

# PostScript

FALL 2024



THE MAGAZINE FOR RETIRED EDUCATORS

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**BCRTA**  
BC Retired Teachers' Association

# PostScript

FALL 2024



Cover photo:  
Red Squirrel at Pincushion Mountain  
by BCRTA member Paul Desjardins

PostScript welcomes photography submissions from members for our cover and for articles. Printing requires high resolution images at least 300 pixels per inch in printed format (3000 pixels wide by 3600 pixels high).

Submission guidelines at [bcrta.ca/postscript-submissions](http://bcrta.ca/postscript-submissions)

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To fit any given story into our magazine, there are a lot of choices as to what to leave out. There is more that can (and will) be said about **Classrooms Without Walls**, which is featured in a brief article in this issue. More about the impact this work is having in the lives of children in conflict zones, and more about its founder, and how his own childhood set him up for this task. I would strongly encourage you to join us on **September 27** for the **BCRTA 2024 Conference** online - it's free! **David Falconer**, the Founder of CWW, will be giving a keynote address, which I expect to be one of the most valuable things we present this year. The conference - which also has a number of other presentations - will be available on our website at [bcrta.ca](http://bcrta.ca). See you there.

Also in this issue, **Garry Litke** is back, this time with some insight into choosing to live part-time in Mexico. He gets into important details, but I lost my focus when he mentioned tacos. For you lifelong learners, **Helmut Lemke** offers us a thoughtful article about whether we can teach Art. His answer is good. **Stephanie Koropatnick** shares about a learning experience here at BCRTA, as she joins the Heritage Committee and discovers the colourful history of a retired BC teacher with something to fight for.

Our recent article on the **BC Exchange Teachers' Association** and its storied history stirred a lot of memories. Our Communications Chair, **David Denyer**, quietly confessed (only **after** the article was complete) that he was a veteran of that program, and it was instrumental in bringing him from the UK to BC. After a fairly good tongue-lashing from the Editor that we expected him to speak up, he has given us his perspective and we are glad he did. David's droll retelling of his experience sheds light on how a new setting can change a person's perspective.

Speaking of experiencing something new, our BCRTA Group Departures have been extremely successful, and often sell out quickly. Members have been reporting lots of fun traveling with friends and colleagues. If you have been wondering what all the fuss is about, check out page 26, where our partner **Trip Merchant** is introducing a new trip, set for next fall - destination: Turkey. It looks like a real winner.

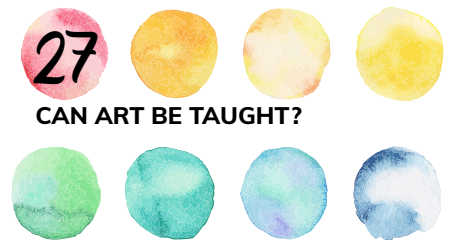
Finally, this is **Arnie Lambert's** last issue as President, but we're not sniffing here, because he will still be involved with BCRTA as Past President, and who knows, we might even jostle another article out of him.

It's good to see you again!

*The Editor*  
[postscript@bcrta.ca](mailto:postscript@bcrta.ca)

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## BCRTA IS ALL ABOUT CONNECTIONS

**I**N MARGARET LAURENCE'S *The Stone Angel*, an ageing Hagar Shipley looks in the mirror, studying her image, and sees a person unlike the one she remembers; the one in her head. My usual glimpses in the mirror are mostly perfunctory - a check for something caught in the teeth after a luncheon salad; any crumbs in the beard? There are, however, those occasions when I linger, staring like Hagar, at someone almost unrecognizable. What I see in the mirror is how others see me: almost no hair, and time has bleached my once-red beard to white. It's not the "me" in my head. So how do I relate to the physical evidence? What is my identity as an older person?

My issues with identity actually began long ago with my name. When your name is Arnold, and there is also an Uncle Arnold in the family, you end up being called "Arnie". The name Arnie is fine, but an additional complication is that my first name is Walter.

Growing up, I didn't mind being Arnie, and didn't really care for Walter; at least until Grade 2. But then my 7-year-old self thought the name Wally was pretty neat, I think because of a TV character, and when I had to move schools I decided to become Wally. It turned out that I wasn't quite as enamored with Wally as I thought I would be, but I was saved by a second move that year, and resumed my schooling as Arnie.

The past two years have also caused some identity changes for me; the first assuming the title of President - a bigger change than just the title, and second, a somewhat strange issue again related to my name. This is because our different forms of identification now have to be the same, with membership and credit cards matching the Driver's Licence and passport. This is no problem if you go by your first name, but when I went on a short cruise following the 2023 AGM, the crew knew me as Walter, and it felt strange to get a morning latte served to "Sir Walter!" It was as if someone named Raleigh was on the ship.

I asked my wife, Bonnie, what was the event that most affected her regarding identity, and it wasn't when she changed her name to Lambert. It was when she was at a gas station some years ago, and the attendant addressed her as "Madam." Instant aging!

What has all of this got to do with the BCRTA? It is that we are not only a group of members with different and changing identities, we are also an organization with an identity that has been evolving.

Many of you have benefited from the pre-retirement workshops that helped you make good decisions about when and how to retire, and which voluntary benefit plan to choose. Others enjoy the EHC plan we sponsor through Johnson Insurance, and your international travel has been made more secure by the comprehensive travel insurance coverage available to our members. And a few - we happy few! - have taken part in BCRTA group departures, wonderful expeditions at an affordable price, with good company. Thousands of you are saving money on services and products from our Advantage partners.

But the BCRTA is also much more than that. Our strong connections to both the active teachers at BCTF and to the Teachers' Pension Plan means our collective voice is heard and respected. More personally, I find that BCRTA continues to be a venue for meaningful discussion about our lives as retired teachers, Canadians, friends, colleagues. Whether it be at a branch meeting, or an online event, or at our annual conference, BCRTA

*The older guy in the mirror is doing a lot of those things that they say we should...*



facilitates awareness of what makes our lives meaningful and vital.

Just as individuals must come to a better understanding of what it means to age, our society as a whole is re-examining the role of older persons. I'm excited to see how BCRTA is showing that retirement can be a time of personal growth, service to those in need, and providing strong advocacy on issues like health care. I may be startled from time to time when I look in the mirror, but when I look at BCRTA I see a clear reflection of the concerns we share and the ways we are confidently addressing them together.

Our Postscript magazine is representative of our group identity, and when I read an issue I am aware that our organization is continuing to evolve; displaying the long-held values of the BCRTA, but with an updated identity that is keeping pace with changes in technology and communication. Behind the scenes, BCRTA has leapt forward in terms of our administrative

functions and member support. We are the same organization, but with new and better tools to do our job.

I think that I am managing to cope with my changed identity as a senior. The older guy in the mirror is doing a lot of those things that they say we should: maintaining relationships, being involved in community, getting exercise, doing puzzles, and eating well. I also take comfort in knowing that while I may have more identity "crises" as I continue to age, this is nothing new. Throughout our lives we have survived many identity changes: as teens, as new parents, or as beginning teachers, when we first stood before students and took on the title of Mr., Miss, Mrs., or, in those days, the rare and innovative Ms.

Now, with this being my last "Notes from the President", I feel another identity change coming! •

**ARNIE LAMBERT** is President of BCRTA

# PostScript Letters

## Greetings from the Top of the List

I am writing a behalf of my father, Gordon, who is 104. He was a principal and teacher in British Columbia all of his career. He retired in 1976. He has asked me to write to you and ask if there are any living school, principals or teachers who are around his age. My dad has a curious and acute mind. He lived with me for 15 years and now is in Langley, in independent living.

Appreciatively,

Melva R.

*Editor's note: Well we had a look, and we can report that Gordon is in good company! When we survey BCRTA's total membership of over 17,500 persons, as of July we had 1,246 members age 90 or older. We show 131 members on our rolls that are 100 or older!*

## Exchange Teacher Memories

We were very interested to read the article about the BC Exchange Teachers' Association and its archive. (Education History in Search of a Home, Summer 2024 PostScript)

We were lucky enough to come to BC in 2000 when Pete exchanged with a teacher at a school in Maple Ridge. Our exchange partner spent a year in our home in Ipswich, Suffolk, UK.

We had the most fantastic year and enjoyed many events organised by BCETA. We met the wonderful Rosemary Swinton and are in regular contact with her and our exchange partner 24 years on. One of our old Canadian school colleagues and his wife spent 4 weeks in the UK with us this summer!

We do hope a place is found for this precious archive.

Gill and Pete Milwright  
Ipswich, Suffolk, UK

The article about exchange teaching in the Summer volume of Postscript brought back many fond memories for me. Dave Ellis was so accurate when he said that a year of exchange teaching makes you divide your life into three parts-before, during, and after that year.

I did the 85/86 school year at The Hayes Infant School in Kenley, Sussex, just south of London. Living in a village close to London gave my husband and me many opportunities to visit the capital and enjoy the museums, art galleries and wonderful live theatre. We used the school holidays to travel in Europe spending the October half-term in Rome, Christmas in Tunisia and Easter in Russia.

Many of the staff members at The Hayes became close friends and I have visited them often, and they have visited me here in Vancouver.

When I returned from England, I became involved with the Exchange League here and billeted many teachers here. I still correspond with Jo Anne Cameron who came to Prince George on exchange from Brisbane.

That year in England enriched my life in so many ways and I am so thankful for the opportunity.

Mary Stewart

I was one of the fortunate ones to have gone on an exchange to England 1998-1999. My husband and I lived in Bebington and my school was Bidston Primary in Birkenhead. To this day we have friends made that year who have come to visit us on Vancouver Island and us visiting there in years following.

Being located on the Wirral Peninsula between Liverpool and Chester, we could explore both Wales and Scotland easily. And during longer holidays visit with relatives in Germany as well as take a train to locate our birth cities now in Poland.

Upon our return we joined the exchange teachers club here in Victoria. That gave us so many other

Write us at [postscript@bcrtc.ca](mailto:postscript@bcrtc.ca)



learning opportunities about life in other countries. We celebrated Robbie Burns Day and Australia Day and had home and garden parties.

Our home welcomed families on exchange in Comox and Nanaimo from Australia and to this day we are friends. Imagine the fun and excitement when we went to Australia in 2010 staying in Adelaide and Kangaroo Island, Canberra, and Sydney all with exchange teachers' families.

Talking about archives I have binders in my place of the wonderful experiences teachers had. Brenda Morton had passed them on to me and I, too, have no idea where this history of a great part of educational learning should be stored.

Lennox Stieda  
Retired from  
Saanich School  
District



Leanne Clark, left, from Sydney with Lennox Stieda, right, in June 2024 at Lennox's home.



Australian Chris Clark happily shows off his salmon catch on an outing with his Nanaimo exchange teacher, John Noble.

## POSTSCRIPT WRITER'S WORKSHOP - PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

It's been such a pleasure to hear you all speak about your writing and your lives! Thank you!

Donelda

This was a great conference (my first) and thank you so much!

Nora

I really enjoyed your PostScript workshop, in particular the sublime performances of the authors. Thank you for this event.

Barrie

Thank you for this supportive and very informative workshop.

Sally

I have appreciated the workshop and the discussion has been interesting. I might like to try submitting an article for PostScript in the future!

Ken

This was an inspiring conference. Thank you so much.

Sharon

Enjoyed the workshop. Thanks for all the good advice.

Denise

Thank you, Tim and Karen,... such illustrious company! I am honoured to have been part of the workshop. Great to meet fellow BC writers, as well.

Patti

Was impressed with the supportive response from retired teachers in the chat.

Janet

Thank you for sharing your time and expertise. It's been wonderful.

Marjorie

Thank you for the great session today! I feel inspired.

Marcy

***Missed it? View the Workshop at***

**[bcrta.ca/writers](https://bcrta.ca/writers)**



# Letters from Alma

**REDISCOVERING A TIRELESS ADVOCATE**

**BY STEPHANIE KOROPATNICK**

**A**LMA McGAULEY may not have a Wikipedia page, but she played an important role in the political landscape of BC in the 1980s and was instrumental in changing the rules to ensure that your bank deposits are insured. She is a hero for thousands of retired teachers whose life savings were frozen by market forces beyond their control.

When the Teachers' Investment and Housing Cooperative (TIHC) declared bankruptcy in November of 1985, few others gave much thought to the 45,000 teachers who had deposited their money into the Co-op, which many wrongly believed to be connected to the BCTF. It wasn't.

Alma McGauley, a retired teacher from Castlegar, had invested \$70,000 in RRSPs, her entire life savings. When the government appeared

unwilling to do anything to help the thousands of teachers whose monies were frozen overnight, Ms. McGauley took matters into her own hands. After establishing a small ad hoc BCRTA Committee, Alma began a tireless campaign of writing letters, circulating petitions, holding public meetings, and launching lawsuits with the goal of recovering lost deposits for herself and thousands of her retired colleagues across the province.

Her letters went to premiers and prime ministers, members of the sitting Social Credit government and members of the opposition. She wrote to lawyers and lawmakers, corporation heads, and fellow members of the TIHC. For her troubles she suffered the taunts of trolls who accused her and her fellow depositors of greedy speculation and foolhardy risk-taking. But she also gained



*Alma McGauley (Photo from her Vancouver Sun obituary)*

a grudging admiration from journalists for her determination and single-minded focus on seeking justice for those who had been wronged.

Alma appeared on Jack Webster's television show and featured in a May 1986 article in the *Globe and Mail* which noted that the TIHC, while a cooperative, had taken on a form unlike other co-ops, appearing stable, but completely unregulated. According to a colourful quote from Alma, it was a "bastard organization that fell between the cracks and was overlooked." She was dumbfounded at the risks the co-op's administrators had taken with teachers' savings.

In August 1987, the *Vancouver Sun*'s Gary Mason outlined the results of a major inquiry into the TIHC collapse, which had been conducted by Al Mulholland, who was superintendent of financial institutions at the time. Mulholland's conclusion: there was no deliberate malfeasance on the part of the co-op, just bad decision-making. The collapse

was a result of over-exposure to highly speculative land deals, no governmental oversight, and an immense lack of transparency regarding the risks involved for investors. Instead of taking the steps required to qualify for deposit insurance, the co-op had moved into "deposit-like financial products" without a safety net. It was a case, he said, of "tunnel vision and insularity."

It took seven years—in Alma's words, "longer than the second world war"—for justice to prevail. In March of 1992, an out-of-court settlement found in favour of Alma and the depositors and awarded compensation of approximately 80 cents on the dollar for each depositor still living. Of course, this did not account for the seven years of lost interest, but as Alma and other surviving depositors were well into their retirement years, even this late and partial victory was worth celebrating.



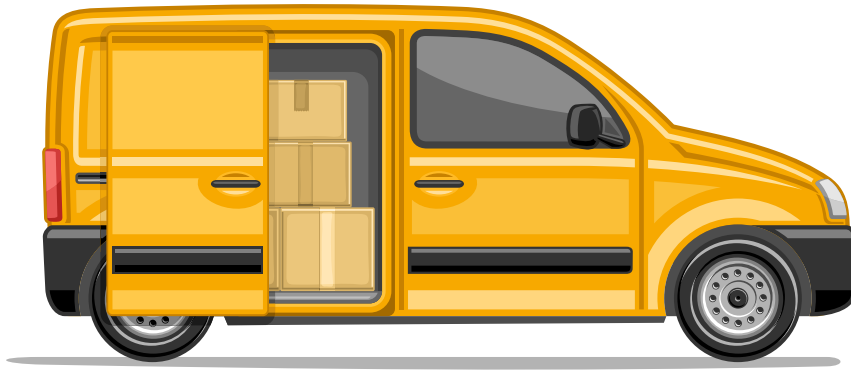
*The prospect of seeking out  
and preserving old things  
was foreign to me...*



This fascinating piece of local history may be well known to some of you, but I came to know of this story as an item on a committee agenda.

I had joined the BCRTA Heritage Committee rather by accident. Following the first BCRTA AGM I attended in 2019, I applied to join one of the provincial committees. I was placed on the Communications Committee and the Heritage Committee. For the first year, I could not really figure out what the purpose of the Heritage Committee was. I tend to look to the future; I purge closets and am a strict practitioner of the philosophy of "If you don't use it, get rid of it". The prospect of seeking out and preserving old things was foreign to me.

"Organize materials in storage" had been listed for at least two years as a committee goal. I didn't know what those materials might be, but I love the word "organize", so I volunteered to take it on. On a cold wintry day in the depths of the pandemic, with a skeleton crew at the BCTF building, I met with



our Office Administrator in the alley and watched while two heavily bundled men loaded six banker's boxes into my van.

For the next several months I worked through the boxes with fellow committee member and retired teacher-librarian Carol Baird-Krul.

There were books donated by Branches representing their own Heritage Projects, minutes from meetings, hand-written ledgers detailing financial records from years past, agendas and hand-written notes from AGMs long past, unidentified photographs of BCRTA members and other random memorabilia, most in reasonable condition.

There was one box, however, that appeared to be the contents of a large file drawer that had been dumped upside down, which we peeked into and closed again for several sessions. It was a mess of papers, clippings, and file folders. Finally, after all the other boxes had been examined, I girded my loins and began to pick through the box, one piece at a time. An hour into this task, I began to see a pattern—each document was related in some way to the dissolution of the Teachers' Housing &

Investment Cooperative. Memos, meeting minutes, newspaper articles, letters from and to lawyers, letters from and to politicians, all in a jumble, all fascinating.

By this time, as the Chair of the Heritage committee, I made it my mission to organize the collection into a form that could eventually be shared with the membership. Over the next several months, other commitments restricted my access to the materials to one or two 2-hour sessions a month. I sorted the materials by topic and by date, preserving each in a sheet protector, sometimes simply sorting and other times becoming engrossed in the subject matter, reading the letters, becoming drawn in to the drama, shocked by the callousness of those who were being asked for help and always, always impressed by the tenacity, the doggedness, and the calm intelligence featured in each letter written by Alma McGauley.

Several more months into this process, I began to realize that, despite the expert help I had received at the hands of retired librarian Carol, the roughly two years I had been working on the



*Krisztina Laszlo, (left) the Head Archivist at the UBC Rare Books and Special Collections department with BCRTA Director Stephanie Koropatnick.*

project of organizing these “found” materials was only a drop in the bucket and that I would need to continue to devote at least that amount of time to get the collection into the kind of shape that would allow it to be shared with others.

Enter the UBC Library. One of our new committee goals has been to visit a Heritage site each year. This year, our wonderful and wise committee member Larry Kuehn organized a visit to the Rare Books and Special Collections department at the Main Library at UBC, with a goal of learning more about preserving Heritage materials.

In April of this year, after meeting with one of the archivists and comparing our preservation attempts with their much more advanced processes, a follow-up phone conversation between Carol and another archivist at the Library resulted in a request for us to donate the TIHC collection. The Head Archivist wished to use the collection as a teaching opportunity for student archivists, who will properly

organize and preserve the collection and make it available in a searchable format to UBC students and to the public. This outcome seemed too good to be true, and while I briefly hesitated due to illogical but understandable feelings of ownership and potential loss of something I had poured so much time and energy into, I realized that it would be the most fortuitous outcome for the collection.

After the appropriate motions were passed at our committee and subsequently by the BCRTA Board of Directors, on June 19th, 2024, Larry Kuehn and I met with Krisztina Laszlo, the Head Archivist at the UBC Rare Books and Special Collections department and officially donated our own “Special Collection”. Soon, the world will be able to see all the work that Alma McGauley did on behalf of retired teachers, and we can all properly recognize her for the heroic figure she was. And who knows, perhaps she will eventually get that Wikipedia page. •

**STEPHANIE KOROPATNICK** is a member of the Parksville-Qualicum branch, a BCRTA director, and Chair of the BCRTA Heritage Committee.

# important dates

## CPP and OAS

### Payment Dates

**2024**

- September 25, 2024
- October 29, 2024
- November 27, 2024
- December 20, 2024

## Teachers' Pension

### Payment Dates

**2024**

- September 26, 2024
- October 30, 2024
- November 28, 2024
- December 23, 2024

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# MORE THAN MARIACHI

LIVING PART TIME IN MEXICO

BY GARRY LITKE



**Y**ou're living the dream," my friends tell me. I don't disagree.

We spend summers in the sunny Okanagan, but in winter we travel to Guayabitos, small-town Mexico, forsaking gas-heated Canadian winters to fill our lungs with moist Pacific air. There we enjoy flavorful fresh food daily, spend more time outdoors and socialize with an active group of locals and ex-pats. If we cook, we can choose delicious dorado, red snapper, or jumbo prawns purchased from fishing boats on the beach. Fresh peppers, cucumbers, avocados, and a wide variety of flavorful vegetables arrive daily at our local *fruteria*, delivered from neighboring farms and plantations.

Alternatively, we can purchase spicy hot tacos from a street vendor for less than a dollar, have lunch at a workingman's cafe for around four bucks, or spend more for a gourmet meal at a high-end restaurant. When we go out, usually to a bar featuring live music, we reunite with friends from all over North America, exchanging hugs and handshakes like characters in a "Cheers" episode. There's always someone planning a jungle hike, a deep-sea fishing trip, or maybe just horseshoes on the beach. Of course, relaxing by the pool with a good book is also a pleasant way to spend an afternoon.

We started slowly, years ago, with an all-inclusive vacation in the town we now call home. One morning, as we sat on the golden beach with

our morning coffee, we noticed a daily procession of fit seniors striding purposefully along the three-kilometer beach, with no telltale wrist bands to identify them as tourists. Residents? How lucky.

"That will be us someday," my wife said prophetically.

With retirement, we returned to the place that had become familiar. Each year we lingered longer, expanding incrementally into better accommodation and a deeper knowledge of the language and culture. We were tentative, thinking other places might be better, yet eventually committed to the place we had grown to love. Here, a growing circle of knowledgeable friends created a support network, providing security for comfortable living.

Finally, tired of the uncertainty that comes with renting, we bought a long-coveted hacienda. A private walled-in casa for less than the price of a Canadian condominium. It's two blocks from the beach, with three bedrooms, two baths, roof-top terrace, and a pool. A short easy stroll to shopping and entertainment.

### **SOME FACTS**

As Hamlet observed, a dream may present challenges. We had to accept that property ownership is not as clear cut as it is in Canada, so did not put all our *huevos* into one basket. Banking here is complex, home repairs difficult, property taxes mysterious, and utility service unpredictable. Legal residency status, personal tax registration,

*Banking here is complex, home repairs difficult, property taxes mysterious, and utility service unpredictable...*



*Image by iStockphoto*



vehicle permits, insurance, senior's cards, and driver's licences are all difficult to negotiate in Spanish.

Traffic regulations and practices vary, but if ignored, can result in a flashing red light and hefty fine. It may be wise to drive away from the scene of an accident, if possible, rather than encounter vehicle impoundment, extortion, or costly litigation. Bad can quickly turn to worse. Luckily, body shops offer inexpensive labor.

Is Mexico safe? This fear-laden question, often repeated, arises because of our narrow interest in border towns and the cartel. While it's true that crime can occur anywhere, savvy tourists always avoid sketchy neighborhoods or travelling at night.

Some mosquitoes carry Dengue fever, so vigilant use of insect repellent is required. Careful disinfection of fruit and vegetables with clean sources of water is essential to avoid stomach disorders. Fortunately, medical care is inexpensive and easily accessible. Otherwise, Mexico is as safe as most places, with watchful and caring neighbourhoods. Strangers have often come to my aid without being asked, at their own inconvenience

and without any thought of compensation.

Mexicans enjoy more freedom, less government interference, and low taxes, but that means a greater need for self-sufficiency and reduced standards of service. To a fastidious Canadian, accustomed to a certain order, life in small-town Mexico may appear rough around the edges. Cobblestone streets are rough and dusty. Bathroom facilities are not standardized. Ditches contain litter. Stray dogs doze in the street. Car stereos thump incessantly. Four-story hotels invade a residential neighborhood. Is there no zoning? And who created that rat's nest of wiring on the power pole? Does it work?

Away from major urban centers, sidewalks are irregular, sometimes dangerous, requiring pedestrians to watch every step--not for the mobility challenged. But next to those pathways are aromatic taco stands, colorful clothing vendors, and plastic pop-up restaurants with temporary furniture on the curb in a daily appeal to passersby. *Barato*. Cheap. No business licence required. And ambition, exemplified by a myriad of hawkers who approach with everything from bubble gum to silver jewelry, from straw hats to blankets, and are waved off with

a polite “*Gracias*”. Or the young men at intersections with Windex-filled pop bottles, squeegee-cleaning windshields before the light turns green. It’s all part of daily life.

In Canada, we hear very little about the Mexican government, their elections, their expanding middle class, their culture, or their five-hundred years of history. The country is much more than beaches and drug lords, or the stereotypical machismo portrayed in movies. The 130 million people who live here represent three civilizations overlaid upon each other. Mesoamericans like Aztec, Mayan, Zapotecan, and many other cultures built cities and pyramids, some of which still exist. Then came the conquering Spanish Catholics, infusing ornate architecture and their religion into the core of every community, still ringing church bells to bring Christians to Mass. And now, contemporary culture featuring Mexican rock stars and glamorous supermodels, embracing the latest fashions and the newest technology.

## A CULTURE OF CELEBRATION

Regular Mexican holidays produce weekend celebrants with Mariachi bands lacing the air, brass bands screaming tuneless marches, fireworks shattering the sky, and exuberant festivities lasting until dawn. We need a noise by-law, someone said. Canadian, eh? Mexicans display a *joie de vivre* with singing, dancing, laughter, and good food, usually in large family groups where teenagers eagerly attend to grandparents, where older siblings care for the little ones, and where parents dig in the sand with their children.



How does one accurately convey the chaotic excitement of the teeming bazaar and guerilla flea market that materializes every Thursday morning around the church in the plaza, blocks long, offering tools, tacos, and ten-peso dresses? Or the rutted road to a mountain hot spring for a rejuvenating soak? Or the jungle hike to kilometers of deserted beach? Or boogie boarding in the crashing waves, afternoon *cerveza* at Victor’s beach bar, or an evening at Las Brisas’ open air dance floor as we watch the sun drop into the ocean. Margaritas on the rocks. An antidote to many ills.

## THE SEASONS

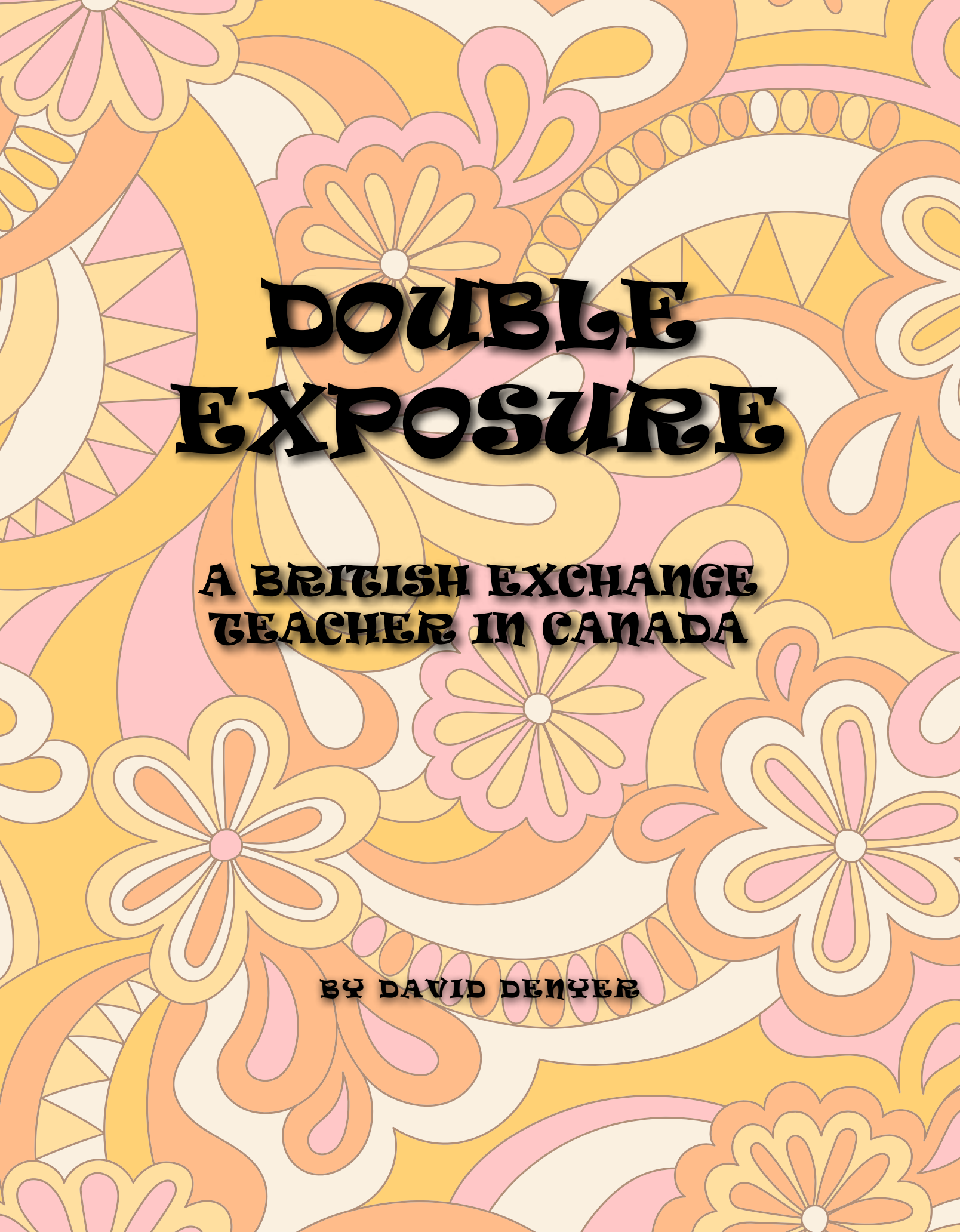
Mexico is a welcome wintertime balance to the predictable Canadian environment we’ve been accustomed to. But when we return, we enjoy the Canadian summers and pick up where we left off with family and friends. Meanwhile, Mexico has become a lifestyle, no longer just a vacation. It’s not a place to slow down, but an environment where we learn to live life to the fullest.

*Viva Mexico!*

## HELPFUL WEBSITES

- [soniadiasmexico.com](http://soniadiasmexico.com)
- [mexicorelocationguide.com](http://mexicorelocationguide.com)

**GARRY LITKE** is a BCRTA member and served as Mayor of Penticton, BC. Garry has chaired the BCRTA Annual General Meeting several times and is a regular contributor to PostScript.



# **DOUBLE EXPOSURE**

**A BRITISH EXCHANGE  
TEACHER IN CANADA**

**BY DAVID DENYER**



London, UK, 1972  
(photos by iStockphoto/Getty)

*Inset: A young David Denyer with his class.*

**I**T WAS THE BEGINNING of the new school year at the Junior/Primary school where I was teaching in South West London. We never had formal staff meetings, so the hastily gathered small number of staff was ad hoc and unusual. Don, standing to one side, was duly introduced as an Exchange teacher from Canada taking the place of one of our staff for the coming year. He was young, tall, and athletic, with a facial expression not unlike Alfred E. Neuman. His neat and tidy attire contrasted with the rather worn everyday appearance of the rest of us.

In 1967, a very influential report, the Plowden Report, essentially established what came to be known as the 'child-centered' approach in primary education. Children worked in groups, free writing

and reading were encouraged, along with creative art activities, music, and movement. I had known nothing else, since it was in full swing when I started teaching, but it was into this milieu that Don was suddenly thrust.

It wasn't long before Don's initial enthusiasm and eagerness began to drain away. Where were the curriculum guides, workbooks, prescribed readers, worksheets? Record books? I offered what help and support I could and in the process established a friendship. He spoke glowingly of Canada and said he was from Mississauga, a place I'd never heard of. He had bought a car on arrival; an Austin Mini Minor he called a 'puddle jumper'. That impressed me greatly since on the wages teachers were paid at

that time I could barely afford to live. He often gave me a ride home and clearly enjoyed the challenge of navigating the crowded tangle of London's streets.

It was this relationship that inspired me to explore a similar possibility. I was eager for change. The UK was in the doldrums politically and economically and the future looked bleak. My appetite whetted, I submitted my application to the League of Exchange for Commonwealth Teachers (LECT). Preliminary meetings and interviews were held at their offices in Central London. The teacher could specify which country they preferred; it was up to the LECT staff to make all the other arrangements.

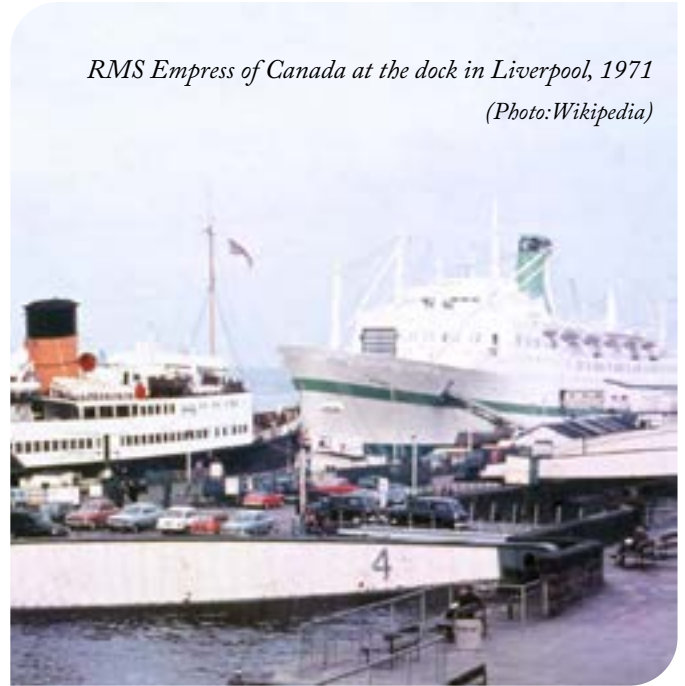
I was paired with an elementary teacher from a school in Gordon Head, Victoria, about as far away as I could imagine. A flurry of travel arrangements followed with CPR passage booked on one of the very last crossings of the Empress of Canada from Liverpool to Montreal, then on by train to Vancouver. For much of the journey I had the company of others also going on Exchange. One by one they dropped off at Toronto, Winnipeg, Regina, Vancouver, leaving me feeling much like a survivor as 'I followed the birds' to Vancouver Island, in awe at the radical transformations in scenery, and the breathtaking beauty of places like Lake Louise.

In locations where Exchanges were hosted there were clubs comprised of both Canadians and any British who had elected to come or to stay. Through the Victoria club, I was met at the bus station in Victoria and very kindly offered a place to stay until I was able to make my own arrangements. This was a major undertaking since I had no vehicle and was dependent on generous souls to get around, including a long-serving kindergarten teacher from Gordon Head who ferried me to and from the school for many months.

The principal was a stocky individual with a serious and humorless disposition and I found out later, a celebrated local golfer. Before long, he contacted me, saying we should start making preparations. His concept of preparation was to haul out a stack of blue manuals and ceremoniously plop them on the desk with a very clear 'over to you'. He did add that Rod, the person I was replacing, was

*RMS Empress of Canada at the dock in Liverpool, 1971*

*(Photo: Wikipedia)*



related to a famous hockey player of the day, Ken Dryden. On reflection, this conveyed a great deal that I was unable to appreciate at the time.

What became evident at the outset was a heavy emphasis on sports. Nearly every moment outside of classes was filled with a game: soccer, basketball, or hockey. The hallway resounded with the pounding of heavy footfalls, and the roars of elation and groans of upset.

It was assumed since I was British that I must know everything there was to know about soccer. I had an arts background and as far as I could remember never played soccer. The secondary school I attended favored rugby which I found even more abhorrent. Early in the year I was cajoled into



*You could purchase an Austin Mini in the 1960s for about \$1,500.*

*(Photo: iStockphoto)*

## *It was assumed since I was British that I must know everything there was to know about soccer...*

refereeing one of the many lunchtime games. The principal, standing legs astride on the sideline, and his trusty vice principal were clearly interested in my predicament. At one point I sensed something amiss so called it. To my astonishment they complemented me on the call about which to this day I have no clue as to its validity.

The staff was largely older than me and clearly proud of Rod and his connection to hockey celebrity. They were generally serious, and intent on filling every child's time with 'busy' learning activities. After school and first thing in the morning, the staff workroom was filled with the sound of the whirring Gestetner machine spitting out worksheets and filling the surrounding areas with heady wafts of duplicating fluid. All were very reverential towards the principal and minded their p's and q's whenever he was present, even during breaks.

The staff was strictly segregated according to sex and grade level. Grades up to and including grade four were taught by women with men taking over in grades five to seven. I was given a split four/five with a majority of fours, which put me precariously on the margins. Don J. was the most avuncular of the staff, a tall man with craggy, pockmarked features. He possessed an energy field that could draw you in and just as quickly keep you at bay. He was loud and difficult to predict. On occasions he could be heard roaring at his class which was often followed by a loud slam of the classroom door as a particular miscreant was hauled into the hallway for an equally loud dressing down. All quite acceptable at a time the strap was not infrequently used.

Don J. had stature since he had been declared the NDP candidate for the local riding in the upcoming election. These were the W. A. C. 'Wacky' Bennett years. I had many genial conversations with Don as he introduced me to the rather turbulent political climate that was then brewing in BC.

He was the Grievance Officer for the Greater Victoria Teachers' Association and provided me with a first glimpse into how teacher organizations worked locally and provincially. Another more direct contact with this world was organized by the GVTA who hosted a meeting between I, Liz Gittins, the other local Exchange teacher, Adam Robertson, the president of the BCTF, and a young, sprightly local president, Bill Broadly. I can't remember anything of what was said but it did put the BCTF squarely in my consciousness. Having been an active member of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) in the UK, all of this was very intriguing, given that both Unions were becoming more politically active. I didn't quite realize it at the



time but the first provincial withdrawal of services over pensions earlier in 1971 was about to usher in a new era for the BCTF.

The school was impressively well-provisioned and maintained in contrast to what I had been used to: young people we would now refer to as EAs to assist, particularly with the younger children. A well-stocked library and a full-time teacher/librarian. A full-time day janitor who was constantly on the move sweeping with a very wide broom, scattering sawdust on the inevitable mishap, and always ready for a chat. Nurse Lum, who was there frequently, had a commanding presence but was very sensitive to the needs of the children and when necessary, members of staff. Then there was Mrs. Izzard the learning assistance teacher who had the uncanny knack of moving around the school undetected until she reached the classroom door ready to work. She would appear later in the day and impart her findings in very hushed tones as if mortality was in the balance.



Advantages to being on Exchange included an additional allowance every month to help with the increased cost of living. Extra time was tacked on to what seemed very short holidays, allowing for extended excursions such as I and some others took that Christmas, driving to Mexico City and back. We reveled in the carnival atmosphere in Mexico—thronging in the street, fireworks, music, dancing—so different from the closed, family experience that I had been used to.

Another was to a horse ranch in the Cariboo. I had never been near a horse in my life and the thought of riding filled me with apprehension, but there I was in the long nose-to-tail line plodding its way along the well-worn pre-ordained path, enjoying it all immensely. That was my first recognition of how important the outdoors is to many Canadians. Back home there was nothing other than a small park made up of a pavilion, tennis courts, bowling greens, and a duck pond. If you were really adventurous you went to Wimbledon Common.

The one big drawback of Exchange was the lack of collegiality. Others knew you were there temporarily and hence you never felt the allegiance that would have come as a beginning or established staff member. It was also difficult to ignore the standardized rows of desks, the constant intercom interruptions, the morning religious, patriotic rituals, the remaining dribble emerging from the heavily congealed opening of the Carnation 'milk' can. And how was one to treat a prescribed





reader, 'Under Canadian Skies', that had a piece describing an indigenous person as 'a big heap Indian'? Balancing the more-individual learning needs of the majority of the children with the emphasis on 'product', worksheets, and marks was a problem that I was unable to resolve.

Exchange teaching is not a simple swapping of places. It involves a host of adjustments, accommodations, and compromises. It was an unforgettable experience that prompted much introspection, personal growth, and development. And for me, it paved the way for a career that I otherwise could never have imagined and for which I will be forever grateful. A permanent position in Campbell River enabled me to become a fully-fledged member of the BCTF which was the key to active participation in what was a burgeoning climate of change spurred forward by a younger membership beginning to take charge, as the "old guard" began to give way.

Following the year, I wish I'd had the opportunity to meet with both Don and Rod. How interesting and informative it would have been to compare, share, and pick apart our respective experiences. I never heard from either of them again, though I had maintained a sporadic correspondence with Rod during the year. He found the staff at my old school too casual and idiosyncratic and quoted some examples that left him quite bewildered.

Like Don, and myself, Rod was trying to cope with a different educational climate and philosophy. He moaned about having to live in a hovel. By contrast, having grown up in such a hovel, I was overcome by the modernity of the bare bones bachelor apartment I was able to rent in Victoria for \$120 a month. A shower, a refrigerator, a phone - what else could one need? Likewise, I found the general politeness and courtesy extended by Canadians was such a contrast to the rather surly attitude that was prevalent in the UK.

I often wonder what happened to them both, how that year affected them, and whether it changed their careers as it had mine. Regardless, my guess is that they couldn't wait to get back to Canada. •



*A shower, a  
refrigerator, a  
phone - what else  
could one need?*

**DAVID DENYER** is a BCRTA director and Chair of the Communications Committee. In years past he served as editor of Teacher Magazine. He lives in Cobble Hill on Vancouver Island.

# BCRTA EXCLUSIVE GROUP DEPARTURE

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September 2025

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Join other BCRTA members on this remarkable experience. We start in Istanbul, historic capital city of the Byzantium & Roman Empires and the Ottoman State. Situated across two continents - Europe and Asia - it is a city of museums, bazaars, minarets, mosques, churches, palaces, and restaurants catering to every taste.

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- Gallipoli Tour - historic sites
- Troy Tour - the mythological site of legends, including Bergama museum
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- Pamukkale and Hierapolis Tour - experience the natural springs
- Antalya Old City Tour with Waterfalls - see Hadrian's Gate
- Cappadocia - underground city and ancient church frescoes
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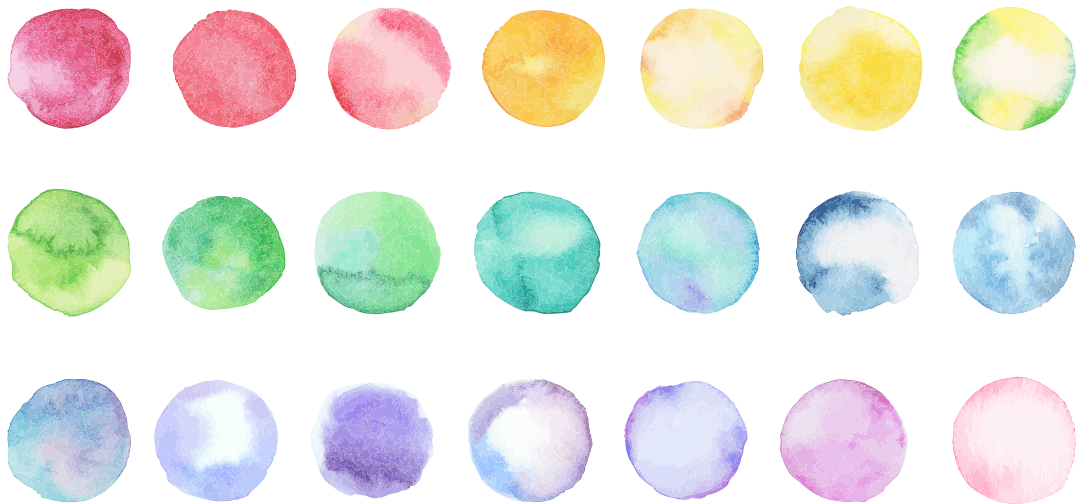
\*\*Packaged price is based on arrival into Istanbul and departing out of Istanbul. Contact Trip Merchant for the detailed itinerary.

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# Can Art be Taught?



**AN ART TEACHER'S REFLECTION ON  
FEELING, IMAGINATION, AND INTUITION**

**BY HELMUT LEMKE**

**W**hat is 'art'? One dictionary calls it "The expression and application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form."

I think everybody can be creative in one form or another.

Years ago, in my leisure time, I would occasionally take my sketchbook and draw images from what I had seen or imagined. Throughout our marriage, I would sometimes notice my wife looking over my shoulder observing what I was drawing or observing a sculpture I was chiselling out of a block of soapstone. She would then say, partly to herself, 'I will never be able to do something like that'.

When she retired and had some spare time. I encouraged her to join me sitting outside, drawing landscapes, street scenes, trees, flowers and people. I gave her some tips about design principles and how to arrange a composition, but it soon became clear that drawing and painting realistically were not things she could master easily.

Shortly before I retired, on our exchange year in Germany, she saw an offering for an art course where the presenters were experimenting with painting with dyes on silk. She attended and got quite involved in those experiments. On the soft silk, the coloured dyes would flow together somewhat which gave the pictures a softer touch. After working with this material for a time, she realised this was her medium and she became quite proficient in it. Soon she took part in art exhibits and some of her pictures hung for a while in local art galleries. Some of them hang now in the living rooms of our children. A triptych of Antelope Canyon hangs in my bedroom here at Amica.

Did we teach her art, or did we just provide the tools for creating art and awake the desire in her to express herself in images?

A few years after my immigration from Germany to Canada, I changed my profession from architect to art instructor. In my last practicum, I had an elderly colleague as my support teacher. I was to





“I thought there must be a better way to teach art...”

observe her to learn ‘how to teach’ art. She taught the basics—how to mix primary and secondary colors to get different shades and how to start a painting. Then she leaned one of her own paintings against the blackboard and asked the students to copy it.

I thought there must be a better way to teach art.

When I had finished the practicum, the principal, who had observed me, asked me if I wanted to replace the retiring teacher at his senior secondary school. I agreed.

For the first lesson, I taught basic principles of design—balance, contrast, point of interest—and I asked the students to illustrate those principles. They did not know how to do that and asked if I could put an example on the board, such as they were used to. I drew a few sketches on the blackboard to illustrate what I had taught them and erased them again. Some caught on, others not.

The courses listed in the art curriculum were Drawing and Painting. I prepared for a new course,

Applied Design, which added pottery, sculpture, and commercial design to the art program. During the hippy years it was cool to design your own jewelry, so we saw an opportunity to apply some of our designs to real objects. I bartered for a sheet of copper from the Industrial Art teacher in turn for drawing posters for him. I paid for the materials - the schoolboard did not supply for such new kinds of art. We recouped the money by selling our jewelry as Christmas gifts to fellow students. When jewelry-making was not in anymore, we tried other applications of art.

The school added a cafeteria building to its campus with a large empty wall on the inside. One of the teachers challenged the art department to paint a mural on it. I discussed it with my students, and we chose the topic ‘Our Town’. Students made sketches about what was important to them in our town. We combined those sketches, and I arranged them so that they flowed together to give a comprehensive image of our town. My



students were so excited about it that they stayed after school to continue painting. Students who ate lunch in the cafeteria admired our mural, and it became a kind of ‘advertising’ for the art department. The next year more students signed up for art courses and we had to employ another art teacher.

Our Commercial Art students were looking for opportunities to apply the artwork which they had done in class, so they contacted the local newspaper and asked them if they could design some ads for the paper. The editor agreed, so our artwork was printed in the local newspaper. The next year we borrowed a teacher from the home economics department to teach textile art, weaving, and batik part-time. When art students came to school in their own batik shirts, fellow students wanted to wear those shirts too, so they signed up the next year for an art course.

When I started teaching, I was the only part-time art teacher. When I left after 30 years, we were four full- or part-time art teachers in the school. Throughout, I observed the progress of students applying their creative ideas.

I remember Karen, a shy student who had chosen to sit in the back of the class by herself. She seemed to have no friends. The counsellor told me she had been in six different foster homes in the last five years and had rather low self-esteem.

In the beginning she did not participate in doing the assignments, instead just scribbling in her sketchbook. When I looked at her scribbles, they were quite creative, which I mentioned to her. She looked at me, “Did I do something right?” I made some suggestions, and she willingly applied them. From then on she participated, and she did some good work. Students looked at her artwork, became interested in her, and she began to make friends.

At the end of the school year teachers gave awards to their best students. Karen had become one of my best art students. When the principal asked me to present the art award I announced: “The art award goes to Karen S\_\_\_\_\_.” Karen looked around - *did he mean me?* I had to ask her a second time to come forward, and when she came up she almost had tears in her eyes. When I handed her the award, she spontaneously gave me a big hug in front of a thousand students and staff. That hug was my award.

Can one ‘teach’ art—how to express one’s ideas, feelings, emotions and imagination in images? I taught my students the basics, some principles of design, different techniques, and gave them some inspiration, based on images from our Art History course.

Their real art expressions, however, came from within, from their own feelings, imagination, and intuition. •



**HELMUT LEMKE** is a member of BCRTA. He taught at Burnaby South for 30 years, and also taught one year as an exchange teacher at an Art College in Germany. His article in the Spring 2024 issue of *PostScript* highlighted his various life transitions during retirement from his perspective at 97 years of age.



# FALL PHOTOGRAPHY

**TEXT AND PHOTOS BY TOM SKINNER**

**W**hether you are an experienced camper in tents or RVs, or like to stay in motels, you'll already know that fall offers several advantages. There are fewer people on the road, since many families are in "back to school mode", so finding a campsite or motel is usually easier. The days can be pleasant when the sun is out and you will experience the crispness of fall, accompanied by dramatic changes in colour, whether it's deciduous trees or the colours of fruit at a farmer's market, all there waiting for you and your camera.

Many campgrounds offer shoulder season rates and it's definitely the closest you will find to "no bug" season. When I think "fall", I think early September to late November, even though that's not scientific. While I was an educator, our lives as a family revolved around the beginning of September as the start to the year, which pattern continued for our children and our grandchildren.

As a photographer and wildlife observer, I monitor the various changes - including bird migrations and the seasonal migration of various salmon species including kokanee (land-locked



salmon). Many local creeks and rivers are worth exploring for the scenery and observing smaller runs is worth a chance and a challenge. In BC, the world-renowned Adam's River sockeye run is expecting a peak run in 2026.

#### **SPAWNING FISH AND MIGRATING FOWL**

In Kamloops, about an hour and half north of Vernon, our son and I have had success photographing pink salmon on the Tranquille River at the same time that American white





pelicans are fishing for the pinks prior to their migration south to Mexico or California. For more “challenge”, I’ll suggest a trip to Wells Gray Park in the early fall. Large chinook salmon make their way up the Clearwater River at Bailey’s Chute. It’s spectacular to watch and a definite challenge to photograph.

### **JASPER-BOUND**

Of all the National Parks my wife and I have travelled to in the US, Canada and abroad, Jasper National Park, is our number one pick for several reasons. It’s relatively close to our hometown of Vernon, it’s incredibly beautiful, like many National Parks, and has provided us with many great adventures, a plethora of stories, experiences, and photographs.

We’ve had considerable experience visiting Jasper, initially as a young family, and we continue to plan regular outings with our grandchildren. Among the many memories made in Jasper, three keep surfacing for my wife and I, our adult kids, and our grandkids. The memories of hiking and bike riding in a beautiful setting are topped by the discovery that our favourite cycling/hiking spot was a former septic field. Other memories include times spent in B&B’s and cabins like Pine Bungalows, where we had waffle breakfasts and whipped cream sprayed into our mouths, while listening to Shania Twain. And the one I almost forgot was when there was a problem with the fireplace at Thanksgiving and we thought we were going to freeze.





Jasper was opened as a National Park in 1930 with the establishment of the National Parks Act, and was named for Jasper Hawes, who operated a trading post for the North West Company. It is Canada's largest National Park and shares the Columbia Icefields Parkway with Banff National Park, Canada's first National Park. Although the townsite was once rumoured to have been named after a cartoon character, the story isn't quite true. Jasper the black bear became the "official mascot" for Jasper in 1962, after being created for Maclean's magazine by hall of fame cartoonist Jim Simpson.

In October of 2022, our son Jamie, also a photographer, contacted me with a plan to visit Jasper National Park. We could manage a trip leaving late Friday afternoon, returning on Sunday.

With good information from a reliable source and a trip planned by Jamie, the two of us were off.

On this trip we were determined to photograph moose, elk, and bighorn sheep, as well as anything else that crossed our path. The trip exceeded our expectations. On day one, we drove the Maligne Lake Canyon Road in search of moose. We were successful, as many of the photos reveal. A bonus alongside Medicine Lake was a nest with two bald eagles. We explored the scenery of Maligne Lake and headed back to town to rest and plan the next day's adventures. We knew from previous trips that we had a good chance of seeing elk alongside Highway #16, heading north from the townsite, and indeed we found them there the next day. •

## GETTING PREPARED

I will make a few suggestions for those not used to fall travel, especially in Jasper National Park. Check the weather before you travel. Keep an emergency kit in your vehicle, including food and water, a shovel, and a sleeping bag or blanket. If you are travelling in late fall it will snow and driving in snow requires good winter tires. Indeed, they are legally required in parts of the park from Nov. 1 to March 31. We know from personal experience how nerve-racking it was to see a very large moose pass within inches of our vehicle; imagine if it were in front of you on an icy road.

As an aside, we did enjoy pushing an SUV out of the snow, not because we consider ourselves to be Good Samaritans, but because it capped off our adventure with another good story.



## TOM'S POSTSCRIPT

After the writing of this article, we all witnessed the devastation and tragedy in Jasper caused by wildfire in July of 2024.

I have learned about one way to help. People can donate directly to JCTS ([jaspercommunityteamsociety.ca](http://jaspercommunityteamsociety.ca)). This is a local charity established in 2004. If you are interested you can get details about donating online, with 100% of donations being used towards relief. •

**TOM SKINNER** taught in Kamloops, Victoria and Vernon, and was principal of four schools in Vernon, retiring in 2000. For 30 years he has been a freelance photographer, and has been published in numerous magazines. He developed and taught a beginner photography course in photography for Vernon Parks and Recreation. He hopes that his photographs will encourage people to take a greater interest in the natural world.



# CLASSROOMS WITHOUT WALLS

BY DAVID FALCONER



**A**s retired teachers of British Columbia, we all understand the transformative power of education. We have spent our careers witnessing firsthand the impact that a dedicated teacher can have on a student's life. Today, I want to share with you an extraordinary opportunity to extend that impact beyond the traditional classroom and into the lives of children and youth in dire need through an inspiring organization: **Classrooms Without Walls (CWW)**.

## THE MISSION OF CWW

Classrooms Without Walls is an innovative non-profit organization with a mission to provide free online education to children and youth living

in conflict zones. Through the dedication and compassion of volunteer teachers, CWW offers a lifeline of hope and learning to those whose lives have been disrupted by war and conflict. The organization currently runs four key programs:

- Teachers for Ukraine
- Teachers for Myanmar
- Teachers for Afghanistan
- Winds of Change International Leadership Youth Program

Since its inception, CWW has reached tens of thousands of students, providing them with a sense of normalcy and continuity through education. The

programs offer a wide range of classes, including ESL, Yoga, GED courses, and even fun sessions delivered by notable figures such as a well-known Canadian magician, and a retired Canadian astronaut.

## **THE NEED FOR EXPERIENCED AND COMPASSIONATE TEACHERS**

CWWs' students come from some of the most challenging environments imaginable. They need well-experienced and kind teachers whose ultimate goal is to bring hope and a sense of stability to their lives. As retired educators, your wealth of experience and empathetic approach could make a significant difference. Whether you have taught languages, sciences, physical education, or arts, your skills are invaluable in creating an engaging and supportive online learning environment.

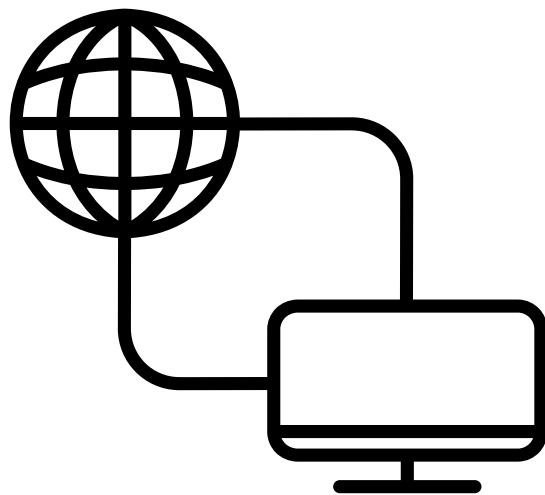
## **A TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCE**

Volunteering with CWW is not only transformative for the students but also for the teachers themselves. This experience provides a profound insight into the resilience and strength of children and youth facing unimaginable hardships. Through your involvement, you will witness how the power of education can bring hope and change, even in the bleakest situations.

As a retired BC teacher with 35 years of experience and the Founder and Executive Director of CWW, my time volunteering has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career. CWW's beginnings go back to March 12th, 2022, when I volunteered to teach internally displaced Ukrainian children who, due to the full Russian invasion, stopped going to school. From this initial effort, CWW has grown into an organization with volunteers from all over the world.

Normally, volunteers are required to meet with students at least one hour a week. Groups can range from 5 students to 30 or more. Ideally, volunteer teachers provide at least 3-4 months of instruction.

Before joining CWW, volunteers attend a virtual introductory session that provides details such as the history of CWW, programs, our students, trauma-informed guidelines, schedules of sessions, and



*Volunteering with CWW is not only transformative for the students but also for the teachers themselves...*

ongoing support for volunteers. This preparation ensures that volunteers are well-equipped to meet the needs of their students.

CWW is supported not only by many dedicated individual volunteers but also by esteemed Canadian organizations such as Ocean Wise, Edmonton Public Library, Royal Tyrrell Museum, Calgary Zoo, University of Alberta, and others, which provide ongoing support to our mission.

*“CWW offers a deeper understanding of our shared humanity. It reinforces the idea that education is a universal right and that, despite our different backgrounds, we all strive for a better future...”*

## **YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN**

The main role of CWW is to let these students know that they have not been forgotten. During lessons, we encourage teachers to connect with their students and establish positive relationships. Flexibility and patience are required when teaching with CWW. In countries such as Afghanistan and Myanmar, poverty is rampant and internet access is poor. However, these unfortunate realities don't stop our students from doing their best in accessing and appreciating our volunteer lessons.

I recall one of our students sending the following note: “Hello, I'm from Irpen! Me and mom were hiding in the basement when the bombs went up. And the roof in front blew off. There's such a big hole, sorry I can't take a picture. Thanks for the lessons!”

CWW offers a deeper understanding of our shared humanity. It reinforces the idea that education is a universal right and that, despite our different backgrounds, we all strive for a better future for the next generation. Teaching through CWW allows you to reconnect with your passion for education and make a lasting impact on those who need it the most.

**DAVID FALCONER** has taught in BC as a classroom teacher, Stay in School Coordinator, Learning Assistance Teacher, and other roles including Principal. Since then he also has taught in China, Myanmar, Nunavut and Alberta. He is the founder of Classrooms Without Walls.

BCRTA is delighted to welcome David as a keynote speaker at the **BCRTA 2024 Conference**, live online on **Sept 27!** Don't miss this window into how retired teachers are improving the lives of youth around the world. Visit [bcrt.ca](http://bcrt.ca) for more info.

CWWs' work has been highlighted by *CBC's The National*, *The Afghan Times*, and *Ukrainska Pravda*, showcasing the significant impact we are making around the world.

## **JOIN THE MISSION**

I invite you to consider joining Classrooms Without Walls in their mission to bring education and hope to children and youth affected by conflict. Your expertise, patience, and kindness can help pave the way for a brighter future for these young learners. By volunteering your time and knowledge, you will be part of a global organization dedicated to changing lives through education.

For more information on how to get involved, please visit Classrooms Without Walls' website. If you wish to join one of my introductory sessions, please email me at [dfalconer@classroomswithoutwalls.ca](mailto:dfalconer@classroomswithoutwalls.ca).

Together, we can continue to make a difference, one lesson at a time. •

**web:** [classroomswithoutwalls.ca](http://classroomswithoutwalls.ca)

**email:** [dfalconer@classroomswithoutwalls.ca](mailto:dfalconer@classroomswithoutwalls.ca)



## THE RESULTS TELL THE STORY

BCRTA MEMBERS' EXTENDED HEALTH CARE INSURANCE

# Satisfaction Survey

Green Shield  
Plan Users

BCRTA Johnson  
Prestige Users

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND  
YOUR CURRENT EHC PLAN?

35.2%

88.9%



# OF CATEGORIES  
WITH THE HIGHEST RATING

1

21



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 <https://bcrt.ca/ehcsurvey> 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 [bcrtajohnson.ca](https://bcrtajohnson.ca) or call 1.877.989.2600

TELUS Exclusive Partner Program for Retirees



# BCRTA members can unlock exclusive savings with TELUS



## Stay connected across the borders

- Enjoy Unlimited CAN-US or CAN-US-MEX rate plans at a special BCRTA member price<sup>1</sup>
- Pair with the latest smartphones on a 2-year term with TELUS Easy Payment<sup>®</sup>



## Have peace of mind with TELUS SmartHome Security

- Get 24/7 peace of mind with our state-of-the-art security
- See who's at the door with live video from your doorbell camera
- Stay safe online for free with TELUS Online Security

Plus, save an extra \$10 per month when you bundle mobility and home services.

Our team of experts are here to help you. Skip the line and get direct assistance from our sales team or redeem online.

Schedule a call back at [EPPSales@telus.com](mailto:EPPSales@telus.com) or visit [telus.com/BCRTA](https://telus.com/BCRTA).  
To access your savings, a photo of your membership card is required.

Proof of eligible association required for all Exclusive Partner Program ("EPP") offers. 1. Taxes and pay-per-use charges (including long distance, roaming and additional airtime or additional data) are extra. The cost of voice service used while roaming outside Canada will vary by zone. Currently voice roaming in the US is charged at \$1.50/minute. Visit [telus.com/mobilityppu](https://telus.com/mobilityppu) for details. Plus applicable provincial or municipal government 911 fees in Nova Scotia (\$0.43), PEI (\$0.70), New Brunswick (\$0.97), Saskatchewan (\$1.88), Quebec (\$0.46), Alberta (\$0.95), Northwest Territories (\$1.70) and Newfoundland and Labrador (\$0.75). Premium and subscription messages are not included. Text messages sent from Canada to a non-Canadian phone number will be charged at 40¢/message. Text messages sent while roaming outside of Canada will be charged at 60¢/message. Visit [telus.com/text](https://telus.com/text) for details. Multimedia messaging used while outside of Canada is charged as data roaming. Messages sent using iMessage may incur data charges. Rates and offers are subject to change without notice. For any subscriber(s) with a Canada-US plan, roaming pay-per-use charges only apply when roaming outside Canada and the US. The cost of data used while roaming outside Canada will vary by zone. Visit [telus.com/mobilityppu](https://telus.com/mobilityppu) for details. Data speeds reduced to a maximum of 512Kbps after your included high-speed data bucket is exhausted. Speed may vary with your device, internet traffic, environmental conditions, and other factors. Please refer to TELUS' Fair Use Policy at [telus.com/fairusepolicy](https://telus.com/fairusepolicy) for further information. 5G access requires a compatible device and connection to TELUS' 5G network where available. Speed and signal strength may vary with your device, configuration, internet traffic, environmental conditions, applicable network management and other factors. For more information, visit [telus.com/coverage](https://telus.com/coverage). © 2024 TELUS. TELUS and the TELUS logo are trademarks of TELUS Corporation, used under licence. 24-0343



# BCRTA 2024 CONFERENCE

**YOU ARE INVITED! SEPT 27 @ 9AM**

**BROADCAST LIVE AT BCRTA.CA**

**Open to all BCRTA members and friends! No registration required.**

## **ESTATE PLANNING - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

Hilde Deprez

Notary Public, Deprez & Associates

An expert's overview on getting your affairs in order: wills, power of attorney, medical representation agreements, preventing elder abuse.

## **APPRAISING SPECIAL OBJECTS**

Gale Pirie

Accredited Independent Appraiser

Retired from a successful career in public education, Gale has been an appraiser on CBC's Canadian Antiques Roadshow, and has many years of experience valuing antiques, art, and museum collections.

## **CLASSROOMS WITHOUT WALLS**

David Falconer

Teacher and mentor

After retiring from teaching in BC, David Falconer has taught in locations around the world. His new project: retired teachers around the world uniting to tutor and mentor children in conflict zones. An inspiring talk you will not want to miss.

## **PLUS**

- GOLDEN STAR AWARDS
- MEMBERSHIP AWARDS
- ACER-CART UPDATES
- WHAT'S NEW IN INSURANCE
- MEMBER PRIZE DRAW



# IRIS

## BCRTA members and your family members

Your organization is a member of the IRIS Advantage program and that means you are entitled to exclusive eye care benefits at IRIS. There's no cost to you, it's easy to register and you'll get to enjoy all the advantages IRIS offers like direct billing to your insurance, interest-free financing, IRIS's exclusive No Matter What Guarantee and more.



### HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF YOUR EXCLUSIVE OFFERS

#### PRESCRIPTION EYEWEAR SAVE \$150

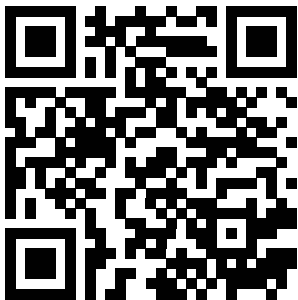
When you purchase any frame with fully coated prescription lenses (lenses valued at \$250 or more).\*

#### PRESCRIPTION SUNGLASSES SAVE \$150

When you purchase prescription sunglasses.\*

#### CONTACT LENSES SAVE \$50

When you purchase an annual supply of contact lenses.\*



### START ENJOYING YOUR BENEFITS TODAY

- 1 — **Scan the QR code** or visit [iris.ca/advantage](https://iris.ca/advantage)
- 2 — Register with Access Code: **BCRTA**
- 3 — Visit any IRIS location to access your savings!

We're here to help with registration or accessing your benefits. Contact us at [advantage@iris.ca](mailto:advantage@iris.ca) or 1.800.663.3937 ext 224

\*Only registered Advantage Members may redeem Advantage offers. Advantage must be presented at the time of purchase. Only one IRIS Advantage offer can be applied to each transaction. The purchase must be for the same customer with the same prescription and for the same brand of contact lenses. Cannot be combined with any other IRIS offer, Instant Rebate, IRIS Card, IRIS Certificate, In-Store offer or promotion. Not applicable on safety eyewear or sport safety glasses. Excludes all packages. Other conditions may apply, ask in store for details.

## Interested in Tutoring? Join Teachers' Tutoring Service.

We are a non-profit society established over 30 years ago by teachers, for teachers. We are a Society of over 200 BC licensed teachers that offer tutoring services across the greater Vancouver area.

We are looking for qualified applicants with teaching experience and qualifications. *Retired teachers make terrific tutors!*

At Teachers' Tutoring Service, we offer great flexibility to our tutors: you decide how much you wish to tutor, when, where and in what subjects. We pride ourselves on being easy to work with and committed to excellent customer service to both our tutors and our clients.



To find out more  
visit [tutor.bc.ca](http://tutor.bc.ca)  
or call 604-730-3410

## Have a friend who hasn't joined yet?

Teachers and Administrators

School Support Staff

Post-Secondary Educators

**BCRTA Membership - First Year Free**  
*Joining Means a Better Retirement*

More Choices with Prestige EHC & Travel

Advantage Partner Discounts

Pension News and Advocacy

Learning and Social Opportunities

Supporting the Cause of Public Education

PostScript Magazine

Share the Link: [bcрта.ca/join](http://bcрта.ca/join)

**TEST  
DRIVE**  
Your 1st Year  
100% Free!



# EDUCATION BEYOND A B.Ed.

BY WILF PAULS



**D**avid Hayward, a gentle, warm, kind man, was our dorm 'Dad' at Carey Hall, my student residence while I attended UBC in Vancouver from 1972-1974. He encouraged all forty of us guys to think outside of ourselves and to volunteer on outings with people from Woodlands (a psychiatric facility for people with mental disorders).



We took them bowling, but because they put the women and men's groups together for such an event, a lot more than bowling was going on. We were constantly on guard to keep their kissing and hugging in check during aggressive attempts at romance while waiting for each turn to bowl.

Floor hockey was probably the favorite activity. Every game was played as if the Stanley Cup was on the line. These guys were good, fast, and strong, with no inhibitions or concern for injuries. One guy would wait on the side at center and line up his target. As his target crossed the line he would launch himself, rear end first, to flatten the poor Carey Hall volunteer. No one was safe in this life-or-death game. There was so much fun, with lots of laughter and high emotional adrenaline taking this physical exercise to the highest level. We became friends - UBC students and the so-called handicapped men from Woodlands.

“He taught us a  
bigger picture  
of humanity...



A hiking trip to Mission, BC involved a one-hour bus trip from Vancouver to a hiking area that had a cliff as the end point. About thirty-plus men from Woodlands and five or six Carey Hall guys joined David Hayward for a cloudy, Saturday adventure. It was not a quiet, restful ride, but it certainly was entertaining. Jimmy was in his thirties and a delightful crowd clown. Suddenly, he quieted the crowd and then shouted in a high-pitched nasally voice, “Who all misses their mommies? Let’s all cry! Waaaaa!!!” and everyone wailed away till the whole busload broke out laughing.

A few minutes later Jimmy got everyone’s attention once more. This guy could command respect. In the same nasally outrageous voice he announced, “And the first star of the hockey game is...Dave Hayward!” Everyone cheered. “The second star of the hockey game is...Miles!!” Loud applause. “And the third star of the hockey game is...(longer pause) ME...MYSELF, Jimmy!” A roar filled the bus.

The hike was a bit of a shuffle. Not everyone was agile, but we all encouraged each other and eventually reached the bluff overlooking a large open area. The men cautioned each other about not getting too close to the edge. Some clung together. It was a beautiful mountaintop gathering.

And then it started raining. Oh, no! Not what I had in mind for a good day. But I shouldn’t have worried with these guys! Miles, who had rocked back and forth for almost the entire trip, slowly stepped to the edge of the cliff. He looked up at the sky, raised his hand in the air and in a clear commanding voice shouted, “God!!! ... make... rain... stop!!!” The rain stopped. We were shocked, amazed, in awe.

Then the clincher. Jimmy matter-of-factly announced, “Miles is really the witch from Hansel and Gretel, reincarnated!”

No one laughed.

The ride home had more announcements and three more hockey stars. It was quieter. We’d had a positive, unforgettable day.

I could have stayed back in the dorm that day in 1974, but just think what I would have missed with these precious guys. Dave Hayward knew that we needed an education beyond learning to become school teachers or engineers or scientists. He taught us a bigger picture of humanity that included active love. As I look back fifty years, Jimmy and Miles still rank up there as stars for the Woodlands Wonders. And Dave Hayward was definitely the first star of the Carey Hall and Woodlands Hockey Team!

**WILF PAULS** taught Grades 3 to 7, was also a Science and Music Specialist, and for over 20 years, a Teacher-Librarian. His career took him to Kelowna, Watson Lake YT, Old Crow YT, Lahr W. Germany, 108 Mile Ranch, Africa, and North Okanagan/Shuswap.

*Some names have been changed in this story.*

# DID YOU KNOW?

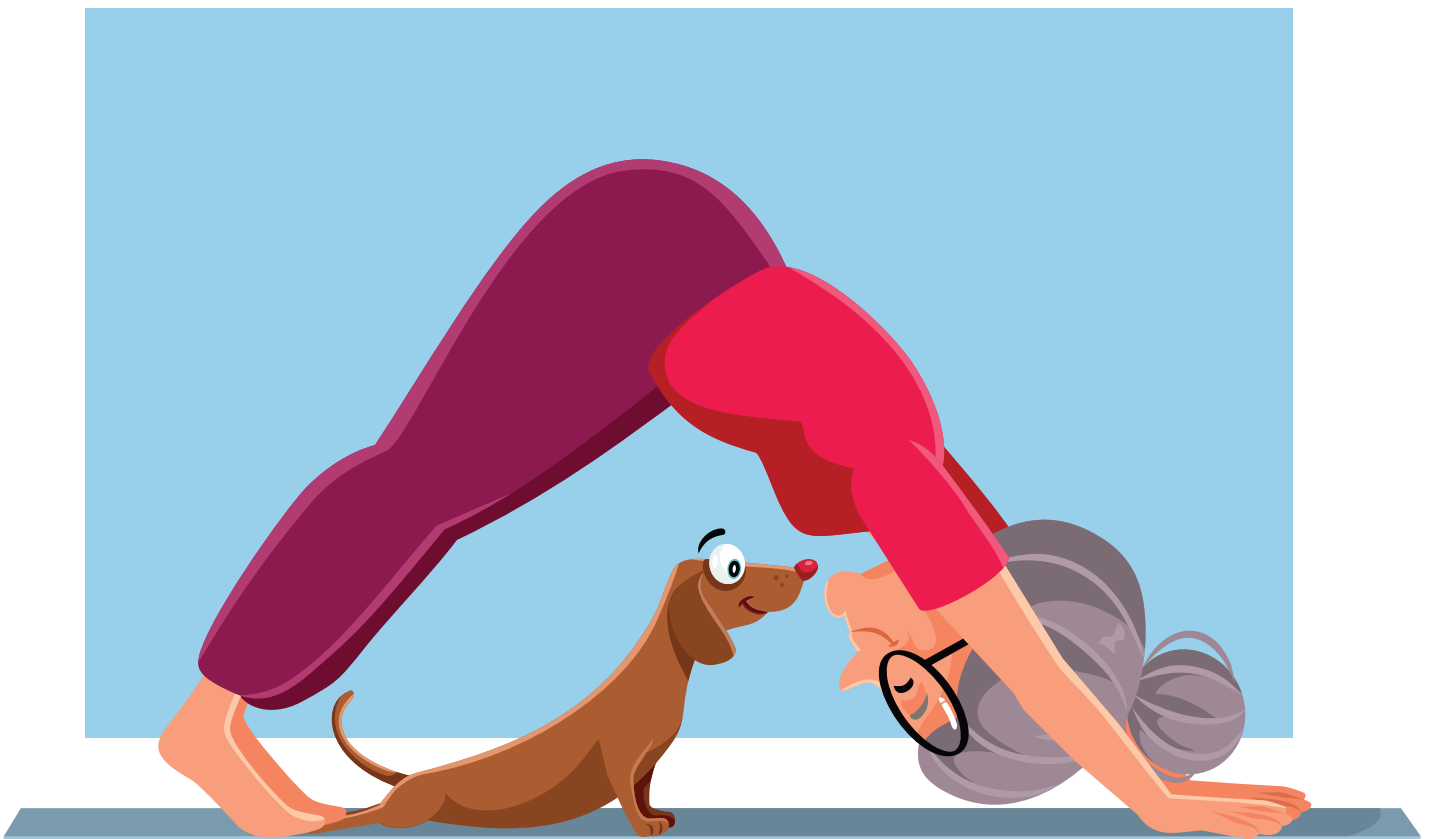
## FASCINATING HEALTH FACTS

BY PAT THIESEN  
BCRTA WELL-BEING COMMITTEE

### DOWNWARD DOG, UPWARD SPIRITS

An “umbrella search” of research worldwide, conducted by Anglia Ruskin University, has found that low to moderate physical activities such as gardening, walking, and golf were associated with a reduction of the risk of depression by 23% and anxiety by 26%. Activities reduced depression. Even severe mental illness was impacted, with reductions in psychosis/schizophrenia of 27%. While the authors noted that exercise needs to be tailored to individuals, the fact that even low to moderate exercise has strong impacts suggests it may be better for those who, for emotional or physical reasons, may only be able make small lifestyle changes.

<https://www.aru.ac.uk/news/low-intensity-exercise-linked-to-reduced-depression> or search “Anglia Ruskin Low Intensity Exercise”



## HEALTH FACTS TO CHEW ON

Several recent studies have examined a potential relationship between periodontal disease and cardiovascular disease, including hypertension, atrial fibrillation, coronary artery disease, diabetes mellitus, and hyperlipidemia.

Any of these signs can be a clue that you have periodontal disease:

- swollen, red, or tender gums
- gums that bleed easily
- pus between the teeth and gums
- bad breath
- buildup of hard brown deposits along the gum line
- loose teeth or teeth that are moving apart
- changes in the way dental appliances fit.

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/heart-health/gum-disease-and-heart-disease-the-common-thread> or search “Harvard gum disease and heart disease”

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10010192/> or search “ncbi periodontal and cardiovascular disease”



## HOBBIES FOR ALL!

Researchers at Harvard University combed through five large studies involving 16 countries and found that, “Compared with people who didn’t have hobbies, those who did reported better health, more happiness, fewer symptoms of depression, and higher life satisfaction.” Interestingly, the study highlights a few gentler hobbies such as gardening, crafts, and social clubs. Hobbies “involve creativity, sensory engagement, self-expression, relaxation, and cognitive stimulation, which are linked to good mental health and well-being.”

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/having-a-hobby-tied-to-happiness-and-well-being>  
or search “health Harvard hobby well-being”



# books OF NOTE

## ART AND SOUL & ART AND SOUL 2

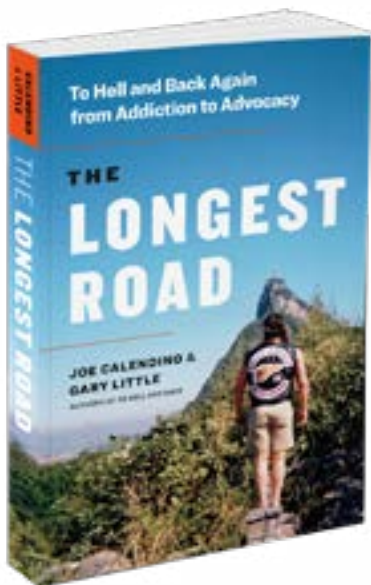
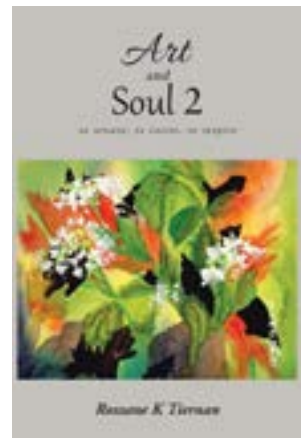
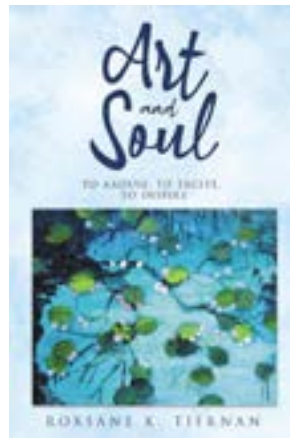
by Roxsane K. Tiernan

Life is a journey we take alone or with others. I believe each of us has infinite possibilities to make this world a better place in many tiny ways.

You can. Believe me, you can. Give a smile, a compliment, a new perspective. Find a way to be helpful, useful, and positive.

My journey has taken me to over thirty countries. I have accepted friendly advice, learned to be culturally sensitive, and collected many friends.

*Available from Amazon*



## THE LONGEST ROAD

by Gary Little and Joe Calendino

Joe Calendino, once a member of the notorious Hells Angels, found himself trapped in the vicious cycle of addiction. He hit rock bottom and faced the possibility of losing everything. Joe embarked on a journey of recovery that led him to a new path, one dedicated to helping young people avoid the pitfalls he once faced.

Gary Little, a long-standing educator and BCRTA member, and Joe's former teacher, co-authored this book. An authentic and heartfelt look at the struggles of addiction and the possibilities of redemption.

Available online and at bookstores. A Teacher's Guide is available for classroom use at [www.thelongestroad.ca](http://www.thelongestroad.ca)

Books of Note features publications by BCRTA members.  
To have your book included, send the details to [postscript@bcrt.ca](mailto:postscript@bcrt.ca)





# WRITER'S workshop

## NOW ON THE BCRTA WEBSITE

PostScript Magazine presents a **Writers' Workshop** WITH SPECIAL GUESTS



**Nancy Hundal**  
Author of 15 books



**Patti Shales Lefkos**  
Memoir



**Janet Nicol**  
Biography & Fiction

AN INFORMATIVE AND ENTERTAINING WORKSHOP

PostScript Editor Tim Anderson and Karen Cooper host this discussion with three BCRTA members who are published authors. Topics include: getting started, finding a venue or publisher for your writing, staying true to your inspiration while understanding the marketplace, and more.



**Tim Anderson**  
Editor, PostScript Magazine &  
Executive Director, BCRTA

### WORKSHOP HOSTS



**Karen Cooper**  
Assistant Editor  
PostScript Magazine

VIEW IT AT [BCRTA.CA/WRITERS](http://BCRTA.CA/WRITERS)

# Squirrel

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY PAUL DESJARDINS

*A*s the sun casts long digits of light through the trees,  
Along a branch comes a creature scuttling with ease.  
So bullishly balanced, the squirrel looks to appear  
As if guided above by some blest puppeteer.  
Whether on leaf-littered ground or highways of limbs,  
His penchant for play rarely wains, seldom dims.  
But when green leaves of summer turn red in the fall,  
The squirrel must pay heed to a nut-gathering call.  
Thus, the lesson we learn from this bushy-tailed rodent:  
Not only plan for the future, but enjoy every moment.  
For time is too precious. Life's gifts won't be won  
By devoting each hour to all work and no fun.  
Hence, treasure the joy of watching squirrels firsthand  
And maybe just maybe, an ethereal strand.

**PAUL DESJARDINS** is a regular contributor to PostScript. He taught English and French for 34 years and retired in 2006.



# NOTICE OF 2024 AGM

**78th BCRTA Annual General Meeting (9:30am)**  
called for Saturday, September 28, 2024

## BCRTA Positions for Election

President - 1 year term  
1st VP - 1 year term  
2nd VP - 1 year term

2 Directors (2 yrs) from outside the Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley  
2 Directors (2 yrs) from inside the Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley

**21st Annual General Meeting of the RR Smith Memorial Fund Foundation**  
(9:00am) called for Saturday, September 28, 2024  
RR Smith Positions for Election  
8 Directors - 1 year terms

**This meeting will be held in person AND online.**

**Location: Hyatt Regency Hotel, 655 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC.**  
**Details to follow.**

## PostScript

### CARING FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT

PostScript Magazine is part of the Tree-Neutral Printing movement. Thanks to our printer, *Mitchell Press*, and their partner, *Print Releaf*, every copy of PostScript Magazine works to ensure that reforestation projects are undertaken and certified in areas that need it most. The program keeps track of fibre used in the printing process and carbon generated and then initiates planting of trees via certified global reforestation projects to offset all the effects.

Print Releaf sponsors reforestation and carbon storage projects around the world, including the BC's Cariboo, where they are currently reforesting areas with native species like Ponderosa Pine, Western Larch, Lodgepole Pine, Douglas Fir, and Spruce.



# NOMINATION FORM FOR 2024-2025 BCRTA DIRECTOR POSITIONS (SEPTEMBER 28, 2024 AGM ELECTIONS)

Note that the President and the two Vice-President positions have one-year terms. All other directors have two-year terms.

Information about directors' nomination and election procedures is summarized below, along with a guide to related information contained in the BCRTA Handbook ([www.bcrt.ca](http://www.bcrt.ca)) - look under the "About Us" heading.

Nominators: (Two required. Must be Active or Life BCRTA members in good standing. Signatures on the same form are not necessary - it is acceptable for nominators to endorse the nomination of a candidate by email to [kristi@bcrt.ca](mailto:kristi@bcrt.ca))

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

We nominate (please print clearly): \_\_\_\_\_

(Nominee must be an Active or Life BCRTA member in good standing)  
for the position of (circle):

President      1st Vice-President      2nd Vice-President  
Director (Lower Mainland)      Director (outside Lower Mainland)      ACER-CART Representative

By signing here I affirm that I accept this nomination: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee, please fill in the blanks below and **attach item #4** to this form.

1. Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Branch membership (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_
4. A curriculum vitae, preferably in item form - not to exceed 200 words - for publication in the Summary of Reports booklet (**publication submission deadline July 15th**).  
**Summarize** educator positions held, experience on executive and other committees, and why you would like to serve on the BCRTA Board of Directors.

**Please note:** Candidates do not have their expenses paid to attend the AGM unless they are elected by their branches as delegates. There are not usually any candidates' speeches at the AGM.

Acknowledgment of receipt of your nomination will be forwarded to you as soon as possible.

## **Return this form by July 15th to:**

Grace Wilson, Nominations Chair,  
c/o BCRTA, 100-550 W. 6th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 4P2,  
or fax to (604) 871-2265, or email a scanned attachment to [<kristi@bcrt.ca>](mailto:kristi@bcrt.ca)

## **NOMINATION AND ELECTION RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR BCRTA DIRECTOR POSITIONS**

**There are usually five 3-day (Mon.-Wed.) meetings of the Board of Directors each year. Most directors are asked to chair a BCRTA committee, and there is usually homework. Travel, accommodation and meal expenses are reimbursed by the BCRTA.**

In summary, you may be nominated:

- a. by completing the nomination form and your c.v., and submitting them to the office by July 15th. Your c.v. will be published in the Summary of Reports booklet; **OR**
- b. by completing the nomination form and your c.v., and submitting them to BCRTA staff after July 15th but before the day of the AGM. Your c.v. will then be distributed to the AGM delegates; **OR**
- c. by being nominated from the floor of the AGM -- whereupon you and all the other candidates for that particular position will be given two minutes to introduce yourselves.

The following refer to sections in the BCRTA Handbook, located on the BCRTA website at [www.bcrt.ca](http://www.bcrt.ca)

### Handbook Section B. Bylaws:

- 2.16 Member not in good standing
- 2.7 Rights of Active and Life Members
- 6.1 Number of directors
- 6.2 Eligibility to become a director
- 6.3 Election of directors
- 6.9 Limits on directors' terms in office
- 6.10 Board of Directors Meetings
- 6.11 Powers and Responsibilities of Directors

### Handbook Section C. Procedures:

- 4.6.2 Pre-AGM nomination procedures for Director positions
- 5. Duties of Directors

### Handbook Section E. Rules of Order:

- 8.4 Nominations from the floor
- 8.5.3 Voting in elections
- 8.5.4 Order of the elections
- 8.5.5 Balloting rules

# BCRTA DELEGATES TO THE 2025 BCTF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOMINATION FORM

The BC Teachers' Federation holds its AGM each year during the March spring break. A block of time during the AGM is normally set aside for debating recommendations and resolutions relating to pensions. The BCRTA sends a number of delegates to participate and vote in the "in-committee" consideration of those motions. Our delegation consists of BCRTA directors and BCRTA members elected at the BCRTA Annual General Meeting—to be held online on September 30, 2023.

To be elected as a BCRTA delegate to the BCTF AGM, you must be an **active or life member of the BCRTA, and a member or honorary associate member of the BCTF**. If you were a BCTF member when you retired, you are almost certainly an honorary associate BCTF member now. If you are unsure, you should contact the BCTF to check. (Google "BCTF" to get phone nos. etc.)

**A background of past membership on a BCTF or local association Pensions Committee is a requirement**, and experience on BCRTA or Branch executive or other committees would also be helpful. If elected you may be asked to attend a pre-AGM session to become familiar with the issues. You should be prepared to go to a microphone at the BCTF AGM to speak for or against a motion if the opportunity presents itself and to stay until the end of the Pensions section of the BCTF AGM agenda.

Filling in and submitting this form will result in your name being added to the list of candidates on the **BCRTA Delegates to the BCTF AGM ballot** used in the elections at our BCRTA AGM, scheduled for September 28, 2024. Nominees do not have their expenses paid to attend our BCRTA AGM unless they are delegates. You will be notified after our AGM if you are elected. If elected, your expenses will be paid to attend the **BCTF AGM**.



# BCRTA DELEGATES TO THE MARCH 2025 BCTF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOMINATION FORM

Must be in the hands of BCRTA staff by 5 p.m. on September 27, 2023.

Name (please print clearly): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated by 2 BCRTA members (email notice of your nomination from nominator to kristi@bcrt.ca is also acceptable):

Nominator (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominator (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are applying see note above and outline your pensions experience through positions you have held and/or work you have done in the BCTF and/or BCRTA:

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Mail this form to: BCRTA, 100 – 550 W 6th Ave., Vancouver, BC, V5Z 4P2, or email scanned copy to kristi@bcrt.ca

# 2024-2025 BCRTA COMMITTEES - APPLICATION FORM

DEADLINE for receipt of applications: September 28, 2024

BCRTA committees meet 5 times a year during a 2-day period prior to each Board of Directors meeting. Some meetings are held electronically and in-person meetings are held in Vancouver. Appointments are made at a post-AGM Board of Directors meeting, and terms are two years. Members may serve on any one committee for up to a maximum of 4 consecutive years (i.e., two 2-year terms). Travel, accommodation and meal expenses are reimbursed.

To learn more, see a description of BCRTA Committee activities and responsibilities [www.bcrta.ca/committee-profiles](http://www.bcrta.ca/committee-profiles)

Members are expected to sit on one or two committees, as selected by the committee chairs. For further information see the **Handbook** on our website ([www.bcrta.ca](http://www.bcrta.ca)), and look in "Section C-Procedures", parts 7 and 8.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch, if any: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominated by two BCRTA members in good standing:** (email notice from nominator to [kristi@bcrta.ca](mailto:kristi@bcrta.ca) is acceptable)

Nominator (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominator (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

The BCRTA Committees are:

COMMUNICATIONS    EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION    HERITAGE    MEMBERSHIP

PENSIONS & BENEFITS (A pensions background, e.g., in the BCTF or a local, is **required**.)

WELL-BEING    [The FINANCE, ADVOCACY and PERSONNEL Committees are Directors only]

**Please list in order of preference:**

Committee Applying for: #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Why would you be a good choice for this committee? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Applying for: #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Why would you be a good choice for this committee? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Applying for: #3 \_\_\_\_\_

Why would you be a good choice for this committee? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Outline positions held and/or the work you have done in your branch: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Note: All applicants will be informed of the Directors' decisions concerning appointments.**

Mail to BCRTA, 100 – 550 W 6th Ave., Vancouver, BC, V5Z 4P2, or email to [kristi@bcrta.ca](mailto:kristi@bcrta.ca)

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- BCRTA and advocacy news
- Useful links and articles
- Special member offers

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[www.bcrt.ca/publications](http://www.bcrt.ca/publications)

## CLASSIFIEDS

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**UBC Health Psychology** is looking for senior couples (aged 60+) to participate in an online study. The 10 day study uses brief daily questionnaires (5-minute and 10-minute), with a zoom session before and after those 10 days with corresponding questionnaires. Participants receive a \$50 Amazon gift card. To participate, please email [gripstudy@psych.ubc.ca](mailto:gripstudy@psych.ubc.ca) or call **604-822-3549** and express interest in the GRIP study.

The Literacy Circle is seeking certified teachers to teach English literacy skills to Indigenous adults at various school levels. We also seek a Learners' Advocate, please see our website for more information about this position. Classes continue in Victoria and Nanaimo, with expansion plans for Vancouver Island, including Cowichan!

For more information and to apply, visit us at  
[www.theliteracycircle.ca](http://www.theliteracycircle.ca)

### EVENTS

**PARENT SUPPORT SERVICES SOCIETY OF BC**  
**Grandparents Day Picnic** – brings together families from the community to celebrate the invaluable contributions of grandparents. September 8th, 2024 @ 11AM-2PM. Slocan Park, 2750 E 29th Ave, Vancouver. Special recognition and appreciation for grandparents raising grandchildren and other Kinship caregivers. For more information or to confirm your attendance, please contact [orneli.bakajika@parentsupportbc.ca](mailto:orneli.bakajika@parentsupportbc.ca)



# CLASSIFIEDS

## TRAVEL

**CUBA1TOURS** of Courtenay, BC looks forward to having you join one of its specialized, small group tours to Cuba. All tours are fully guided and safe. Travel is in a spacious, comfortable bus with a professional, friendly driver.

Tours for 2024/25 include Cycling/Discover Cuba/Garden/Birdwatching. Tours are run through Square1travel of Courtenay and is a full service BC registered agency.

All tour details for 2024/25 can be found at  
[www.cuba1tours.com](http://www.cuba1tours.com)

**DID YOU KNOW?** With Trip Merchant, BCRTA members get special offers on group departures to amazing destinations. To see the full list, visit:

[bcrtatripmerchant.ca](http://bcrtatripmerchant.ca)

## ACCOMMODATION OFFERED

Townhome in Kelowna available to rent for the months of January and February, fully furnished and equipped. 2 bedrooms, with master on main floor. Hardwood floors, 2.5 bathrooms. Parking for 1 vehicle. Close to bus route, shopping, hospital, dedicated bike routes, less than an hour drive to Ski hill. \$1600/month plus utilities. Call 250.212.6111

**Heritage house in Alsace-France**, Heritage house in Alsace-France, Vosges Mountains, three bedrooms, modern kitchen, wifi, located on wine route, close to Germany (Freiburg) and Switzerland (Basel). Partial cleaning included. CA\$850 per week. Contact [mano936@gmail.com](mailto:mano936@gmail.com)

Fully furnished suite including pickleball court on 2 acres in **VICTORIA**, close to beaches, hiking, biking trails. 30 minutes to downtown Victoria. Minimum stay 30 days. Rate \$1900/month.

For info contact [Myrna\\_forlandfarm@gmail.com](mailto:Myrna_forlandfarm@gmail.com)

## ACCOMMODATION OFFERED

**Tri Palms Resort, Palm Desert CA** - Available December 21, 2024 to January 22, 2025 and the month of April 2025. 2 bedroom home. This is a 55+ resort with 18 & 9 hole golf course. Clubhouse with restaurant, bar, pool table, library, card room, 2 pools, 2 hot tubs, tennis, pickle ball and shuffleboard. \$2,000 per month. Non smoking and no pets. Email [barbara\\_grundy@yahoo.com](mailto:barbara_grundy@yahoo.com) or call 604 855 5536.

Lovely Victoria home in the Mt. Doug area. Available Dec. 1, 2024-Jan. 31, 2025. Suitable for retired couple. Only \$2500.00 a month all in.

Contact us for details and photos:  
[slugedwards33@hotmail.com](mailto:slugedwards33@hotmail.com) or 250 721 2147.

Charming 2 BR 1,100 s.f. home located in Sun City, Palm Desert. Available Dec. 2024 only [30 day min]. 1 1/2 Bath; King Master BR Queen 2nd BR; Private yard with patio and BBQ. Golf Cart. No smoking or pets. \$2,600. For more info: [kenpaterson0@gmail.com](mailto:kenpaterson0@gmail.com)

## HOUSE SITTING

Retired, widowed, female principal seeks house-sitting opportunity in Victoria region, mid-Dec – mid Feb. Non-smoker, neat freak, casual wine drinker, no pets, but can look after plants and cats. Need wi-fi, parking and would love a water view. Minimum Dec. 15 to Jan. 31

[dquast@citywest.ca](mailto:dquast@citywest.ca)

House & Dog Sitter wanted for home in Saratoga Beach area of Vancouver Island, between Courtenay and Campbell River. Short term stays when I travel. Call/text 250-204-4777.

## COMMUNITY

**SENIORS FOR CLIMATE**



We're Seniors planning a major Day of Climate Action on Oct. 1st, Canada's National Seniors Day. Our goal is to demonstrate seniors' growing concern about climate change.

Visit [SeniorsForClimate.org](http://SeniorsForClimate.org),

or contact [BC-Hub@seniorsforclimate.org](mailto:BC-Hub@seniorsforclimate.org)

# crossword

## Get Smart!

By Lynn Hembree

Email: [crossword@bcrtc.ca](mailto:crossword@bcrtc.ca)

### ACROSS

1. Imogene \_\_\_\_, from "Your Show of Shows" (1950)
5. Stacked
10. High-end outdoor brand
14. "Once \_\_\_ a time..."
15. More than once
16. "Absolutely!"
17. Historical board game
19. Atomizer output
20. Common greeting at OGG and KOA
21. Give \_\_\_\_ the bride (3 wds)
23. Mercedes-Benz-\_\_\_\_-Class hybrid
26. Increase, with "up"
27. Perplexing kind of workout (2 wds)
34. \_\_\_ gin fizz
36. "What does the \_\_\_ say?" 2013 song by Ylvis
37. Feeling worse
38. 85 dBA or higher
39. Implied
42. Greeting (Fr)
43. Courtyards
45. Country in the Horn of Africa: Abbr.
46. Celtics, Lakers and Knicks teams, briefly?
47. See 27-across (2 wds)
51. Third of 12, abbr.
52. You might see one at OGG or KOA
53. Bacteria found in contaminated foods
58. Heroic tales
63. "I had no \_\_\_!"
64. Severe self-discipline
67. Love handles, essentially
68. Guide
69. Peter, Paul & Mary
70. Electric or freshwater
71. "My mistake!"
72. Byproduct of smelting

### DOWN

1. Island country
2. Birthstone
3. Chanel of fashion
4. Egyptian cross

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17				18							19			
20							21			22				
				23	24	25		26						
		27	28				29				30	31	32	33
34	35				36					37				
38					39			40	41		42			
43				44			45				46			
47					48	49				50				
				51				52						
53	54	55	56				57			58	59	60	61	62
63					64			65	66					
67					68						69			
70					71						72			

5. Community school group acronym
6. London, Manchester or Duxford Museum, in short
7. Bean and capital
8. May be an add-on at the gas pump?
9. Early Norman surname
10. Thanksgiving dish
11. Give off, as light
12. Assessment
13. "What's gotten \_\_\_ you?"
18. Lady \_\_\_
22. Fool's Day, briefly
24. Restaurant at YVR and in Coal Harbour
25. Dwarf buffalo
27. Rivulet or creek
28. Made again
29. Shine
30. Bell sound
31. "Well, \_\_\_!" (2 wds)
32. Ward of "Once and Again" and "Sisters"
33. Greek god of love
34. Grand \_\_\_ of tennis
35. Currency of Lesotho
40. "\_\_\_ be a cold day in hell ..." (contraction)
41. Quaker's "you"
44. Most perfect
48. Badger
49. May come before -crazy or -tle
50. Filter and lenses manufacturer
53. "That's \_\_\_"
54. Doing nothing
55. Close, as an envelope
56. Labels
57. Big name in computers
59. Behaves
60. Young lady
61. \_\_\_ Minor
62. Air quality concern
65. Always, in verse
66. "There is no \_\_\_, only do" (Yoda quote)

See the crossword solution at [bcrtc.ca/crossword](http://bcrtc.ca/crossword) AFTER July 31

# Sudoku

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

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

**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.websudoku.com/](http://www.websudoku.com/)

**DEADLINE FOR SUDOKU AND CROSSWORD SUBMISSION IS:**

October 31, 2024

**Congratulations to last issue's puzzle winners. Your cheques are in the mail!**

**Crossword:**

Barbara Aylett, Kelowna  
Frank Reimer, Abbotsford  
Beverley Ready, Campbell River

**Sudoku:**

Gayle Greveling, White Rock  
Rose Loewen, Prince George  
Chris Bischoff, Kelowna

**SUMMER 2024 CROSSWORD SOLUTION**

1	O	2	D	3	E	4	S	5	G	6	R	7	O	8	U	9	S	10	E	11	I	12	T	13	S
14	C	15	O	16	M	17	P	18	S	19	U	20	R	21	R	22	E	23	Y	24	M	25	O	26	P
27	T	28	W	29	O	30	H	31	E	32	A	33	D	34	S	35	A	36	R	37	E	38	P	39	S
40	A	41	S	42	T	43	E	44	R	45	D	46	O	47	N	48	E	49	N	50	E	51	S	52	T
53	L	54	E	55	E	56	R	57	E	58	D	59	U	60	N	61	E	62	A	63	T	64	65	66	67
68	S	69	E	70	C	71	R	72	E	73	T	74	S	75	E	76	R	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84
85	E	86	R	87	M	88	A	89	P	90	R	91	A	92	M	93	S	94	L	95	O	96	97	98	99
100	B	101	E	102	A	103	C	104	H	105	C	106	R	107	A	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117
118	B	119	E	120	T	121	T	122	E	123	R	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137
138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163
164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189
190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215

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News and links relevant to you.



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 [twitter.com/bcrta1](https://twitter.com/bcrta1)

# Obituaries

Location listed is the area given as "last taught"



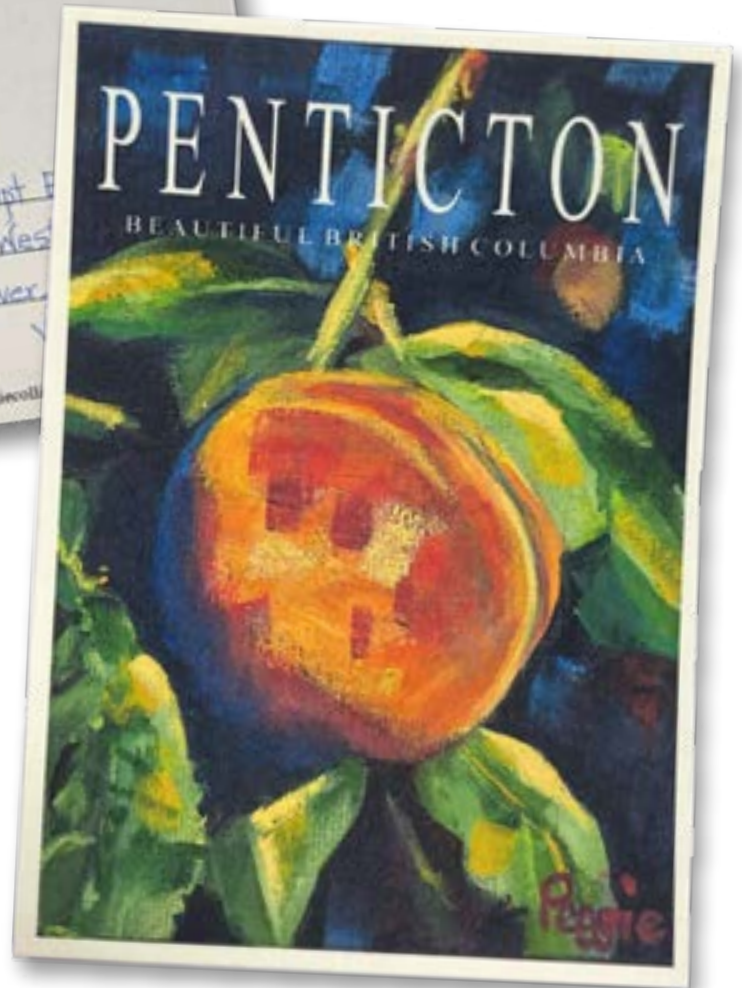
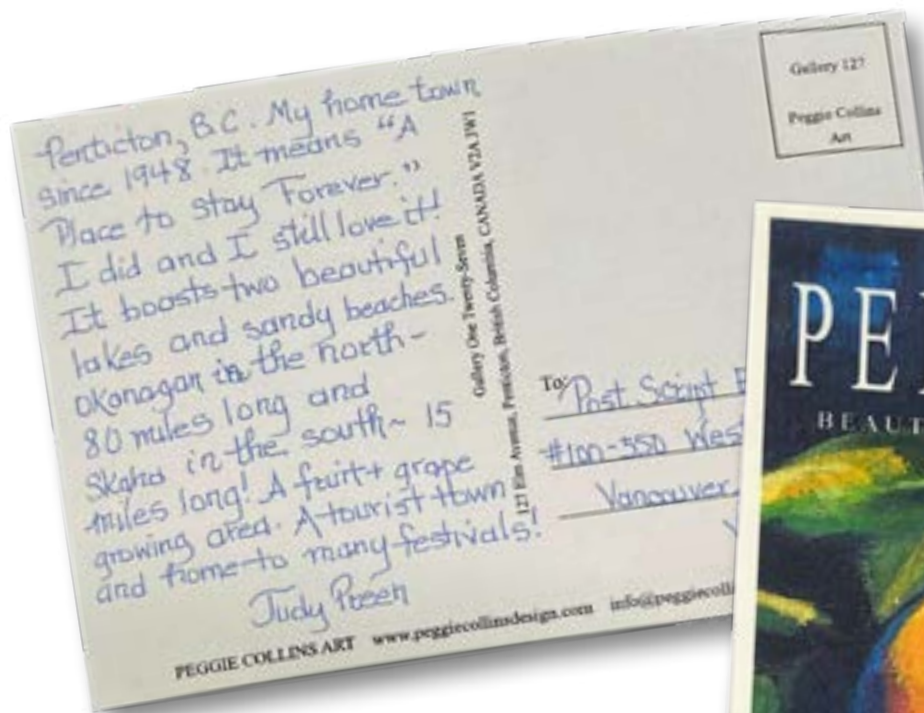
Adami-Hawley, Helen G.	Saanich	Newnham, Jack	Langley
Axford, Robert J.	Coquitlam	Olsen, Evelyn G.	Surrey
Barr, Oliva R.	Greater Victoria	Pladson, Kathleen V.	Surrey
Beardsmore, Mary	Greater Victoria	Proudfoot, Leslie Adam	Penticton
Bennett, Lorna Marie	North Vancouver	Raitt, H. Joyce	Greater Victoria
Bray, John V.	Cowichan Valley	Reid, William	Kootenay Lake W
Brummet, Anthony (Tony)	Peace River North	Reimer, Iris C.	Vancouver
Bujan, Sara	Sunshine Coast	Rogers, George Alec	Cranbrook
Cameron, Vincenza Wendy	Saanich	Rogers, Ted	Central Okanagan
Campion, Pamela	Okanagan Skaha	Russell, Betty A.	Quesnel
Damen, Vera D.	Vancouver	Sahota, Avtar	Surrey
D'avignon, Marian	Chilliwack	Sasges, Sandra	Vernon
Davis, Mildred M.	Surrey	Schembri, John S.	Coquitlam
Dean, Mary	Richmond	Smeaton, William B.	Shuswap
Dennis, Murray	Kamloops	Souther, M. Elizabeth	Burnaby
Dunsmuir, Hedy	Coquitlam	Spoor, Hugh	Gulf Islands
Esau, Abram North	Vancouver	Stevens, Fred J.	Vancouver
Fraser, George G.	South Okanagan	Stovel, Brian E.	Central Okanagan
Froebel, Bernard	Langley	Tam, Jeannie	Langley
Grigg, Mervyn	Langley	Thiessen, Annie L.	Abbotsford
Heine, Arthur	West Vancouver	Unrau, Joyce E.	Prince George
Insley, Joyce B.	Coquitlam	Waite, Shelley	Prince George
Jacobson, Eugene	Saanich	Whitmore, Angus	Greater Victoria
Johnson, Sheron	Howe Sound	Williams, Vern	Quesnel
Kirby, John E.	Cariboo-Chilcotin	Young, Karen L.	Vancouver
Knutson, Gil	Chilliwack		
Longman, Richard S.	Central Okanagan		
Looi, Clare S.	Merritt		
Low, Cynthia	Alberni		
Maxwell, Arthur	Kootenay Lake W.		
McEwan, E. Mavis	Vancouver		
Murdoch, James C.	Nicola /Similkameen		
Nevile, Brin Thomas	Prince George		

## CORRECTIONS FROM SUMMER ISSUE

In our printed Summer 2024 issue, there were two errors. George G. Fraser was incorrectly noted as having taught in Vernon, the correct district was South Okanagan. The list also erroneously included Benita Benjamin. Our sincere apologies for these errors.

# Wish You Were Here

POSTCARDS FROM BCRTA HOME TOWNS



## IMPACT STATEMENT FROM ONE OF THE RECIPIENTS OF A RR SMITH MEMORIAL FUND FOUNDATION GRANT



**STEP International** is a registered Canadian charity. Our vision is education for destitute children in Odisha, West Bengal and Assam states of northern India. Our mission is to provide affordable, accessible education to children from all backgrounds. We commit to equip the teachers, students and the schools with resources and training.

We are indeed grateful to R. R. Smith Memorial Foundation for the grant for the purchase of materials for the library. With your financial help, STEP International selected schools in West Bengal and Assam states of India to help with resources for their library and students. With the funds from R. R. Smith Foundation, we provide various education books and materials to the 300 students in the elementary sections. We were able to purchase textbooks for the children who cannot afford books for the current school academic year. We will continue to strengthen the schools that are helping children in remote places.

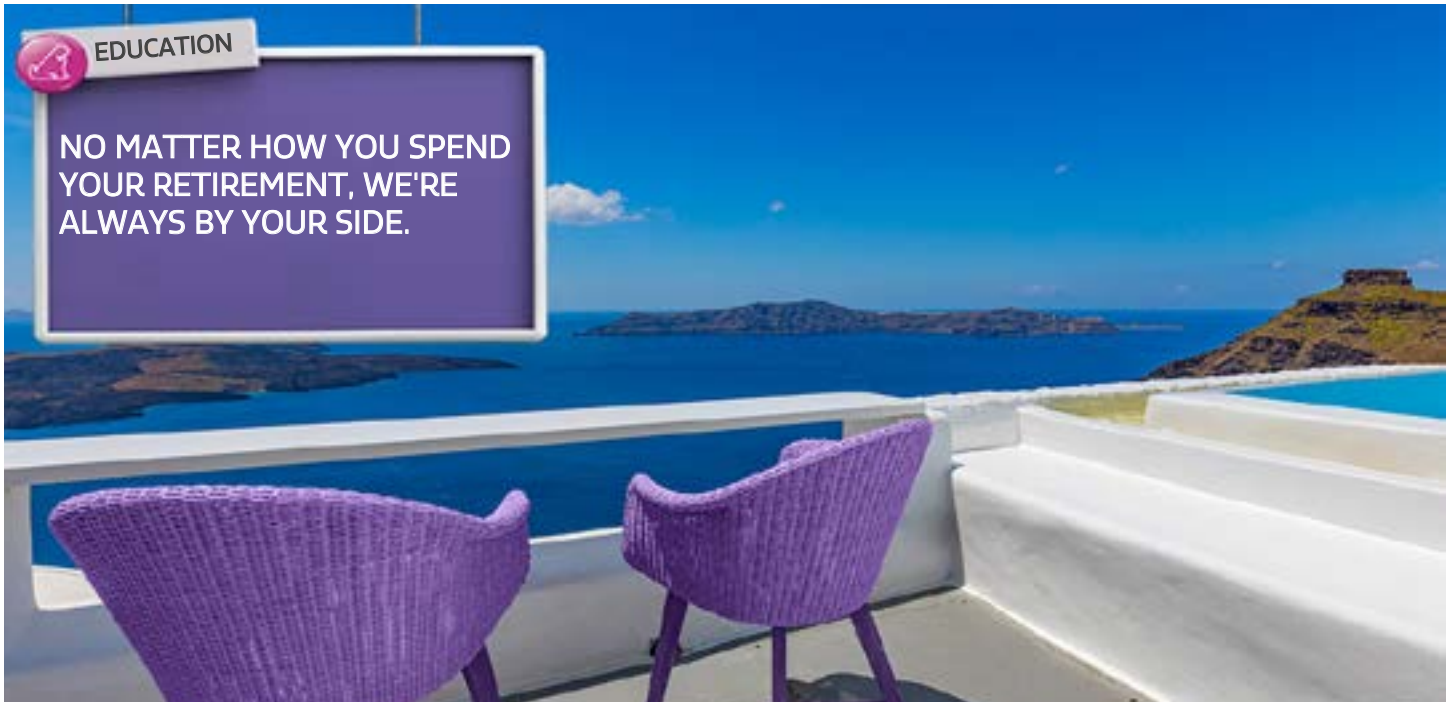
We thank you for your valuable support!



*Children in crisis—no country can rival India's staggering need. Of India's 400 million children under 15 years old, possibly up to 35 million are orphans. Eleven million are abandoned (90% girls); three million live on the street. There are 20 million child laborers (including many instances of bond slavery to pay family debts)—some estimates claim 50 million. Up to two-thirds of children suffer physical abuse, and one-half some kind of sexual harassment or abuse.*



**Learn more at [www.rrsmith.ca](http://www.rrsmith.ca)**



Johnson Insurance has worked closely with BCRTA to provide access to helpful services and products that take care of your insurance needs. With Johnson, BCRTA members have access to:

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- Dental Care
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- MEDOC Travel Insurance
- Trip cancellation, interruption, and delay coverage<sup>1</sup>

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write to : [pbservicewest@johnson.ca](mailto:pbservicewest@johnson.ca)**

**Johnson is ready when you are.**



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