and dining rm, laundry. Parking for boat trailer. \$1250/wk. Pictures on request. Igath4@gmail.com

#### EVENTS

#### OPERA TOUR TO THE UK SUMMER FESTIVALS

#### June 21-July2 2022

Enjoy opera in the grounds of beautiful homes and gardens: Garsington ( Rusalka)

The Grange Festival ( The Yeoman of the Guard), Glyndebourne ( La Boheme), Grange Park Opera (Otello) and Covent Garden ( Cosi fan tutti)

Hotel stays in London, Oxford, Salisbury and Brighton and visits to Highgrove, Winchester, Avebury and Wilton and Petworth Houses

Great Expeditions 604 257 2040 (1 800 663 364) tours@greatexpeditions.com vancouveroperaguild.com

#### CONTACTS

Saint Lukes College Exeter. I am trying to track down people who attended this college for their teacher training. Please contact Bev Parslow at 604.986.3094 or bparslowca@yahoo.ca



## **Persons Real and** Imagined

By David Squance, Victoria

Send your compliments and guibbles to crossword@bcrta.ca

#### ACROSS

- 1. Influence (collog.)
- 6. Young, male horse
- 10. Dog in "The Thin Man"
- 14. Creator of Eevore
- 15. 6th month in the Hebrew calendar
- 16. Nincompoop, doofus
- 17. Religious philosophy
- 18. Location of a famous tower

19. Ceramic jar

- 20. Dog whose friend is Woodstock
- 22. \_\_\_\_ Edugyan, BC author
- 23. Electrical unit
- 24. A person on drugs, perhaps
- 26. Extreme, as heat
- 28. Cut with an axe
- 31. Structures to hold back water
- 33. Romeo's friend
- 35. Knife, small sword
- 40. Jargon or slang of a particular group
- 41. Small bite, as from a dog
- 43. Perch: nest
- 44. Particular bean, dried and roasted
- 46. Now passe form of music storage
- 48. Common man's name
- \_\_\_\_," song by Red Foley about 6. Hat 50. "Old a dog
- 51. Unknown (Fr)
- 55. Estate in "Gone with the Wind"
- 57. Category of words
- 58. With 60 across, famous movie dog
- 60. See 58 across
- 64. Apple's counterpart to Alexa
- 65. Musk. the Tesla man
- 67. Obsequious person
- 68. Brand of gasoline
- 69. Roman emperor
- 70. \_\_\_\_ MacDowell, American actress
- 71. Youth
- 72. Sketch
- \_\_ Syndrome, rare condition 73. causing liver and brain damage

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17						18					19			
20					21		22				23			
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51	52	53	54					55		56				
57					58		59		60			61	62	63
64					65			66		67				
68					69					70				
71					72					73				

- DOWN
- 1. Orders (abbr.)
- 2. Legal claim against property
- 3. Miscellany, hodgepodge
- 4. Small amount (Fr., 2 wds,)
- 5. Casual, part-time workers (abbr.)
- 7. Garfield's dog friend
- 8. Timmy's dog friend
- 9. Taught, as a dog
- 10. Over, higher than
- 11. Athenian statesman and poet
- 12. Fares charged on some roads
- 13. Lessen
- 21. Young sow
- 25. With "in", hold back
- 27. One time Russian rulers
- 28. Some of several accounting designations
- 29. Type of deli sandwich
- 30. A wild party, revelry
- 32. Give utterance or expression to
- 34. 180 degree driving manoeuvre

- 36. Does something solo
- 37. Hun, Vandal
- 38. East (Sp.)
- 39. Highways; trails (Abbr.)
- 42. Portion; role
- 45. A lot, endlessly (3 wds.)
- 47. Remain
- 49. Marion \_\_\_\_\_, First Nations jurist
- 51. Map within a map
- 52. Sound;, often unwanted
- 53. Swear
- 54. Plant of the allium family
- 56. Reapply a coating to a road or roof
- 59. "\_\_\_\_\_ the Explorer", cartoon character
- 61. Elegant movie dog
- 62. 2017 British film about a lady of a certain age
- 63. Type of whiskey (pl.)
- 66. The present time

sudoku

3	8		4	9				7
		6		3				4
4	7			8				
	6	8					3	
5			1		4			8
	4					5	9	
				4			1	6
6				7		2		
2				1	6		8	5

#### TO SOLVE SUDOKU PUZZLES:

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3 x 3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

#### SEND COMPLETED PUZZLES TO:

100 – 550 West 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver BC V5Z 4P2

#### FOR MORE ONLINE SUDOKU PUZZLES:

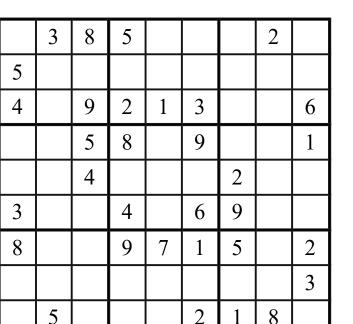
www.fiendishsudoku.com

# DEADLINE FOR SUDOKU AND CROSSWORD SUBMISSION IS:

April 30, 2022

# Like and share BCRTA News and links relevant to you.

twitter.com/bcrta1



# Congratulations to the winners of the last issue. Your cheques are in the mail!

#### Crossword:

Elaine Pybus, Vernon Sandra Sellick, Central Okanagan Donna Elwood, Coquitlam

#### Sudoku:

Al Christie, Shuswap Carol Harrington, North Shore Richard Longman, Central Okanagan

#### <sup>12</sup> G E °MÍO G ้ร R F Ŕ °Uľ́M ŝ A 16 E RE ₽U RR во οĸ U NGE 19 C Ν OL 20 W $S \stackrel{21}{O} N R A Y \stackrel{22}{B}$ 0 UL EON P R <sup>20</sup>E S T Е S Ĉ 0 D <sup>34</sup> C H С R W RBA R А А Ν С B Ν А D L Е Ť н 0 Е А Р S P R OP F R Η <sup>4</sup>/B A L U °°C U Т <sup>49</sup> M A R G A R E T A T W O O D ARAH <sup>57</sup> A R O N <sup>58</sup>EL LA 60 M I Ů Ν Т TE L Е А D Υ PA D Е S S <sup>64</sup>D Е 0 Т Υ

#### WINTER 2021 CROSSWORD SOLUTION

Cocation listed is the area given as "last taught"



Adamu, Ibrahim	Burnaby	Gopaul , Harold	Coquitlam
Akelaitis, Anthony	Campbell River	Gurney, George	Sooke
Alford, Mary	Sooke	Haddow, Eleanor	Peace River South
Antonation, Joyce	Prince George	Hansen, Margaret	Surrey
Armstrong, Marion	North Vancouver	Hattori, Joyce	Surrey
Baker, Donna	Maple Ridge	Hickey, Michael	Maple Ridge
Bergman, Ralph	Surrey	Hodson, Darragh	Coquitlam
Biljan, Joanne	Surrey	Horning, Glen	Prince George
Burden, Frank	Courtenay	lde, Katherine	Surrey
Carcasson, Yu Yoke	Nisga'a	Jack, Janet	Surrey
Carrier, Grant	Surrey	Keating, Norma	Chilliwack
Carter, Richard	West Vancouver	Kennett, Howard	Surrey
Catchpole, Lynda	Vancouver	Knoepfel, Brigitte	Richmond
Challoner, Lucille	Richmond	Lim , Lily	Burnaby
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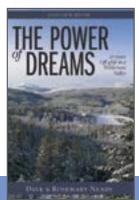
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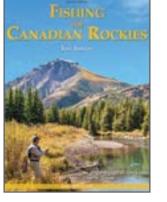
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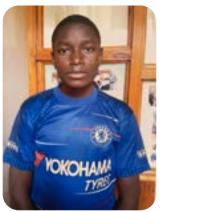
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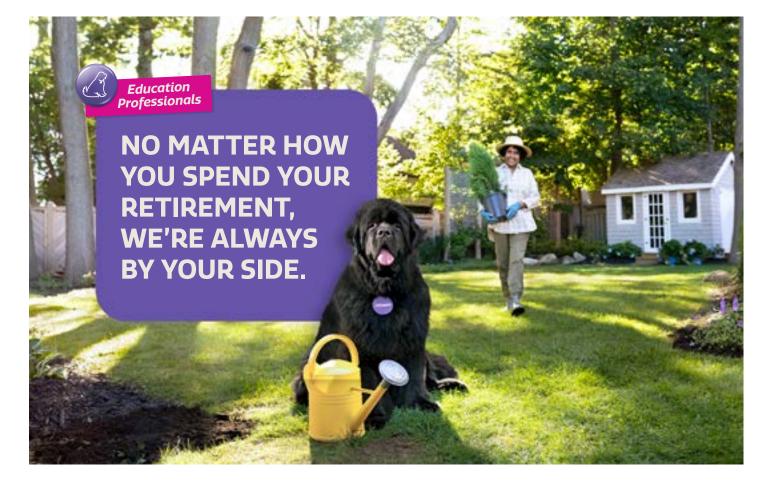


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