

# PostScript

SUMMER 2024



THE MAGAZINE FOR RETIRED EDUCATORS

# Keep hearing & being you

**NEW**  
hearing aids



OTICON | Intent

Sounds keep us connected to the people and experiences that shape our lives. With the new generation of hearing aids, you can enjoy remarkable sound quality and seamless conversations—even at a busy restaurant.

**Discover how you can benefit from the latest hearing aid technology and start your FREE trial today.\***

At HearingLife, a hearing aid purchase doesn't end at the point of sale. Our hearing professionals support customers throughout their journey and provide hearing solutions depending on the type of hearing loss, keeping in mind your unique lifestyle, personal preferences, and needs.



Trusted  
Partner of



BCRTA Members & Family receive **an EXTRA 10% off** the final purchase price of hearing aids!\*\*

**Book your FREE trial!**\*

**HearingLife.ca/BCRTA-Try**  
**1-888-465-6539**

Mention code

**MAG-TBYB-BCRTA**



\*A comprehensive hearing assessment is provided to adults ages 19 and older at no cost. The results of this assessment will be communicated verbally to you. If you request a copy of the Audiological Report, an administrative fee will apply. Child hearing tests are conducted at select locations for a fee, please contact us for more information. This promotion is valid for select hearing aid models and cannot be combined with more than 1 promotion or discount unless stated otherwise. Offer applies to private sales of select hearing aids and discount is applied after government funding has been deducted. \*\*The extra 10% will be applied to the remaining balance on hearing aids and accessories after all other discounts (if applicable). Offer not applicable for industrial hearing tests. Offers not valid in Quebec. Offer expires 08/31/2024.





# SAVINGS AND ADVENTURE. GET SOME!

*BCRTA MEMBERS' EXCLUSIVE DEALS ARE READY FOR YOU*

[www.bcrt.ca/members-advantage-program/](http://www.bcrt.ca/members-advantage-program/)



freshprep.ca  
fresh ingredients delivered



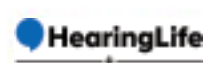
Guided Travel Tours  
to Exotic Locations



ENDLESS SAVINGS  
& MORE



DISCOUNTS ON  
SERVICES



Canadian Public Employee  
Association Club

Enjoy member discount offers of up to 50%



**BCRTA**  
BC Retired Teachers' Association

# PostScript

SUMMER 2024



Cover photo:  
Beach Chairs (iStockPhoto/Getty)

**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 [bcрта.ca/postscript-submissions](http://bcрта.ca/postscript-submissions)**

## BCRTA – HEAD OFFICE

100-550 W. 6th Avenue • Vancouver BC • V5Z 4P2  
Phone 604.871.2260 Toll Free 1.877.683.2243  
Fax: 604.871.2265

## EDITORIAL TEAM

Tim Anderson, Editor  
K.G.P. Cooper, Assistant Editor  
David Denyer, Communications Chair  
Kristi Josephson, Administration



Interested in submitting an article or advertisement?  
For submission and advertising guidelines, contact us:

[www.bcрта.ca/postscript](http://www.bcрта.ca/postscript)

[postscript@bcрта.ca](mailto:postscript@bcрта.ca)

The views expressed in PostScript are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the BCRTA.

This publication is provided for general information purposes only and is not meant as medical, legal or other professional advice.

The BCRTA is a Member of ACER-CART & COSCO, NPF & CCPA. PostScript Magazine is mailed to BCRTA members four times a year. DEADLINES for receipt of material for publications are Oct. 31, Jan. 31, April 30 and July 15. Submit material to [postscript@bcрта.ca](mailto:postscript@bcрта.ca). JULY 15 is the DEADLINE for Committee and Branch Reports to be submitted for the Summary of Reports and the year end audit. Items published reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily express the policy or imply endorsement by the BCRTA. PostScript reserves the right to edit all material. If not credited, photos are licensed from Getty/iStockphoto. Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement No. 40062724 Return undelivered Canadian addresses to Circulation Department.

Ever notice how when you encounter a strange word, it suddenly appears several times in the next few days? Or how about that make of car that you are considering - suddenly they are everywhere. Something similar has happened with PostScript. When I recently received some comments that we should be on the lookout for more articles with historical themes, I shrugged. We choose from what is submitted, and we have done a number of great articles on education history and personal histories. So we already had a history with history. But, just like that, over the next six months we have had a number of great submissions with a historical angle, and that theme abounds in this issue.

**Gerald Soon** gets us started with a fascinating exploration of the family histories now available for Canadians of Chinese descent, in his article **The Paper Trail**. Gerald also highlights how BC curriculum is now better addressing that history.

**Larry Kuehn** shines a light on the BC Exchange Teachers' Association, which for more than 100 years facilitated international experiences for teachers in BC and around the world. It was my pleasure to meet **Rosemary Swinton**, the BCETA archivist, who is ensuring that the history of that work does not get lost.

Our friends from the **Nanaimo-Ladysmith Retired Teachers' Association Heritage Committee** pay tribute to **Les Skipsey** on his centenary. A fitting tribute to someone who has helped in the appreciation of that area's history, especially as it relates to education.

**Jake and Carol Conkin** ride along in this historical round-up, too, as they celebrate the cowboy culture of days gone by with school kids and seniors, and they make sure to get in a song and a tall tale, too.

We do some traveling, this time down to South America with a caffeinated cyclist in the person of **Janey Harper**. Inspired? BCRTA members can enjoy a month in Spain as part of our group departure - check it out on page 22.

PostScript readers are also often writers, too. If you are interested in learning from other retired teachers who have published books, we have a great opportunity for you: our online **Writer's Workshop** on June 25. Registration is free at <https://bcрта.ca/writers>.

Have a super summer!

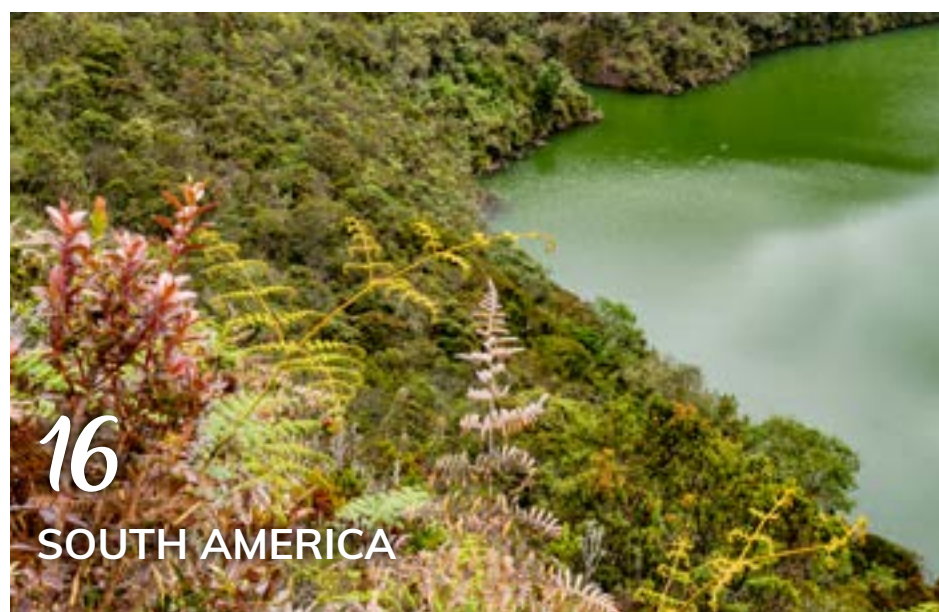
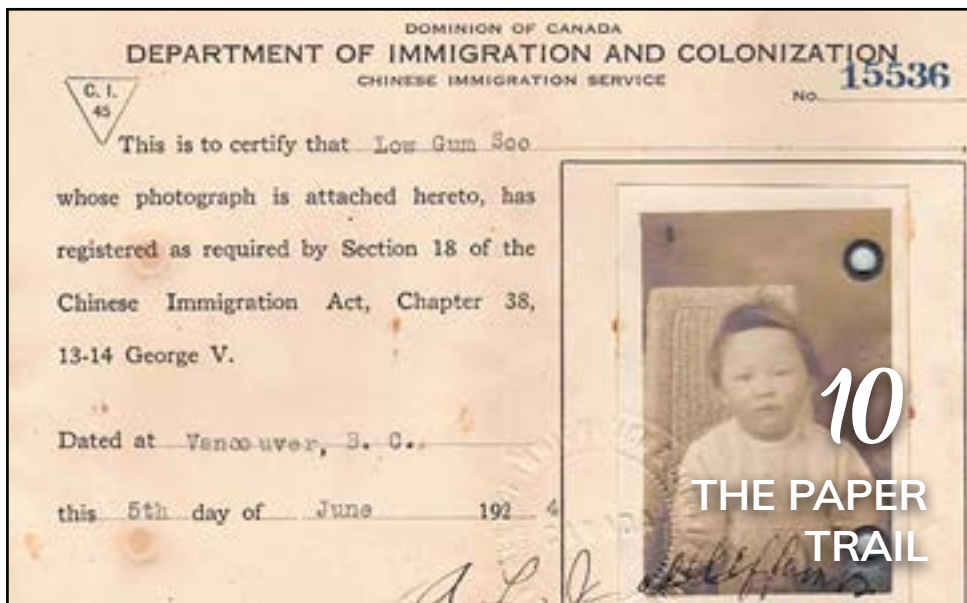
*The Editor*  
[postscript@bcрта.ca](mailto:postscript@bcрта.ca)





# contents

POSTSCRIPT MAGAZINE | SUMMER 2024



- |    |                                 |    |                           |
|----|---------------------------------|----|---------------------------|
| 4  | EDITOR'S NOTE                   | 48 | WISH YOU WERE HERE        |
| 6  | PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE             | 49 | WRITER'S WORKSHOP JUNE 25 |
| 8  | LETTERS                         | 50 | AGM 2024                  |
| 10 | THE PAPER TRAIL                 | 54 | CLASSIFIEDS               |
| 15 | IMPORTANT DATES                 | 56 | CROSSWORD                 |
| 22 | BCRTA GROUP DEPARTURE: SPAIN    | 57 | SUDOKU                    |
| 29 | A DAY IN THE LIFE               | 58 | IN MEMORIAM               |
| 30 | ON THE ROAD FOR SENIORS' HEALTH | 60 | HOPES AND DREAMS          |
| 40 | LES SKIPSEY AT 100              | 62 | RR SMITH                  |
| 46 | GAMES LADY ROUND 2              |    |                           |



## BCRTA IS ALL ABOUT CONNECTIONS

**A**T BCRTA we make connections with each other at the Board table, in our committees, with PostScript and our Branch Executive Update memos, and we reach our members electronically with the (appropriately named!) *Connections* newsletter. We also connect to other retired educators nationally through our work with ACER/CART, and provincially we are affiliated with a number of great organizations that work in the interest of seniors' issues.

All of these good links mirror the way we connect with each other individually; a terrific aspect of retirement is when we get together with former colleagues, volunteer with various community organizations, and just generally enjoy time with friends and family.

In the past couple of years, the BCRTA has spent time and resources getting back out to Branches – connecting with members who were isolated during the pandemic, but are now out meeting with others and travelling again. In last summer's issue of PostScript, I wrote about road-tripping to several Branches in the Interior of BC, and this year we have continued in our efforts to visit and connect with members in their hometowns.

We all know that British Columbia is beautiful, magnificent and diverse, but it is also incredibly big. The area of the province is 944,000 square kilometres: our province is larger than 175 countries around the world! As well, we are separated from each other by the Salish Sea, and numerous mountain ranges. So one of the challenges we face in getting out to members is that our 48 Branches are a considerable distance from each other.



*This snapshot of BCRTA branch locations from the BCRTA website gives a picture of how spread out our membership is. Source: bcrt.ca*





*Cariboo roads – photo by iStockphoto*

This year, it has been a joint effort of the BCRTA executive to get out and connect, and I must thank directors Caroline Malm, Dave Scott, Grace Wilson, Gerry Tiede and Linda Watson for also visiting a number of Branches and connecting with the membership.

The visits give us an opportunity to bring up-to-date information on the benefits of BCRTA membership, as well as the work that the organization is pursuing. We can discuss the various issues for which we have advocated, provide updates on the work of our various committees, and share the results of current efforts to improve the lives of members, and seniors in general.

As well as sharing information from the provincial body, the Branch visits are a great opportunity for members to connect with colleagues they haven't seen for a while, catching up on the big and small events of their lives. Plus, these meetings usually come with a breakfast or lunch, and who doesn't like continuing a conversation over that extra cup of coffee?

The visits are also an excellent opportunity for the membership to provide input on issues and events from their area, things that can be

shared more broadly. We have received many suggestions for extras that our EHC plan might cover, and we have heard several personal stories related to travel. Who knew that after a vehicle accident in the US a short helicopter ride from a small hospital to a trauma unit would produce a \$73,000 bill? Thankfully, there was our Johnson travel insurance to pick up the costs.

Accompanying us on many of our visits have been representatives of Johnson Insurance, our EHC, Dental, Travel and Home insurance providers. I have to thank both Lisa Hansen and Mark Costales who have also spent many hours travelling with us and explaining in detail the health and travel plans available to members.

Having the ability to connect with our members and Branches is an honour and a privilege that your executive enjoys, and we have heard over and over how much the members appreciate the visits, where they are able to speak in-person with one of the executive, sharing their stories and also their concerns.

If you are in one of the few Branches we have yet to visit, we hope to see you in the near future, and to all of you, have a great summer! •

**ARNIE LAMBERT** is President of BCRTA



# PostScript Letters

## About Resilience

"How old is she?", was the most common question young Nepalese hikers asked me, especially in the popular Langtang area. They were fascinated by my relatively short wife with her white hair poking out from beneath her hat. They were impressed when she passed them. When they discovered she had just walked almost 500 kms of some of the most rugged and remote routes in Nepal and still had 300 more (easier) kms to do, they could not disguise their admiration.

When I told them she was 77 years old, this admiration turned to something akin to idolatry.

Patti is likely the eldest woman to complete the 800 km route from the western border of Nepal through the northern sections of the country. She is writing a book about our latest adventure; working title: Nepal. It's Never Too Late.

Point is: stay strong...stay positive...and keep moving, baby.

Now, Patti is committing to children again: she has formed a foundation, Nepal One Day at a Time. So far that foundation has built a school in a village so remote that she was the first foreigner to ever visit it. This past trekking season we visited the two homes recently built by the foundation and found another school in another remote area that was without books. We will support this school into the future. If you would like to help, please do an online search for Nepal One Day at a Time and/or author Patti Shales Lefkos.

Barry Hodgins

## Red Ink Department

Whoops – looks like the proofreaders missed something in the fine article "Educate to Liberate" by Arnie Lambert.

In the first sentence, we read "Caroline Malm and myself had been invited to join." It should be "Caroline Malm and I had been invited."

Old habits don't die. I am seeing too many misuses of "myself", such as "I myself have seen that film." Redundant.

John

## Puzzle Superheroes

I am sending this Sudoku puzzle on behalf of my husband, Dr. Michael Marshall. Mike was a superintendent on the Gulf Islands for fourteen years. Between 1997 and 2001 he was principal and teacher on Pender Island. In 2001 Mike retired after suffering a massive stroke that left him hemiplegic and aphasic. Completing difficult Sudoku puzzles (with his left hand) has become his prime pastime. Thank you for providing this enjoyment!

Anne Marshall

## EHC Survey - an Ad or a Fact?

I always enjoy reading my seasonal copy of PostScript, but there is one thing that continues to concern me. Recent editions feature a satisfaction survey comparing Green Shield to BCRTA Johnson where the respondents are BC retired teachers. I believe the survey is, in fact, an advertisement, and even though it may be accurate, presenting it as an impartial survey is misleading.

I changed my insurance coverage based on this ad then had to change back when I realized some basic coverage for a common joint problem was not available through Johnson. I am not criticizing Johnson Insurance, which is undoubtedly an excellent company. However, knowing the survey in PostScript is an advertisement would be more transparent and beneficial to our members and your readers. Therefore, I am hoping you will label it as such.

Evan L.

**Editor's note:** There's a lot to unpack there, Evan. Over the past 15 years BCRTA has worked with Johnson to provide an insurance plan for our members. The plan's funds are solely for the benefit of the BCRTA members who sign up for coverage. The BCRTA-sponsored EHC plan is not a 3rd party service, nor is it for profit. As such, it is not a 3rd party advertiser.

Are the survey results "impartial"? The content of the EHC Survey report is simply a summary of the feedback of your colleagues. The statistically significant survey was conducted without us knowing what the results would

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

be. We wanted to measure how effective both plans were in meeting the expectations of retirees. We report the opinions of the respondents transparently. In fact, the online version of the survey allows readers to browse all the comments we received about both plans. See it at <https://bcрта.ca/ehcsurvey>.

Moreover, the survey summary report concludes with a paragraph which explicitly states that members should look at both options to understand which plan is a better fit for them as an individual. Here's the concluding text with some points that apply to your situation:

*The final score of the survey? Johnson comes out on top in every one of the 21 measurable categories covered in our survey... So what is the right plan for you? You might be surprised to hear us say: we're not sure. Why? Because there are some unique coverages in Green Shield that might suit you better - usually around specific prescription drugs they cover that Johnson does not. So in the final analysis, it truly is up to you. See which plan meets your particular needs. It's your choice, and that's the way it should be.*

My understanding is that you contacted our office regarding the plans before switching and were encouraged to consult with Johnson prior to making your choice. However at the time you felt that Johnson could not be impartial so declined to ask them some of these questions. I can see how you would later be frustrated that your particular medication was not covered. However, I hope you can also see that we are making best efforts to have people learn the details of the plans before they sign up. Our instructions to Johnson are to give "best friend advice" so that people get the plan that suits them. Our only goal is to help you find the one that best suits your needs.

I'm glad you have got your coverage resolved now and wish you success with it.

#### **FAST FACTS ABOUT BCRTA'S EHC**

- ✓ BCRTA's EHC plan is by far the fastest-growing plan for retired educators in BC.
- ✓ The plan's design is updated regularly with input from our association's Health Benefits Committee.
- ✓ The purpose of our plan is to provide good coverage and excellent service at a reasonable price.

Learn more at <https://bcрта.ca/ehcplancomparison>

## **Pip Pip PostScript**

Hello Tim,

Just a fast line to let you know how satisfying it was to get the latest issue of Postscript and to see the size and scope of the magazine now. The number of people now involved and the size of the magazine and the depth of the subject matter is a far cry from my original efforts after moving on from the black and white bulletin which I inherited so many years ago! I remember the first full colour issues, decades ago - who knew of such a move - and yet we did it.

I miss the meetings and the people who were like family for years - just have my memories to fall back on, I wish you all continued success and am thankful I deserved to stay on the mailing list until I croak!

Best of luck for the future - keep up the good work,

Sheila Gair  
Delta

**Editor's note:** Sheila is known for her colourful writing style (see above!) and during her time as editor was instrumental in building this magazine, so much so that we named a PostScript Excellence Award after her. She was awarded Life Membership in BCRTA in 2017.

Thank you for all that you do at Postscript. We look forward to each issue!

Shannon Riedlinger

Thanks for all you do.

Darlene Lim

Thank you for all the puzzles!

Andrew Black

#'s 7,8 down and 18 across just stumped me. I decided to send my guesses along even though I'm sure they are wrong. Will have to wait for the summer Postscript to see the solution. Ooh, a long wait.

Anne Tonkin

Enjoy Post Script Magazine. Thanks.

Mickey Quinn



# **THE PAPER TRAIL**

**UNCOVERING THE  
HISTORICAL RECORDS  
OF IMMIGRATION**

**BY GERALD SOON**



Remember, you are Chinese Canadian, my father always said, when I mentioned that some derogatory slur had been thrown on me at school. Be proud, let the words roll off your back. *Sticks and stones may break your bones, but names will never hurt you.* As a young child I was unaware of ethnicity, but the slurs I began to hear on the school grounds still affected me.

Growing up in the 1950s and 1960s, I could count on my hands the few Asian families in my elementary school in East Vancouver. I didn't want

to be different. My parents, also wanting us to be as "Canadian" as possible, did not pressure us to learn Chinese. But in September of my fifth grade, I was placed in Miss Fung's class at Renfrew School, and she encouraged me to try. My parents enrolled me in Chinese School, but I did not understand anything that was being said, and so I did not continue.

When I was a young teacher, a parent called me a "banana," and then had to explain it to me—I was yellow on the outside, and white inside. As



*Vancouver Chinatown district, circa 1925.*

*Photo from Wikimedia (public domain)*

a youngster, I had recognized the culture of my childhood experience--the food, the closeness of our extended family (on my father's side alone there were some twenty-two siblings), gathering for wonderful Chinese meals--but I blissfully lived exactly like a "banana." I remember asking as a teen, "Can't we just have steak for dinner?" For the most part we still had wonderful Chinese cuisine, yet my mom expanded her repertoire to please me.

My parents didn't talk of the past and I was not aware of the difficulties they had experienced: segregation or restrictions in access to public spaces such as pools, restaurants, or movie theatres, limits to vocation, opportunity, and land ownership because of race, non-recognition as citizens even though one was born in Canada.

Then, later in her life, we assisted my mom in her downsizing, and I found in her papers a document I had never seen before. "Oh that... it's just my ID," was her response. It didn't dawn on me

to dig deeper; we tucked the paper away again, and it didn't resurface until I saw a Facebook post by Catherine Clement decades later.

Clement discovered the existence of the documentation of Chinese people when she was doing research for "Force 136" about Chinese Canadian soldiers who volunteered to serve during the Second World War. Mom's brother Norman Low was, in fact, one of those soldiers. He served on a mission to Borneo so secret that they were sworn not to even tell their families where they had been. When he was hospitalized in Vancouver with pneumonia and pleurisy, complications of having contracted malaria, his medical team, not knowing where he had been during the war, could not figure out how a young man could have malaria. Sadly, my uncle died in 1960, never fully recovering from his illness.

When the surviving soldiers of Force 136 presented their Chinese Identification (C.I.) 44 certificates to Clement, they explained that these were painful reminders of a racist environment in Canada for people of Chinese heritage. She then posted her request on Facebook for anyone in possession of these documents to contact her.

I knew very little of Chinese history in BC. While I knew of something called the "Head Tax", I didn't know the details of how it came to be or why there would even be an identification paper for Chinese people. The topic just was not covered in the BC Curriculum when I was in school or involved in education.

Now I know that Canada was seen as the "Gold Mountain," a chance for young men to seek success and help to improve living conditions for their wives, children, and fellow-villagers. Once the CPR railway was completed in 1885, the Chinese were seen as a threat to the white labour force. The government of BC introduced strict measures to stop Chinese immigration, but the law was deemed to be beyond the powers of the provincial government. In response, the federal government enacted its own Chinese Immigration Act of 1885, establishing the Head Tax.

Department of Immigration and Colonization  
CHINESE IMMIGRATION SERVICE

This is to certify that the party described below registered at this office pursuant to Section 18, Chinese Immigration Act, Chapter 85, 13-14 George V.

Name: **Tan Eze**

Where born: **405 Hastings Street E., Vancouver, B.C.**

Present Occupation: **Merchant**

Age: **35** years

Height: **5** feet, **8** inches

Weight: **150** lbs.

Facial Marks and Physical Particulars: **Dark right eye.**

Fit left cheek.

Fit left forehead.

Family: **Wife, Tang Eze, and fifteen children at above addresses: "Bamboo" for names of children and one son, the King Eze, at school in Chicago, and one daughter, the Lee Eze, married, at Prince Rupert, B.C.**

Originally admitted to Canada at the port of: **Vancouver, B.C.**

Ex. No. **"Express of Japan"** Date: **August 24th, 1905.**

Amount Head Tax Paid: **\$100.00** Is in possession of certificate C.I. No. **20000**

Signature of Registrar: *[Signature]*

Title: **Registrar of Chinese Immigration** Place and date: **Vancouver, B.C., June 24th, 1905.**

This space for use of Department.

Arrival register: **1915.**

C.I. No. **2014279**

File No. **20000**

Serial No. **2014279**

CERTIFICATE C.I. **26** No. **22671**

ENDORSED *[Signature]* 1907

*My grandfather's identity certificate from the Department of Immigration and Colonization.*

Then, with the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923, commonly called the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Canadian government basically banned Chinese immigration. Under section 18 of the Act, all people of Chinese descent, even those born in Canada, were to be photographed and documented. They were deemed to be alien and had no citizenship or voting rights. Previously some communities had allowed Chinese people to vote in elections, but the 1923 legislation enshrined a law that forbade voting, and also prevented Chinese people from entering professions where citizenship was required—medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, law, notary public, etc.

The C. I. forms were meant to fully identify people: name, address, occupation, birthplace, marital status, the names of their children, where in China they were born, including the name of the village and district, where the person was originally admitted to Canada, and upon which ship, the amount of Head Tax paid, the C.I. Certificate number, height, facial marks and physical peculiarities, as well as any other pertinent remarks.

My mother's C.I. certificate states that: "Low Gum Soo, whose photograph is attached hereto has registered as required by Section 18 of the Chinese Immigration Act, Chapter 38, 13-14 George V. Dated at Vancouver, BC this 5th day of June 1924", then the signature "A.L. Jolliffe" is written across

*My mother's certificate shows her birth date in 1920, describes her as "native born" and includes later handwritten notes identifying her husband and married name.*

*My mother, a 4 year old immigrant born in Canada.*

the paper and onto my mother's photo. A.L. Jolliffe is listed in the Vancouver Directory at that time as Arthur L. Jolliffe, commissioner of Immigration for BC. To further ensure non-counterfeiting, the photo is attached with two metal circles to prevent tampering of the document. I also discovered a handwritten note on my mother's document, that she was married to my father, Henry.

Randall Wong, the first Chinese Canadian lawyer to be appointed to a federal court, joined Catherine Clement and others in applying to Library and Archives Canada for these collected records to be released. They serve as a treasure trove of Chinese Canadian genealogy, available online (see below). I was thus able to access records for all my grandparents, parents, aunts, and uncles who were alive at the time. It was wonderful to see



snapshots of them in younger days; photographs were expensive, and few were taken.

The results of Wong's and Clement's work are documented in the current Feature Exhibition at Vancouver's Chinese Canadian Museum, "The Paper Trail to the 1923 Exclusion Act", which opened July 1, 2023, a hundred years after the anti-Chinese legislation "The Chinese Immigration Act of 1923" became law and 138 years since the 1885 the Head Tax was put in place to curb the flow of Chinese immigration.

But what of those racial slurs? Did they subside over time? Many years later, as an adult, I was walking slowly, window-shopping in Richmond Mall while waiting for my wife, when a woman approached me, saying quite angrily, "In THIS country, we walk on the RIGHT!" Then she kept walking. I was quite startled, shocked really, and then I became angry. I was a third generation CANADIAN of Chinese descent, after all. I couldn't see where she had gone, and my anger turned to sadness...some things hadn't changed that much.

Is education really the key? Do I still have the ability to be a change agent? I went into teaching believing I could make a difference. Though retired, is it still possible? I have presented information about the Paper Trail to one grandson's former teacher's class, and to another grandson's Grade Five class already. I am willing to share my newfound information with any class.

I am happy to say that the Head Tax and Exclusion policies are now included in today's Social Studies curriculum, in grades 5, 6, and 9, under various headings including "past discriminatory government policies and actions", "global poverty and inequality issues, including class structure and gender", "discriminatory policies and injustices in Canada and the world". •

**GERALD SOON** is a retired educator with experience at elementary, secondary and post-secondary levels. He is a third generation Chinese Canadian and proud of his heritage. Before becoming a school administrator, he was involved with the BCTF as a PSA president and presenter with the Program Against Racism..

## IMMIGRATION PAPERS

Are you curious about the stories of Canada's history with Chinese immigrants? Exclusion records can be accessed here:

<https://1923-chinese-exclusion.ca/resources/>

Rumble in the Jungle: The Story of Force 136

[www.ccmms.ca/features/the-story-of-force-136/](http://www.ccmms.ca/features/the-story-of-force-136/)

The Chinese Canadian Museum is located at 51 East Pender Street, Vancouver

[www.chinesecanadianmuseum.ca](http://www.chinesecanadianmuseum.ca)

Many immigration documents are now public and can be viewed at

<https://rbscarchives.library.ubc.ca/paper-trail-collection>

# important dates

## Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security

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

### Payment dates 2024

#### 2024

- January 29, 2024
- February 27, 2024
- March 26, 2024
- April 26, 2024
- May 29, 2024
- June 26, 2024
- July 29, 2024
- August 28, 2024
- September 25, 2024
- October 29, 2024
- November 27, 2024
- December 20, 2024

## Teachers' Pension Plan

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

### Payment dates 2024

#### 2024

- January 30, 2024
- February 28, 2024
- March 27, 2024
- April 29, 2024
- May 30, 2024
- June 27, 2024
- July 30, 2024
- August 29, 2024
- September 26, 2024
- October 30, 2024
- November 28, 2024
- December 23, 2024

## Protection for the people you care about and peace of mind for you

Term Life Insurance / Dependent Term Life Insurance /  
Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance /  
Critical Illness Insurance / Dependent Critical Illness Insurance

### BC Retired Teachers Association Insurance Program in partnership with Johnson

For a personalized quotation or to apply online,  
please visit us at: [specialmarkets.ia.ca/bcрта](https://specialmarkets.ia.ca/bcрта)  
1.800.266.5667

Underwritten by Industrial Alliance Insurance & Financial Services Inc.  
iA Financial Group is a business name and trademark of  
Industrial Alliance Insurance and Financial Services Inc.





A scenic landscape of a tropical valley. In the foreground, there are lush green ferns and reddish-brown plants. A vibrant green lake is nestled in the valley, surrounded by dense, lush green forest. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a sky filled with soft, white clouds.

# SOUTH AMERICA

CYCLING AND HIKING IN COLOMBIA

BY JANEY HARPER





Facing page: Lake Guatavita Above: Manizales, Colombia  
(photos by iStockphoto/Getty)

My plan is to visit a different South American country every year. My first venture on this quest started with Colombia. My itinerary covered a “small” geographic area in the northwestern part of Colombia, traversing the three mountain ranges (cordilleras) of the Colombian Andes. This area is lush year-round, with little temperature variation. What does vary are the torrential seasonal rains that arrive in November and last through the spring.

I landed in Colombia on October 7, direct from having been on a sailboat in the Chesapeake Bay for 10 days, cruising between quaint New England seaside resort towns. Talk about culture shock! It was a physical jolt to land in traffic-congested Medellín, population over 4 million, transitioning from a cool 18 degrees to 29 humid degrees and

from English to excavating my memory for Spanish words! Medellín itself is a beautiful city in a valley, though slums climb up most of the surrounding mountains.

Whenever I travel, I search for a good book to bring along (now in electronic format) to provide me with background information and stories to help me better understand what has created the country I am exploring. For my Colombia journey, I planned to read *Magdalena: River of Dreams: The Story of Colombia*, by Canadian author Wade Davis, who has lived mostly in Colombia since his late teens. It turned out to be *muy muy informativo*.

Jaime, my Spanish language partner, living in Medellín, took time off from his business to be my guide for the city and its environs. I “befriended”

Jaime two years ago on Tandem, an app for matching up language learners, and the best way of learning a language I know. One creates a profile explaining how one prefers to learn a language, current level, amount of time prepared to commit to conversing weekly, etc. Just like a dating app, one can contact persons that appear to match with one's learning needs and styles. Every week, for 1½ hours via What's App video I have been conversing in Spanish and Jaime, in English. I've studied Spanish for almost 10 years, via in-person and on-line university courses, and by attending language schools in Spain. My Tandem experience - talking every week - has eliminated any embarrassment so I launched into speaking nothing but Spanish as soon as I landed in Colombia and found my fluency improving daily.

After exploring Medellín and its surroundings, I flew south and higher into the mountains to Manizales, the start of a short stay at a somewhat remote hot springs resort, Las Termas de Santa Rosa. The hot springs had been highly recommended by several Colombians, so I was expecting a spectacular experience, much like those natural remote hot springs I have enjoyed along our coastline and in the Queen Charlotte Islands. It proved to be very different, more like going to a Harrison Hot Springs, including the day trippers with cars. A highlight was the challenging and somewhat treacherous hike to the top of the mountain and source of the hot springs. Such a hike might be prohibited in North America, mainly because there were no protective barriers along the way.

When booking Las Termas, I had assumed it would be easy to catch a ride out, but in fact, it was impossible to leave the area without a private car and driver, neither of which was available the day I left for my next destination. I walked down the road to a more-public hot springs and talked to the tour bus drivers who were waiting for their passengers. None were supposed to take me unless I signed a waiver. However, Colombians tend to be easy-going, welcoming, and very helpful, going out of their way to offer assistance. One driver offered to smuggle me aboard if I could quickly gather up my belongings from the hotel.

Then, while I was checking out at reception, a family overheard my dilemma and insisted on driving me to the nearest town with a bus depot. I gratefully accepted. Once at the nearest town, they then decided to drive me to the bus depot two hours away in Armenia and almost all the way to my next resort, which was also in the middle of nowhere! Before entering the depot, I googled the resort address, then headed for the multiple ticket wickets, only to find incredibly long lineups. For some reason, I decided to wander through the station and miraculously discovered a tourist booth hidden away at the far end. The official took me to a taxi driver waiting outside, who confidently assured us that he knew how to get to the Hotel Campestre Solar De La Luna.

I hopped in, opened Google Maps and within five minutes saw that the driver was on the wrong road. Several times I stated that he was headed in the wrong direction and that the journey would take three times as long. The situation reminded me of past experiences with taxi drivers in large cities who take advantage of tourists. In this case, it turned out the driver simply didn't know where he was going; he had given us assurances because he wanted the



*Hotel Campestre Solar De La Luna  
(photo by Janey Harper)*



## *I launched into speaking nothing but Spanish as soon as I landed in Colombia and found my fluency improving daily...*

fare. Finally, we pulled over to talk with the security guards of a gated community. My Spanish was adequate; after all, I had been speaking virtually only Spanish for 10 days. Still no one would listen to me! Finally, a woman came by and offered to look on her Google maps, and only then was it agreed that we were indeed on the wrong road. The driver turned around and headed off on the opposite direction, this time with my occasional guidance. To be honest, I think no one had been listening to me because I was a female, English-speaking tourist, who they assumed didn't understand Spanish, was neither capable nor resourceful, and certainly didn't know the route to her resort.

Hotel Campestre was a paradise, a beautiful, quiet, rural "hotel" with views of "nothing but nature". The architect-owners living on site were an added bonus, providing attention and care to their property and guests. The whole experience would wind up being an absolutely perfect footnote for each long day of cycling: conversations in the gorgeously appointed common areas with the owners, sharing a glass of wine, even visiting in their home filled with antiquities and memorabilia. It felt like a week's visit with gracious, well-loved relatives.

While planning my trip I had committed to sourcing a locally operated cycling company for the exploration of the Eje Cafetera. This proved difficult because the cycling companies with the highest profiles online were international, not Colombian. I tripped over Pedaling Coffee on Instagram; they didn't have a website. Mauricio and Laura were a young Colombian couple who had started a cycling and sustainable coffee-promoting business about ten years ago. Their byline was *Rutas del Paisaje Cultural Cafetero* (Cultural Countryside Routes in Colombian Coffee Country). Their motto is "Drink Coffee. Pedal Faster!"

I had swallowed my pride and requested a mountain e-bike because of the hilly terrain. This

proved to be fortuitous; I used it for 10% of every day to manage some of the long and/or steep inclines. They wouldn't let me use the battery the first day because they thought I would drain it and we would be stuck somewhere in the hinterlands. At the end of the 2nd day, when the battery still showed 95% full, they finally stopped worrying, since they could see that I only used it when I really needed it. We seldom cycled on the main routes, and spent half the time on roads that resembled washed-out creek beds with bridges composed of bamboo tied together. Colombians LOVE cycling. The roads were busy with cyclists, mountain bikers and roadies, surprisingly like Whistler where I currently live.



*Laura and Mauro, mis guías de ciclismo. "Drink Coffee. Pedal Faster!"  
(photo by Janey Harper)*



The Eje Cafetera was extraordinarily beautiful with its perpetually lush flora and undulating landscape. With the cooler temperatures up in the mountains, it was the perfect place for cycling (6 days) and hiking (1 day to the Valle de Cocora to see the tallest palms in Colombia). A friend or colleague of my guides joined us almost every day, so I learned a great deal about Colombia's politics, society, history, and economy. It would take me a couple of years to try all of the tropical fruits that grow here, many of which are never even seen in Canada. I even planted a coffee bush at one of the sustainable coffee farms and named it "Canada"! It was all so much fun.

Next, I went east to Bogota, high in another mountain range, a traffic-strangled city of almost 12 million. I had been advised by Colombians that Bogotá was not worth visiting and that it wouldn't be safe to travel solo there. However, there were some "touristy" things I wanted to do, and I'd heard of Bogota most of my life, so I decided on three days. Although my Spanish had been serving me well, I was concerned about my safety,



*Organic Coffee Plantation in the Eje Cafetera*

so organized for a driver, a friend of a friend of a friend of an acquaintance in Vancouver. I assumed he would also fill the role of tour guide, but this did not turn out to be the case.

One day we headed for Lake Guatavita, a sacred reserve in the countryside. The hike through this site turned out to be the highlight of my time in the Bogotá area. Our guides were the descendants of the Muisca, a fierce indigenous group that was the last to be conquered by the Spanish. They walked and talked us through the ancestral heritage of this pristine natural area and of the Colombian tribes prior to the European invasion. The Lake is linked to the story of the search, by the English and Spanish, for El Dorado, the city of gold. The relentless pursuit of riches led to the mapping of much of northern South America, including the Amazon River, but El Dorado proved to be a myth.

I found no reason to ever return to Bogota, although others would say it's the best place to visit in Colombia.

I next flew to Cartagena on the Caribbean coast, arriving to streets which had flooded because of the ancient sewage and greywater systems. While this was another tourist-filled city where I wouldn't likely put my toe in the water again, I happened to trip over a jewel, the Museum of Navigation, which



*Typical cycling terrain in the Eje Cafetera*

was bypassed by all the tour guides because nothing was in English. I learned the entire history, new to me, of the coastline and what the various European countries got up to when they discovered this part of the world. The history that I had learned in school had little South American content, and we certainly weren't informed about the atrocities, greed, piracy, and violence committed here by Spain and England, in particular.

I then headed up the coast and back into nature at Santa Marta, one of the popular beach and resort areas in the Caribbean. Santa Marta is stunning, with the lush green tropical foliage, azure-blue ocean, spectacular sunsets, all at the foot of the white-peaked Sierra Nevada mountains. Nearby Tayrona is a National Reserve with beach after sandy beach, each unique. One can walk for hours. On my last day here, we took a boat ride to nearby islands for snorkelling. Unfortunately, the rainy season had started so the water was filled with sand.

I finished my Colombia journey with a six-day hike up and down hills to reach La Ciudad Perdida, a mini version of Machu Picchu, halfway up the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta mountain range. It's the highest coastal range in the world and is



*Above: Meeting the Mamo of the Kogi subgroup of the Tayrona, on his return climb to La Ciudad Perdida. The Mamo is the spiritual and political leader, integral to maintaining the balance and harmony within their society and environment.*

*Left: La Ciudad Perdida (photos by Janey Harper)*

home to the Lost City, which predates Machu Picchu by about 650 years. This mountain range is “broken off” from the very tip of the western-most Andes cordillera in Colombia. The Lost City is only accessible by a challenging trek through dense jungle. I had never been on such an arduous hike before—no wonder my tour's target market was 20-40 year olds! Two days before the end of the trek, the rainy season began, with downpours like we never see here. Our hiking “trails” had turned from mud into rivers, yet this turned out to be a bonus as we were no longer slipping on mud but rather, running confidently downhill at breakneck speed!

In this and so many other ways, my journey turned out to be a much richer experience than I had ever anticipated.

*Hasta luego!*

After leaving Delta School District, **JANEY HARPER** became a Holistic Nutritionist and Biofeedback Therapist.

As captain of a 52' sailboat she cruised the West Coast of BC for 15 years. Six years ago she escaped to Whistler, starting a project to create a community-based cohousing neighbourhood in downtown Sechelt: see [thecoastalvillage.ca](http://thecoastalvillage.ca).





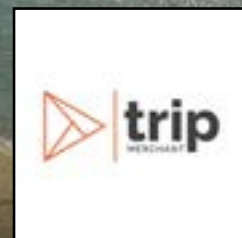
**BCRTA EXCLUSIVE**

# Long Stay in Spain

**Oct 31 to Nov 30 2024**

**31 Days/29 Nights**

**FROM ~~\$4,299~~ \$3,999 PP\***  
(AIRFARE EXTRA)



\*\$3,999 CAD per person, based on double occupancy in a studio or one-bedroom apartment, with a kitchenette (for the Long Stay Portion in Fuengirola on the Costa del Sol). All prices are plus tax (15%). Confirm details when booking.

Join other BCRTA members on this Long Stay Vacation in Spain! Also enjoy included sightseeing such as **La Sagrada Familia** in Barcelona, **Alhambra Palace** in Granada and other remarkable sites in both cities.

Immerse yourself into the Spanish culture and enjoy a warmer climate with sunny skies. Meet new friends and make great memories in the beautiful **Fuengirola**, located in the heart of the **Costa del Sol**. As a BCRTA Member, you are welcome to invite family and friends to join!

This trip starts in **Barcelona** for 3 nights before continuing on to Valencia, Granada and then staying put in the **Costa Del Sol** for 22 Nights!

**\* OPTIONAL 5 NIGHT PALMA DE MALLORCA POST EXTENSION \***

Fuengirola is a nice coastal town just south of Málaga (30km away). The ideal location of the apartments offers you all the desirable facilities for a complete and relaxing vacation. In the heart of the **Paseo Marítimo** (beach promenade), in front of the Marina and one of the widest and most extensive beaches on the Costa del Sol. In the surroundings, restaurants, bars, supermarkets, pharmacies and all kinds of shops.

\*Packaged price is based on arrival into Barcelona on November 1st and departing out of Barcelona on November 30th.



**Phone 604.329.7650 or email [tom@tripmerchant.com](mailto:tom@tripmerchant.com)**

Consumer Protection BC License: 77118

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





# EDUCATION HISTORY IN SEARCH OF A HOME

BY LARRY KUEHN

What should you do with two big boxes comprising a hundred years of records stored in your apartment? No, it's not a case of hoarded heaps of useless paper, these are historically important documents.

This is the challenge faced by Rosemary Swinton, a 94-year-old retired Vancouver elementary teacher who has the records of BC Exchange Teachers' Association (BCETA), which was founded officially a century ago in 1924. She wants the papers to find a publicly accessible home before someone comes and throws away all this history because they don't understand its significance.



*Top: An international exchange teacher outing in Vernon in the 1990s.  
Below: a BCETA meeting led by Jack Gair.*



From the exchange program's inception in 1914 and continuing for over a century, about 2,500 BC teachers undertook a year-long teaching exchange, mostly to the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand, with a few in the early years to South Africa and Hawaii. BC teachers also sometimes went to other provinces, and even areas within the province when travel was restricted during WWII. BC teachers were matched with an equal number of counterparts who came to take over their classes here. Teachers were paid by their employers in the country they came from as if they had their regular job. Sometimes the teachers exchanged homes with one another and the use of their cars. BC teachers paid their own fares to the exchange country. These exchanges continued uninterrupted until the years just before COVID, which altered everyone's experience in so many ways. The last exchange was with Australia in 2016.

Rosemary's papers provide accounts of the experiences of these teachers, giving an insight into the challenges—and rewards — of transplanting oneself into another society, school culture and curriculum. Rosemary emphasizes with enthusiasm the tremendous professional development of the exchange experience.



*Rosemary Swinton was the archivist and retired teacher representative of the Exchange Association in 1999.*

*(photo from the BCETA archives)*



*A young Dave Ellis visits Stonehenge (photo provided by Dave Ellis)*

In the mid-80's members of the BC Exchange Teachers' Association Executive organized an annual conference for all visiting Exchange teachers in the province. This overview gave the visiting teachers an insight into the many different programmes within BC's curriculum.

The influence of being on exchange sticks around long after the adventure. Retired Vancouver teacher Dave Ellis is helping Rosemary find a place for the papers. Dave was on exchange in Scotland in 1977-78. He says that he places events in his life as either before or after the exchange. Others in the papers describe the similar ways in which it was a landmark in their careers.



*Five BCETA Presidents: L-R Anna Gilliatt, Emmeline Sparks, Annie Miles, Wendy Smith, Betsy Morrow.*

*(BCETA archives)*



*ABOVE Dave Ellis with Gwynfel Jones, a longtime leader of the BC Exchange Teachers' Association (BCETA archives)*

*BELOW Rosemary Swinton visited the BCRTA offices to review photos from the BCETA archives in preparation for this article. Providing captions for the photos gave opportunity to describe the contributions of many individuals. As she told PostScript Editor Tim Anderson, "I'm a detail person."*

Rosemary was a teacher in Scotland who came to BC on an exchange in 1961-62. She returned to Scotland for two years, then immigrated to Canada for the rest of her career. In a recent discussion at a BCRTA committee meeting, two of the members turned out to have been on exchange. Carol Baird-Krul had immigrated to Canada from Wales and, while teaching in BC, went on exchange to a school in Wales. Another reported that she visited her exchange partner in Australia some forty years after their exchange! Repeat visits were a common experience.

While the papers provide accounts of the experiences of exchange teachers, much of the material is about the Exchange Teachers' Association as an organization. It was created in 1924 by a group who had been on exchange and wanted to encourage and support those who had arrived in this new situation.







*Carol Baird experienced a touching moment in Wales when students unexpectedly burst out with a rendition of O, Canada. (photo provided by Carol Baird)*

In the early years, many planned activities showed the visiting teachers the industries which were major contributors to BC's booming economy such as forestry and fisheries. Later, many of the activities were social—dinners, picnics, hiking up Stawamus Chief, and other gatherings to make people feel welcome in a place where they knew no one. These experiences gave the visiting teachers a positive experience socially, beyond the classroom. For several years they hosted an annual trip to a ranch in the Cariboo with the exchange teachers who were teaching in several parts of the province. Later there were ski trips to Manning Park, and Thanksgiving weekends in Vernon, organized by the local branch of the BCETA.

The Association mobilized, as well, in periods of crisis. One year, a downtown Vancouver apartment block that was home to five women teachers from the UK caught fire, destroying all their possessions. The Association raised funds to help them and successfully approached the BCTF to provide grants.

In the early decades, most of the people on exchange were women, many of them elementary teachers, and were identified as “Miss,” reflecting the policy of the era that women who became teachers were required by contract or expectation to quit teaching if they married.

During WWII the exchanges to the UK came to a halt. Some of the Canadians in Britain in 1939 were not even able to return home until after the war because individual civilians could not get on a ship, the only form of transportation. At the same time, there were five British teachers who were “marooned” here throughout the war. Fortunately, the local School Boards where they had been working as Exchange teachers gave them jobs. During the war, the Association raised \$4,500—25 and 50 cents at a time, the equivalent of at least \$80,000 now, to provide assistance to underprivileged children in Britain; in many cases, to schools whose libraries had been either damaged or destroyed by bombs. The files have many letters of appreciation for the assistance provided by a small operational group called “The League of the Empire”, of which we will hear more shortly.

Salaries of teachers in Britain were always much lower than in BC. To make it possible for the British teachers to live here, they received subsidies. Some of these actually came from the BC teacher involved in the exchange—Dave Ellis says it was \$500 in 1977—while some came from grants from the sponsoring school boards. But even that was not enough when the British pound was devalued in the early 1980s and the Association made another successful appeal to the BCTF Assistance Society for grants to supplement living expenses.

These exchanges went beyond individual teachers making connection with a teacher in another country. They required an infrastructure—agencies to vet the applicants to make sure they were qualified and would be acceptable to the other schools and to match the teachers for teaching subjects and levels.

The British government had an agency to facilitate the exchanges. It provided funding for British teachers for travel expenses. The BC Ministry of Education had a staff member whose job it was to approve the BC teachers and to do the matching. Later the job was taken over by the Canadian Education Foundation, and, finally, by the Canadian Education Exchange Foundation where, for several years, the Exchange programme continued to flourish.



Carol Baird's class in Wales. (photo provided by Carol Baird)

Besides the stories of the impact on individuals, the files of the Association provide insight into the evolving social history of BC. Why would governments support this? One answer is presumably because it was powerful professional development. It brought new ideas from those coming in from other systems as well as what BC teachers would learn from the experience.

A larger socio-political purpose was presumably at play as well. In the early days, the Colonial Office in the British Government provided support for the League of the Empire, which facilitated exchanges, and which reported that the purpose of the exchanges was to connect the people of the Empire to the “mother country.”

One of the highlights of the year in Britain was the annual Queen Mother's Garden Party which brought together “exchangees” from all the countries involved in the Exchange Programme. All the exchanges were with the former settler colonies, but not the colonies in Asia and Africa, except for white South Africans. Throughout the UK there were many Exchange clubs similar to the three branches in BC.

The name of the Exchange Teachers' Association changed over the years reflecting the changing history. When formally founded in 1924, it was “The League of the Empire--Canadian Branch”; in the 1960s it changed to “The League for the Exchange of Commonwealth Teachers”. Finally, by the 1980s it was known simply as the “BC Exchange Teachers' Association”.

So here is a collection of documents that includes the names of the 2,467 teachers who went on exchange from BC, starting in 1914. Included among them we find Arnold Webster, a Vancouver teacher who later was elected leader of the CCF (precursor of the NDP) Opposition in the BC Legislature and Mollie Cottingham, who was elected BCTF President in 1956 and then taught in the Faculty of Education at UBC, along with hundreds more whose experience enriched their teaching for decades after their exchange.

Teacher	Exchange	Teacher	Exchange
Quinn, Miss E.H.	Renfrew	Starr, England	Cadman
Quinn, Miss A.D.	Renfrew	Stirling, England	Cade
Quinn, Miss E.H.	Wells	Stirling, Scotland	Roberts
Quinn, Miss J.R.S.	Quinn #2	Stirling, England	Lalor
Quinn, Miss S.E.	McLaren High	Stirling, Alberta	Agnes
Quinn, Miss J.H.	McLaren	Stirling, Nova Scotia	Blair
Quinn, Miss H.L.	Nelson	Stirling, Quebec	Blair
Abram, Miss M.H.	MacKenzie	Stirling, Lancs	Willson
Baill, Miss A.	MacKenzie	Stirling, Que.	Hartley
Baill, Miss J.	Queen Elizabeth, Surrey	Toronto, Ont.	Williamson
Baill, Miss G.H.	MacDonald	Nation Range, Ia	Wall
Baill, Miss F.	Nelson, Alta. Burnaby	Leicester	Gregory
Baill, Miss J.R.	Land, Nelson	Toronto, Ont.	Dick
Baill, Miss F.	Douglas Rd. Burnaby	St. Catharines, Ont.	McKenzie
Baill, Miss M.E.	Templeton Jr. High	Glasgow	Wallace
Baill, Miss D.D.	Land, Roberts	Essex, Eng.	Fisher
Baill, Miss C.V.C.	Oriskany	Kitchik, Iowa	Longfellow
Baill, Miss E.M.	Van Horn	Toronto	Hoskins
Baill, Miss Jean	Richmond	Marquette	Davis
Baill, Miss P.H.	Queen Mary	Toronto, Ont.	Jackman
Baill, Miss H.	Richmond, Burnaby	Canadian, Que.	Wickman
Baill, Miss A.	Queen Elizabeth, Surrey	Kitchik, Ont.	Hoskins
Baill, Miss O.K.	Richmond, Burnaby	British, Eng.	Fish



Above: Marian McDonald (center), seen here in the 1990s, was president of the BCETA in the 1940s.

Left: A roster of exchange teachers and their placement schools. (BCETA archives)



The documents recount stories of experiences and records of the organization that supported the teachers, along with some historical context of social developments in BC. Rosemary was responsible for the 75th anniversary celebration of the BC exchange teachers in 1999 and started collecting materials for that event. She continued to be involved in the Association and gathered more materials, mostly from the books containing the minutes of most of the Executive meetings from 1924 to 2005, from the early Bulletins and later the Newlinks which were sent out monthly to all the visiting exchange teachers and fee-paying members. Her task now is to find an archive that can make them accessible to families who might want to research their ancestors, and to researchers interested in aspects of the history of education in the province. This carefully preserved century of documents is organized into binders that fit into just a little more than a banker's box.



*Exchange teachers came with families. These kids from Australia showed surprising resilience in the face of Canadian weather.*



*Gwynfel Jones with Tom Brunker, who went on to serve on the BC Retired Teachers' Association executive for many years.*

Can this collection of historical documents find a home before they end up in a trash can or paper recycling and are lost to the future? The persistent Rosemary Swinton won't give up until they find a permanent place in an archive!

**LARRY KUEHN** was President of the BC Teachers' Federation from 1981 to 1984. He is a member of the BCRTA Heritage Committee.

**Were you an exchange teacher? Write us at [postscript@bcrt.ca](mailto:postscript@bcrt.ca)**

**NEW**  
|

**RETIRED**  
|

# A Day in the Life of a Teacher

**W**hen a teacher plans to retire, what happens? That's a great question because every retired person I know operates on a very different lesson plan from mine. When I retired, I had some guidelines, which turned out to be helpful.

First, learn to say NO. Saying NO has been important for me.

I have had some lapses, and many of the times I forgot to say NO turned out for the best. But a teacher knows how to pivot when a student or parent pokes the wasp nest. I have pivoted on occasion.

Give yourself time to adjust. I took about a year to get settled into my status, a year when I did zero volunteer work or other activities. Well, we did move to the Island and build a new house, you know, small little activities that keep you out of trouble. During that year I was able to look around, see what my new community was all about, and think about how I might fit in and where I might make a difference. It was a great year. A different kind of busy.

So, what happened next? I have stories.

My wife, Maureen, and I spent almost 20 years as runners, and I had run two marathons, but couldn't keep up the training after retirement. When a technical running store opened in our community I took a part time job. I knew running and could talk the lingo of the runners who needed shoes and running clothes. The benefit for me was learning all about my new community. People from every walk of life are runners, and so I heard about pharmacy, doctoring, where to get an oil change

for the car, who served the best coffee after a run, fast food outlets, which church to attend and who the community movers and shakers were, politically, culturally, and socially.

Suddenly I was up to my eyebrows with the local running club. Remember the word NO? I forgot it for a while, but that opened more doors as I became friends with a host of different people of all occupations and backgrounds. And I learned some new skills, like how to organize a run for a special event or for fund raising. The coffee breaks afterwards deepened my experiences and contacts. It was all a positive learning experience.

For many years, even before I retired, I was a committed and practicing agnostic when it came to religion. After I retired, agnosticism lost its flavour until one day I admitted that I had become a lapsed agnostic. OMG, what now? Now turned out to be one of the local United Churches which was a great surprise to me.

I was welcomed by a very young Pastor and assistant Pastor and the congregation made me feel welcome. I became a greeter and suddenly I learned to know a whole new set of people in the community. Then we moved community and church. In the new church community, I once again temporarily forgot the NO rule. It is good for the male ego to be invited to volunteer. A word of caution to my male colleagues—park your ego.

I suddenly knew what LISTEN meant. And in the aftermath of a poor experience, I listen more carefully than ever. And Maureen is there always encouraging me to “pay attention to detail.”

**CLIFF BOLDT** served as President of the BC Retired Teachers' Federation from 2012 to 2014. He now lives in the Fernwood area of Victoria and is a member of the Lower Vancouver Island branch of BCRTA.





# ON THE ROAD

## FOR SENIORS' HEALTH AND WELLNESS

BY SALLY CAISLEY

**D**o you have any ideas for how to spend this grant money, Sally?" My summer slothfulness ended in late August with this question from Barb Mikulec, President of the Seniors Health & Wellness Institute (SHWI). She had just received a sizeable grant from a donor with the requirement to increase the delivery of the Institute's 47 PowerPoint workshops beyond the Lower Mainland. She needed no reminder that SHWI had an "Interior Coordinator" to attach to this request. That would be me.

As this elegant title implies, I am expected to liaise with presenters in eight communities throughout BC, outside of the Lower Mainland,

most of whom are retired teachers themselves. Given that the land mass of BC covers 944,735 square kilometres and, allowing a generous 100,000 sq km of that total to the Lower Mainland, that leaves approximately 845,000 sq km of "beyond Hope" interior and Vancouver Island for those eight presenters to cover. During the 15 years SHWI has been operating, outstanding efforts by presenters have resulted in even some remote communities making repeated requests for our materials. Still, the vastness of the Interior has always been problematic for reaching many senior audiences. As a resident of Christina Lake for 10 years, I once laid claim to the Boundary area as my network. Now residing

in Kelowna, I am beginning to rebuild a small footprint of workshop delivery in the post-COVID era.

In answer to Barb's question, I hatched a plan to increase both the recruitment of new presenters and the production levels of workshop delivery outside the Lower Mainland. I arbitrarily divided the province into four regions: the Island, the Kootenays, the Central Corridor, and the North. Travelling by car, I would visit the first two regions in the fall of 2023 and the second two in the spring of 2024. The SHWI executive approved the plan; Arnie Lambert, our BCRTA president provided a database of RTA presidents throughout BC so I could find those willing to meet with me. And my new Subaru had snow tires! Let the "Beautiful BC" moments begin.

This quixotic plan worked just fine in early October on Vancouver Island when catching ferries, negotiating the Malahat, and cruising on the four-lane Island Highway were my biggest driving obstacles. Island hospitality abounded as I met with four RTA presidents in lower Vancouver Island, Cowichan Valley, Nanaimo, and Parksville/Qualicum who willingly spent time sharing their knowledge of where seniors meet for learning opportunities in their communities. That knowledge was shared with the two SHWI presenters who live in Victoria and Nanaimo respectively and suddenly they saw their audience possibilities widening.

In early November, as I was preparing to tackle the Kootenay region, my earlier aplomb slipped into trepidation. Four mountain passes between Kelowna and Cranbrook awaited me. On Sally's scale of scary roads in BC, these are the three highest ranking:

- The Pennask Summit on the "Connector", or Hwy 97C, between Merritt and Kelowna at 1728m.

- The Kootenay Pass on Hwy 3 between Salmo and Creston, which at 1774m is the highest pass elevation in BC.
- The Pine Pass on Hwy 97N between Chetwynd and Mackenzie is at a mere 933m. However, if you leave the road at -30C, the snow is so deep you might not be found until June when both you and the snow had thawed.

True to its nature, the Kootenay Pass did not disappoint as I headed towards Creston on November 7th. The only snow on the road during five days of travel was at that summit. It was unplowed, slithery, slippery, and hiding in dense fog. My Subaru and I tucked behind a heavy transport truck travelling at 25 km/h for the descent until the snow ended and my white knuckles had turned pink again.

The same wonderful hospitality and willingness to help was waiting for me in Grand Forks, Rossland, Trail, Castlegar, Fruitvale, Creston, and Cranbrook from another four presidents of RTA's: Boundary Area, Kootenay/Columbia, Creston, and Cranbrook. The two SHWI presenters in this corner of the province are experienced facilitators and have built up impressive networks but they needed help finding new recruits to keep up with rising demand. During November, the Boundary and Kootenay RTA presidents I had visited printed a recruitment ad for SHWI in their respective newsletters. Positive results ensued.

My Subaru and I now await spring road conditions before adventuring up and down the Central Okanagan corridor and into the North. RTA presidents in those regions take note—you may be hearing from me soon to meet face-to-face once the snow melts. Together we can increase senior audience access to SHWI workshops in your communities. •

**SALLY CAISLEY** has been a member of three BCRTA branches—South Peace River RTA, Boundary RTA, and currently Central Okanagan RTA. She has been delivering SHWI workshops since 2011.



# A BARELY VISIBLE CRISIS



## THE GROWING PROBLEM OF LONELINESS AND ISOLATION AMONGST SENIORS

**BY BARRIE STREET**

### **TRUTH OVERHEARD**

I was in a café recently and hearing one elderly person whisper to another: *What is the number one silent killer among seniors?* She continued: *Loneliness.*

An integral part of the human psyche is to be social and coexist with other people. My purpose is to document the crucial issue of senior isolation and loneliness, and to suggest ways we can help seniors help themselves.

### **A GLOBAL CONCERN**

The explosion in the numbers of seniors worldwide is a critical issue. The UN believes the number of seniors will more than double, rising from 761 million in 2021 to 1.6 billion in 2050. In the next 20 years, it's estimated that one out of every four people in Canada will be a senior. The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared that the trend in loneliness could become a global health threat.

## **LONELINESS AMONG SENIORS**

Most seniors naturally crave human contact, but circumstances may prevent them from forming connections at a time when they may be losing their existing social connections.

While loneliness may be experienced at any age, older adults are at an increased risk of loneliness because they are more likely to face challenges such as living alone, losing family and friends, suffering from chronic illness, and reduced social networks. Aging and retirement can bring on poverty, low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, lack of transportation, and fear of becoming a burden. Any of these factors can sap interest, steal energy, and seal a senior off from social interaction. Some have no one to call for support, or even to ask a simple question.

## **HOW YOU CAN HELP SENIORS OVERCOME LONELINESS**

- ✓ Visit them in their home
- ✓ Talk to them on the phone, even briefly; check out the “The 8-minute rule”
- ✓ Help them with transportation
- ✓ Empower them to take steps for social interaction
- ✓ Suggest that they own a pet for company (if they can care for it)
- ✓ Advise them to join community groups
- ✓ Encourage them to bridge the digital divide, thereby opening a myriad of opportunities

## **SOME STEPS SENIORS CAN TAKE TO OVERCOME LONELINESS**

- ✓ Track down friends on social media. If this would be new for you, many libraries provide computers, and have at least one librarian on staff who can help you get started.
- ✓ Go online and research all the social resources available for seniors. Seniors centres can help you with this.
- ✓ Take advantage of community resources, such as senior centres and places of worship, which often offer various group activities.
- ✓ Many community centres offer significant amounts of programming for seniors.

- ✓ Exercise is crucial, and walking is one of the most beneficial exercises. Look for walking partners.
- ✓ Cultivate hobbies and pastimes: painting, drawing, cooking, crafts, book clubs, photography, chess, gardening, reading, computers, carpentry, online courses, jigsaw puzzles, pickleball (the fastest growing sport for seniors in North America).
- ✓ Become a volunteer: this can become one of the most rewarding of endeavors and introduce you to both other volunteers and to those you are serving.
- ✓ Contact your doctor, who can provide you with appropriate help and connections.
- ✓ Start conversations with strangers who are walking their dog, standing at a bus stop, in a supermarket lineup, or in a café. Even casual, one-time conversations can be life-giving.

## **AN APP FOR SENIORS**

- ✓ Zeni (zeniarts.com) is a free app which is in development. Fluffy, a virtual dog – acts as an emotional companion--uses advanced artificial intelligence to converse with seniors. The app is powered by AI with training in cognitive behavioural therapy. The purpose of Zeni is to encourage seniors to engage in conversation. Angeline Guo created the app while volunteering with seniors and experiencing their social isolation and exclusion.

## **HELP FOR SENIORS: SENIOR.LINK**

- ✓ Senior.link enables seniors to receive messages and telephone calls from volunteers. Coordinators set up groups of volunteers in their community. Volunteers are then assigned to seniors, providing both volunteers and seniors a way to interact.

## **OTHER SUGGESTIONS**

- ✓ Do consider reaching out to a senior and lending a helping hand. Your support could make an immeasurable impact.

Yours in fitness,

*Barrie*

www.Over50andfit.ca



# BUCKAROO JAKE & CALICO CAROL

EDUCATORS AND ENTERTAINERS



COWBOY JAKE was born Jake Conkin in the late 1930's in the hamlet of Slocan Park, on the Slocan River. Slocan Park is to be distinguished from the village of Slocan, BC, which is 36 km to the north. The village of Slocan has a sizeable population of 345. But Slocan Park is much smaller than that. It was – and is – unincorporated. It's small.

Jake's mother Lola was Postmaster for the Slocan Park area starting in 1945. At first, the post office was in his bedroom. Jake remembers waking up to find strangers standing beside his bed, purchasing stamps. Later, his parents added on to the house and opened a combination store and post office.

Later still, Jake helped his father Sam disassemble several shacks from the Japanese internment camp at Lemon Creek, a few miles north up the Slocan Valley. The lumber was used to build the new Slocan Park store and service station.

Before he attended high school, Jake's whole world was the mile-and-a-half around his home there, with the exception of the occasional trip to the dentist in Nelson.

But when he was only eight, something happened that changed Jake forever.

*It happened like this: Out playing in my yard in Slocan Park one day, I became aware of a low-throated rumbling, building in intensity... soon enough the ground was shaking as well. I sat on the upper rail of our fence and waited, watching the road. Something was coming. To my absolute delight, a herd of horses passed me... 4 cowboys were moving that herd, which I later learned had come all the way from Idaho. It was a thrilling sight that never left my dreams, and was the start of my cowboy career. I nagged my folks but they never got me a pony – money was very scarce in those days!*

That wondrous feeling as an eight-year-old perhaps explains how Jake eventually put together a traveling poetry and music rodeo that reached thousands of students in schools across BC. Alongside his life partner, of course. And we shouldn't forget that that yodeling cow named Annabelle... But we're getting ahead of ourselves...

## BEGINNINGS

After graduating in just the second class from Mount Sentinel Senior Secondary, Jake worked for a while, then decided to become a teacher. When studying to become a teacher in Victoria, he met Carol, who was from the big city of Revelstoke. They bonded over a mutual love of dancing.



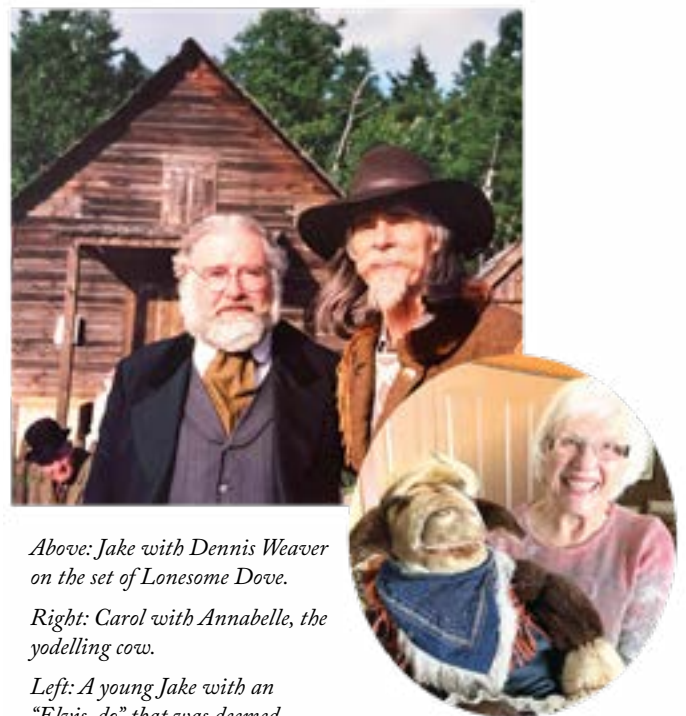
Carol was a year ahead of him, so he worked hard to complete his degree in one year. They both found jobs in the Kootenays, his at Perry Siding Elementary, hers in Castlegar, and they married after their first year of teaching.

Blessed with identical twin boys in 1961, their great joy was replaced with devastating grief as one, then the other was diagnosed with leukemia. Jake and Carol lost Kevin and Kory, at ages 3 and 4, nine months apart. It was during this very sad time that they found out that Carol was pregnant again, this time with fraternal twins Laurelyn and Bret.

Over the years they worked in school districts "from Golden to Castlegar, Nakusp, Nelson, and Vancouver." Jake ended his career with 18 years as a principal in Winlaw.

## EARLY RETIREMENT

Then Jake found himself retired at the age of 48, and "needed something to do." Through a friend, he "lucked into an invitation to the famous Douglas Lake Ranch in BC and the Waldron Ranch in AB—two of Canada's largest working ranches. I



*Above: Jake with Dennis Weaver on the set of Lonesome Dove.*

*Right: Carol with Annabelle, the yodelling cow.*

*Left: A young Jake with an "Elvis-do" that was deemed inappropriate for teachers.*



*“A cattle drive of 10,000 head...  
It was wild, dusty, and dirty—  
a dream come true!”*

had the pleasure of participating in a cattle drive of 10,000 head.... It was wild, dusty, and dirty—a dream come true! Thus my passion for all things cowboy was renewed.”

Jake’s reawakened love for “all things cowboy” led him into Cowboy Poetry circles, where he’s had extensive involvement over many years. A lifetime member of the Alberta Cowboy Poetry Association, he also produced the very first Cowboy Poetry and Music event in BC and has appeared at dozens of events across BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Jake’s book of cowboy poetry, *Silk ‘N’ Silver*, has sold copies all around the world.

He produced the *Cowboy Poetry & Trappings* event in 1991, held at the O’Keefe Historic Ranch in Vernon, BC. It was the first event of its kind in BC – perhaps the precursor to the Spoken Word Slam events that are so popular today – except cowboy themed of course. Cowboys and cowboy writers would come from far and wide to participate.

Jake’s immersion in cowboy culture also led to appearances on television in the well-known series

Lonesome Dove and a CBC movie feature *The War Between Us*. A special memory was an event in Nampa, Idaho, where he sang *Home on the Range* with country legend Kitty Wells.

Meanwhile he also authored a trilogy, the *Little Jake Series*, featuring a small “buckaroo” named Jake growing up on a ranch, stories which included *Little Jake’s close friend Many Skies*, an aboriginal girl. The books were launched at the Quilchena Ranch as the story line is based on the kids growing up in the cattle country of the Nicola Valley. These stories were later optioned for television, with animated segments appearing on the APTN TV network and online as webisodes. There was even an Apple iTunes game based on the series.

### THE COWBOY TOURING SHOWS

Many BCRTA members might be familiar with Cowboy Jake’s educational work. He produced the “Buckaroo Jake and Calico Carol” kids’ show to promote everything cowboy to the younger generation in Western Canada and toured it in schools and libraries across Alberta and BC, performing as many as 52 shows a year.



*The Little Jake and Many Skies series of books inspired a cartoon series on television. (video still from Little Jake Productions)*

# 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.



As the show's title reveals, he did not ride alone. Once Carol retired from teaching she learned ventriloquism and Jake augmented his cowboy skills with some crowd-thrilling rope tricks. The show features those rope tricks, some tall tales, cowboy poetry, cowboy songs, and the magic of ventriloquism with Calico Carol and her "adorable yodeling cow puppet" Annabelle.

Teachers have been able to use the show to introduce students to not just the "lingo", artifacts, and tall tales of cowboy culture, but also to give them a sense of the lives of real cowboys and cowgirls, which they can compare to the romanticized television and film portrayals they had seen prior to the show. This in turn lets students grasp the ways in which cowboy life has changed, including becoming an occupation for both men and women, while it remains an active livelihood.

A report from Gordon Sargent Primary School in Nelson describes the typical reaction of young students to the show. "The children were excited about meeting a real cowboy. They watched and listened with interest... They also had lots of questions..." The show inspired a series of learning centers that explored the historical and present-day realities of cowboy life. While the kids were assimilating a lot of cowboy facts and enjoying more than a little bannock, details of the show stayed with them. Some of the same cowboy inspiration that had so overwhelmed 8-year-old Jake clearly came across to the kids. One student named Kevin reported, "I liked the way he talked and I learned a lot of new things. The very best part was the tall tale."

Along with their "dear sidekick" Bonnie Hindley, in later years Jake and Carol also began presenting the show in seniors' centres across the Kootenays, where it has been a roaring success. Many of the seniors could relate elements of the show to the country life they had experienced in younger years.



*Jake and Carol are well-known to seniors in the Kootenays. Here they are featured on the cover of the magazine **Discover Sixty-Five: Kootenay Seniors Living**.*

Jake and Carol have credited their own well-being to active involvement in cowboy culture and continuing connections to the community. When reporter Karma Halleran visited Jake and Carol in their Castlegar home she was struck by their vigor and warmth. "They were both so welcoming," wrote Karma, "country hospitality is obviously deeply ingrained."

Happy trails, Buckaroos! •

This story was compiled by the editors. PostScript offers thanks to Jake and Carol and to Tonya Lefebvre and Karma Halleran of **Penny Wise Ads** for permission to include material from an article that appeared in **Discover Sixty-Five Magazine**.

**JAKE AND CAROL CONKIN** live in Castlegar.

## 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!



# LES SKIPSEY AT 100

## NANAIMO LADYSMITH RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Les Skipsey was born in Port Alberni in 1924 and although he's older and the world has no resemblance to the one that existed a century ago, he is still the elegant, quiet-spoken, committed man he always was. As Les turns one hundred, the Nanaimo Ladysmith branch believe he should be celebrated for his achievements as an innovative educator and one of the founders of Nanaimo Ladysmith's unique educational history collection.

After spending a brief time in the local lumber industry, Les set his sights on becoming a teacher. He had been inspired by his own teachers, and desired to be of service to the community in some capacity. He left Vancouver Island to attend UBC and on his return began teaching English, Mathematics, and Social Studies at the middle school level in Nanaimo. By 1964, Les had developed an interest in adults who wanted to finish their high school education, so he returned to school himself and got a Certificate in Counselling from the University of Victoria and then an MEd from a Washington State university. During this time Les developed a night school program and started working in the field on a part-time basis. He

eventually became the District's Director of Adult Education. After Malaspina College (now the University of Vancouver Island) was established, Les joined the faculty as their Work Experience Coordinator.

Les's memories of his career are still clear and include among other things being energized by his students, despite the large classes and piles upon piles of marking. He also recalls the various people who influenced him throughout his career, in particular T.E. Bennett, a school principal, who provided him with a positive role model early in his career. Les also has many interesting stories, one of which still makes him smile. During his first year of teaching, the staff and students got sent home because, despite his best efforts, the janitor had not been able to get the furnace hot enough to raise the classrooms' temperatures beyond 32 degrees Fahrenheit. Best of all, Les chuckles, it was a day off with pay, an unheard of occurrence that never happened again.

Never one to shy away from speaking up about issues he considers important, when asked for some words of wisdom for new teachers he quietly and firmly says, "Be an understanding, considerate adult. Have a real interest in your pupils and what they are doing. Don't talk down to them. After all, they may help pay your pension one day!"

Retirement from active teaching didn't stop Les's involvement with education or the community at large; rather it energized him to set new goals and seek new challenges. During his retirement he has, among other things, hosted a radio program and been a regular guest speaker talking about the history of the mid-island region.



*“Be an understanding, considerate adult. Have a real interest in your pupils and what they are doing. Don’t talk down to them.”*



In 1984 Les helped establish a local chapter of the BCRTA, becoming its first president, and was active in the branch’s activities until recently. Les also served as President of the BCRTA during a time of significant changes in personnel, the location of the office, and the introduction of computers. Les most definitely thinks that belonging to the BCRTA is an important aspect of being a retired teacher; he believes BCRTA provides support and pertinent information to the members, while at the local level membership allows everyone an opportunity to gain, maintain, or make new friendships.

It could be argued that Les’s most enduring legacy is the diverse Nanaimo-Ladysmith Skipsey Educational Heritage Collection that he, along

with Gavin Halkett, helped establish. When asked why he thought that the NLRTA should have a heritage collection his answer was clear and simple, “I felt it was important to preserve the area’s educational heritage, for the community, for our young teachers and future researchers, because as someone said to me, if we didn’t do it would all be lost. I also wanted to do what Pierre Berton suggested in his quote, ‘Giving the Future a Past’, because I believe that without preserving the past we can’t build a future.”

Les Skipsey is a fountain of information, especially about education in BC and the history of the mid-island region. Living life to the fullest both personally and professionally, Les throughout his long life has honoured his belief that as an educator you are a role model and as such you should have a positive attitude, be respectful, and stay true to yourself and where you come from.

Les Skipsey is a significant man on many levels and as he turns 100-years-young, he can without a doubt be celebrated as a respected teacher and person, and as an example of remaining active in retirement.



*The Nanaimo-Ladysmith Skipsey Educational Heritage Collection. (NLRTA)*

**The NANAIMO LADYSMITH RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

includes Nelson Allen, Barbara Allisen, Carol Baird-Krul, Deryck Cowling, Pat Parkin, Laurie Shaw, Janet Watt.



# ***DID YOU KNOW?***

## ***FASCINATING HEALTH FACTS***

**BY PAT THIESEN**  
BCRTA WELL-BEING COMMITTEE

### ***JAVA AND YOUR JUJU***



Despite some controversy, coffee is loaded with health benefits. It's rich in antioxidants, and some studies have linked coffee intake to longevity and a reduced risk of type 2 diabetes, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases, and numerous other illnesses. The most beneficial intake amount appears to be 3–4 cups per day. But please note, excessive caffeine intake may lead to health issues like insomnia, heart palpitations, and reflux, and you should avoid high-calorie, high-sugar additives like sweetened creamer.

**"Coffee and Health Benefits" (Easy access by searching "Mayo Clinic Coffee Health")**

**"Coffee and Decreased Mortality" (Easy access by searching "ACP Journals Coffee and Decreased Mortality")**

**"Coffee and Mortality" (Easy access by searching "Annals of Internal Medicine Coffee Health")**

### ***SING OUT FOR HEALTH!***

Decades of research have shown that singing individually and, even more, in groups is highly beneficial. It reduces your stress, stimulates your immune responses to help fend off illness, improves lung function (and blood oxygenation), generates a higher sense of wellbeing and meaningful connection by releasing oxytocin (the feel-good hormone), helps in dealing with grief, improves your mood, helps improve articulation, and even enhances memory in people with dementia. So go on, improve your life, get happy. Join a choir!



**"Choir Signing Improves Health" Oxford University**

**"Group Singing and Bereavement" British Medical Journal**

## HELLO DARKNESS MY OLD FRIEND

Too much light while you are sleeping can interfere with your health. 522 participants (men and women) ages 63-84, found that any amount of light exposure during sleep hours was linked to higher risks for diabetes, obesity, and high blood pressure. A small study with 20 young people similarly showed that any amount of light while sleeping “revved up” the fight-or-flight response, such as raising the heart rate.



- Keep night lights dim and closer to the floor.
- Use soft light rather than bright white or blue.
- When sleeping, consider an eye mask to block the glare from outdoor and indoor lights.
- Consider light-blocking curtains or liners for bedroom windows
- SAFETY FIRST: Keep enough lights on to prevent falls.

**“Light During Sleep is Bad for You”**

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/wellness/2022/12/01/night-light-bad-sleep/>

**“Light, Obesity, Diabetes, and High Blood Pressure”**

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2022/06/220622130748.htm>

**“Light and Metabolism”** <https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2113290119/>

## KEEP YOUR CHIN UP: OPTIMISM BOOSTS LONGEVITY

Harvard researchers studied women from various racial and ethnic groups to see if the optimism-longevity connection held up. Researchers determined that women with exceptional longevity—that is, aged 90 or above—had a 5.4 percent longer lifespan if they scored in the top fourth on the optimism test. Optimists are likely to see the causes of failure or negative experiences as temporary rather than permanent, specific rather than global, and external rather than internal. That perspective helps them see the positives of change more easily. Optimism can be learned and strengthened by practicing deliberate, conscious gratitude and working toward positive rather than negative self-talk.

**“Optimism, Lifestyle, and Longevity” (Journal of the American Geriatrics Society)**

**Search “Self-Talk and Health Mayo Clinic”**

**Search “Optimism Improves Women’s Health May Clinic”**





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®



## 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

## 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 [bcrt.johnson.ca](https://bcrt.johnson.ca) or call 1.877.989.2600



# GAMES LADY

## ROUND II

BY PAT THIESEN

Over the last few months, my friends and family wanted to get into some favourite games from the past as well as some newer ones that didn't involve complicated instructions.

Let's begin with a really cute dice game called Spots, a quick-moving game with humorous depictions of spotted dogs from 2022.



### SPOTS

**Age:** 8+. **Players:** 2-7

**Gameplay:** Each box comes with 40 not-quite-perfect dice, 32 spotted dog cards, a bag of bones (rewards), and 22 “tricks” cards. Play begins with dealing 3 “dog” cards to each player. The goal is to complete a set of 6 dogs by rolling dice and placing them on the dogs’ spots. Players make choices, while pushing their luck to complete each card to win.

**The Fun:** Bury too many unused spots, and all the dice from all your dogs go away!



### QUARTO

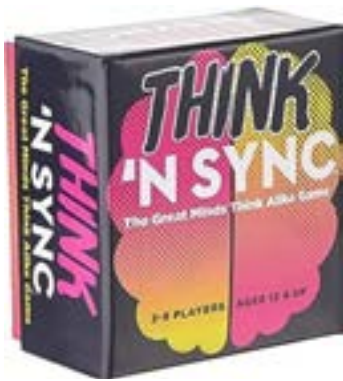
Quarto is a more advanced version of Connect Four from 1991.

**Age:** 8+. **Players:** 2. **Time per round:** Brief.

**Gameplay:** Quarto is played with 16 pieces on a 4x4 board. Each piece has four dichotomous attributes—each piece is either light or dark, tall, or short, square or round, and hollow or solid. The object is to place the fourth piece in a row in which all four pieces have at least one attribute in common. The twist is that your opponent gets to choose the piece you place on the board each turn.

**Fact:** This abstract strategy game has won several awards including the *Mensa Select Top 5 Best Games of 1993* and the *Best Bet Award from the Canadian Toy Testing Council* in 1994..

**The Fun:** Trying to win a round against my 8-year-old granddaughter. Hard to do!



## THINK 'N SYNC

*Age:* 10+. *Players:* 5-9.

**Gameplay:** Decide on a time limit (or score to achieve) for a round. The players pair up to compete against each other pair. The reader states the Topic from one of the cards in the box and gives a suggested category printed on the topic. A verbal countdown of 3 – 2 – 1 is given. Each player then calls out their response. If they respond with the same answer, they are awarded a point or a token. The reader then selects another category from the same Topic card for the next pair to answer and so forth until a winner is declared.

**Fact:** This game has become a real favourite.

**The Fun:** How many different responses are possible and how every other player will comment on what she/he would have said.

*We don't stop playing because we grow old;  
we grow old because we stop playing.*



## SNIPPETS

*Age:* 10+. *Players:* 2-8.

**Gameplay:** Be the first wordsmith to win 3 Snippets cards. A “snippet” is a short sequence of consecutive letters that can be found at the beginning, middle, or end of words. Place one of three decks of cards (Easy, Medium, Hard) face down on the table with a 60 second timer. To begin, flip over 1 card. Each player tries to write down as many words containing the “Snippet” before the 60 seconds runs out. (Anything goes for words, so long as they can be found on the internet). Once time runs out, players compare words and cross out any exact matches. The group can also decide if a word is invalid. Each player receives 1 point for each remaining word on their list. Creativity, as well as brainiac bonus points (3 or 5) can be awarded by a group decision. The round winner is the one with most points.

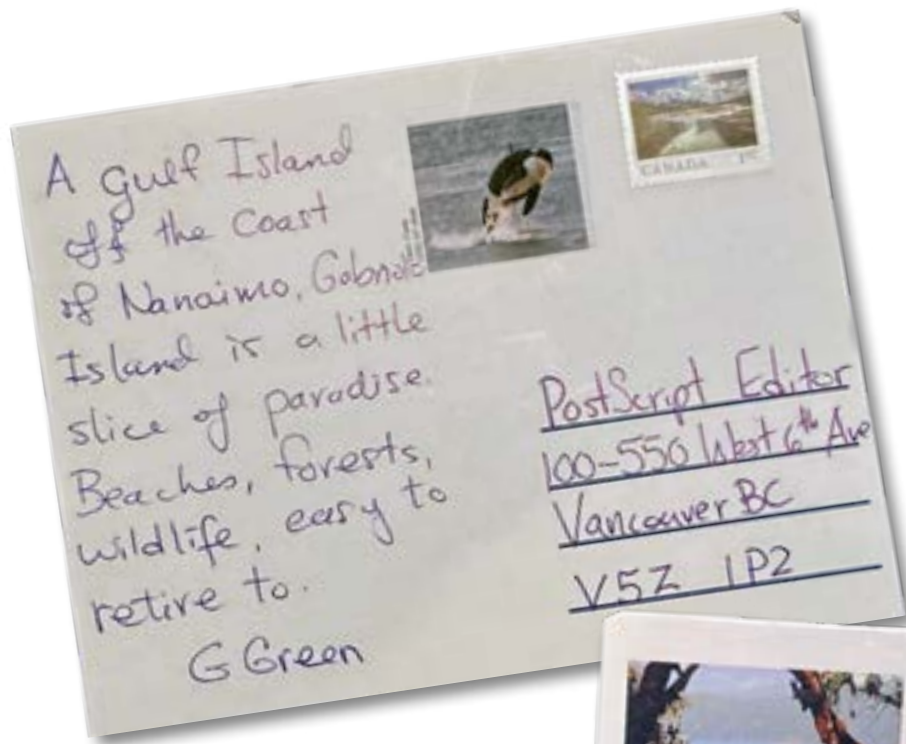
**Fun:** Making that huge decision whether a word is worth extra points! •



A BCRTA director, **PAT THIESEN** is a frequent contributor to our magazine. As a Grade 6 teacher she loved to introduce her kids to Math Games Friday.

# Wish You Were Here

## POSTCARDS FROM BCRTA HOME TOWNS







# ASPIRING AUTHORS UNITE!

PostScript Magazine presents a **Writers' Workshop** ONLINE VIA ZOOM

**Tuesday, June 25, 2024 at 10AM**

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS



**Nancy Hundal**  
Author of 15 books



**Patti Shales Lefkos**  
Memoir



**Janet Nicol**  
Biography & Fiction

All BCRTA members with an interest in writing are welcome to attend!



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

## WORKSHOP HOSTS



**Karen Cooper**  
Assistant Editor  
PostScript Magazine

**BCRTA MEMBERS REGISTER FREE AT [BCRTA.CA/WRITERS](https://bcрта.ca/writers)**

## 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.bcrta.ca](http://www.bcrta.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@bcrta.ca](mailto:kristi@bcrta.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@bcrta.ca>](mailto:kristi@bcrta.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.bcrta.ca](http://www.bcrta.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:

---

---

---

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)

**MAKE SURE BCRTA HAS YOUR CURRENT EMAIL TO GET NEWS AND MEMBER OFFERS DIRECT TO YOUR INBOX.**



**Keep up your Connections!**

- BCRTA's email newsletter
- BCRTA and advocacy news
- Useful links and articles
- Special member offers

*View articles online and subscribe at*  
**[www.bcrt.ca/publications](http://www.bcrt.ca/publications)**

## CLASSIFIEDS

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Parent Support Services Society is looking for Volunteer Facilitators for our Parenting Support Groups, and Parenting Book Clubs. More information can be found at <https://www.parentsupportbc.ca/get-involved> or email to [volunteer@parentsupportbc.ca](mailto:volunteer@parentsupportbc.ca) or call at 604-669-1616 ext. 104.

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).

### CO-HOUSING

**The Coastal Village** – a community-centered neighbourhood modelled on cohousing. Construction commences Fall 2024.

Membership required to purchase/rent. Visit <https://thecoastalvillage.ca/events> to register for events and webinars (online and live in Sechelt).

### VOLUNTEER PRESENTERS

**SENIORS HEALTH AND WELLNESS INSTITUTE** is actively recruiting new presenters to deliver their well-established workshops addressing topics of interest to senior audiences across the province. Expenses reimbursed. Confidence in front of an audience and some PowerPoint knowledge are required. Check out [seniorshelpingseniors.ca](http://seniorshelpingseniors.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.

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

Tours are run through Square1travel of Courtenay and is a full service BC registered agency.

**COSTA RICA TRIP** BCRTA member Alex Campbell is organizing and leading another seniors' group trip to sensational COSTA RICA. The dates are: January 16 - 28, 2025, with an option to extend. For an itinerary and other details, please email Alex at [kocho@shaw.ca](mailto:kocho@shaw.ca)

## ACCOMMODATION OFFERED

**New Zealand** home for rent: Karikari Peninsula, subtropical Northland. Gorgeous views. Pristine beaches, world class golf course, winery, charming historical villages, Bay of Islands and Cape Reinga all nearby.

November: \$1900, December: \$1900  
Contact: [rosemarnelson46@gmail.com](mailto:rosemarnelson46@gmail.com)

**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)

**Phoenix Holiday** For rent: Beautiful four bedroom house in Sunny Peoria, 30 minutes from Sky Harbour Airport.

Gated Community complete with pool steps away from house. Close to shopping, hiking, Mariners Spring Training ball park and miles of biking paths.

Pets welcome. House is great for winter getaway in the sun. Minimum 30 day rental.

Contact [pvmatt@shaw.ca](mailto:pvmatt@shaw.ca) for more info.

## ACCOMMODATION OFFERED

**House exchange** - I'd like to exchange houses with a couple in Nelson for 12 days in September of this year. Our only grandchild lives there. I have a beautiful 3 bedroom, 3 bath house in rural Alberni Valley. Lots to do and see. It is on acreage and is fully fenced, dog ok.

Tofino and Bamfield are very close to us.

[parkin621@gmail.com](mailto:parkin621@gmail.com) 250-951-6216

## EVENTS

### Vancouver Opera Guild

Join the Vancouver Opera Guild on the annual Spring Tour to New York March 10-17th 2025.

Operas include:

- Fidelio (Davidsen),
- La Boheme (Soddy, Calleja)
- Aida ( Jagde, Owens)
- Moby Dick ( Kamenensek, Jovanovich, Costello, Mattei)
- the Finals of the Laffont Opera Competition Concert .

For more information contact Great Expeditions 604 257 2040 or [www.vancouveroperaguild.com](http://www.vancouveroperaguild.com).

### MARPOLE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

invites you to Treats, Treasures and Music on July 13, 2024. Membership and volunteer opportunities at this historical site. Visit [www.marpolehistorical.ca](http://www.marpolehistorical.ca)

## LIFELONG LEARNING



Third Age Learning at Kwantlen (TALK) is celebrating 25 years of providing people over 50 with creative and stimulating educational experiences and activities.

Affiliated with Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU), TALK provides both in-person and online non-credit courses on a wide variety of topics, plus Philosophers' Corners (open to the public with no registration necessary), field trips and special lectures, all in KPU's catchment areas of Richmond, Surrey and Langley.

Membership is just \$10.

Find out more at [www.kpu.ca/talk](http://www.kpu.ca/talk).

# crossword

## Heads Up!

By Lynn Hembree

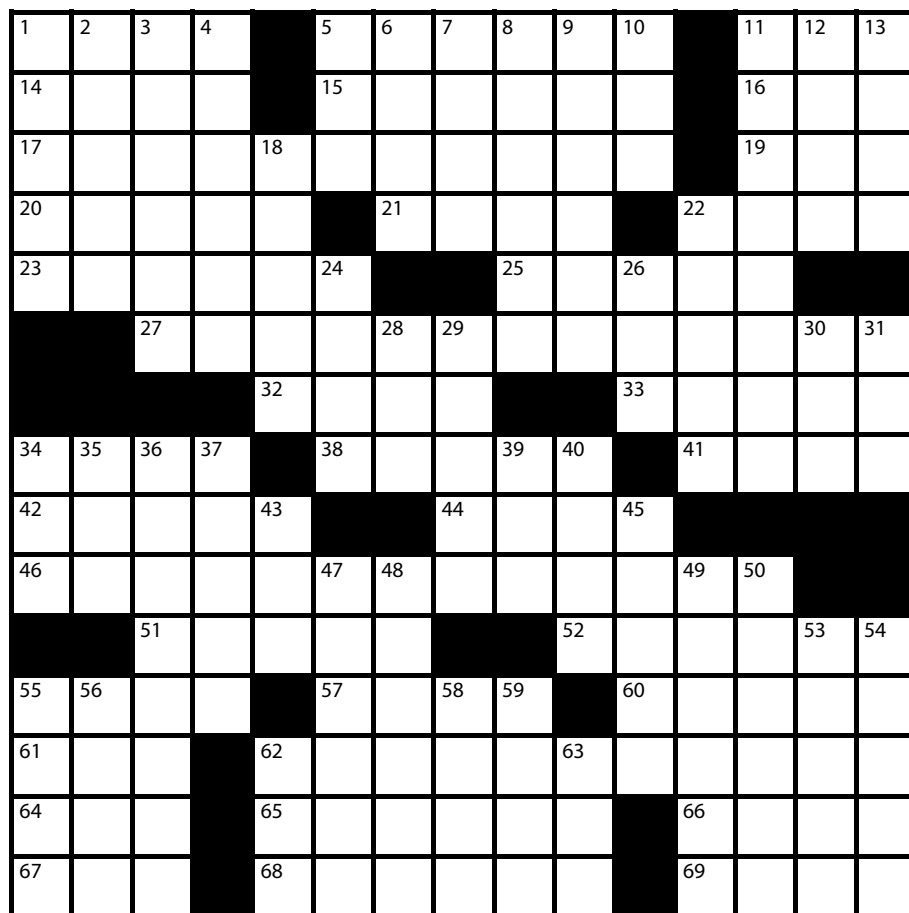
Email: [crossword@bcrt.ca](mailto:crossword@bcrt.ca)

### ACROSS

1. Glorifying poems
5. North Shore mountain
11. "\_\_\_ alive!"
14. Provide for free, informally
15. Largest school district in BC
16. Clean, with "up"
17. With 46-across, wise advice for a group sailing charter (3 wds)
19. Pressure measure, briefly
20. Daisylike bloom
21. Exhausted, with "in"
22. Home for eggs
23. Gazed (in a creepy way)
25. Regurgitate?
27. Confidential operation (2 wds)
32. Flat or snow
33. "Night Moves" Bob
34. "At Wit's End" humourist Bombeck
38. Baby buggies in Britain
41. Bound
42. Boys of "Good Vibrations"
44. Mountain goat's perch
46. End of 17-across (3 wds)
51. Jones of "Come Away With Me"
52. Sounds from a pen
55. Avoid
57. 1 of 100
60. Finnish phone network
61. Irish carrier, with Lingus
62. Safety advice: "Always wear a PFD \_\_\_!" (2 wds)
64. "\_\_\_ and downs"
65. Fowl transportation? (2 wds)
66. "Trick" joint
67. 4G \_\_\_ (cellular standard)
68. How \_\_\_ you? (2 wds)
69. Biology lab supply

### DOWN

1. Base "8"
2. Use a divining rod
3. Behaves theatrically



4. Geometric solid
5. Inclusive groups (acronym)
6. Paul, of "Ant-Man"
7. Approximately (2 wds)
8. Planet with an unfortunate name?
9. Calm
10. May precede -ball or -let
11. Contagious skin infection
12. Chuck
13. What a dental hygienist might ask of you
18. Build
22. Something to contemplate
24. Post-nasal \_\_\_
26. May follow jeep-, knick- or met-
28. Make a mistake
29. Instruct
30. Edible mushroom with pores, not gills
31. Before, poetically
34. Recede
35. "Riddle me \_\_\_", kid's book by Joy Cowley
36. Acronym for healthcare worker who treats addicts holistically (2wds)
37. Follow, as a tip (2 wds)
39. Non-invasive test for viewing blood vessels, acronym
40. \_\_\_ souci
43. He:him or she:\_\_\_
45. Fixin' to
47. "Friends" role
48. Famous last words (2 wds)
49. Sound near Gold River
50. Annoying (var.)
53. Contagious skin infection
54. Wiser
55. "Better Call \_\_\_" (2015 TV drama)
56. "\_\_\_-athlon, Olympic T & F combo
58. Northern building organization, acronym
59. Ski lift
62. First of "The 5Ws"
63. Mineral deposit, like copper

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

# Sudoku

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

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

## TO SOLVE SUDOKU PUZZLES:

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

## SEND COMPLETED PUZZLES TO:

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

## FOR MORE ONLINE SUDOKU PUZZLES:

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

## DEADLINE FOR SUDOKU AND CROSSWORD SUBMISSION IS:

April 30, 2024

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

## Crossword:

Tom McCubbin, Prince George  
Art Benzer, Trail  
Bill Kennedy, Campbell River

## Sudoku:

Trevor Erlendson, Langley  
Shannon Riedlinger, Surrey  
Adeline Hamm, Prince George

## SPRING 2024 CROSSWORD SOLUTION

1	I	2	R	3	O	4	N		5	M	6	E	7	G	8	A		9	C	10	I	11	R	12	C	13	A
14	L	E	V	I					15	A	X	I	L					16	I	L	I	A	D				
17	L	E	A	N					18	L	I	B	S					19	R	E	T	R	O				
	20	F	L	O					21	R	A	L	B	O				22	U	Q	U	E	T				
									23	A	Y	E	S					24	S	U	M						
25	C	A	R	A	T	S									29	S	A	E				30	S	P	A		
33	A	M	I	C	I					34	S	H	A	G					36	S	L	A	B				
37	R	E	D	H	O	T				38	P	O	K	E				39	R	L	I	L	Y				
40	E	D	G	E					41	Y	A	L	E					42	A	I	D	E	S				
43	D	I	E						44	S	R	S						45	A	D	D	E	R	S			
									46	S	A	O						47	A	S	C	I					
	49	S	M	E	L	L				51	T	H	E	R	O			52	S	E	S		53		54		
55	S	H	I	V	A					56	H	E	R	O				57	P	A	I	L				58	
59	J	O	K	E	R					60	R	A	G	S				61	I	S	L	E					
62	P	E	O	N	Y					63	O	D	E	S				64	T	Y	K	E					

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



[facebook.com/BCRTA](https://facebook.com/BCRTA)



[twitter.com/bcrtat1](https://twitter.com/bcrtat1)



# Obituaries

Location listed is the area given as "last taught"



Alder, Frank H.	Coquitlam	Daniel, Brian	Mission
Alder, Jill	Coquitlam	Dargatz, Shirley A.	Chilliwack
Allinson, Alvin R.	Beneficiary	Darvell, Donna E.	Vancouver
Amarilli, Giorgio M.	Victoria	De La Torre, Pilar	Surrey
Bain, Kathleen Joy	Vancouver	Dempster, Lois Elaine	Cowichan Valley
Baird, Joan	Burnaby	Douglas, Trudy	Vancouver
Beech, Edward	Vancouver	Durkin, Joanne	North Vancouver
Bell, Jen	Coquitlam	Ewert, S. Fred	Mission
		Ferguson, Ruth E.	Lake Cowichan
Bermbach, Bernard P. W.	S. Okanagan	Ford, Calvin	Vernon
Bertuzzi, Robert	Kootenay - Columbia	Fowkes, William	Quesnel
Blasner, Ronald	Victoria	Fraser, George G.	S. Okanagan
Bohmert, Peter	Delta	Froom, Donald F.	Cent. Okanagan
Bousfield, Tony	Delta	Gabriel, Joann	Nicola/Similkameen
Bouthot, Marilyn L.	Coquitlam	Gaisford, Ruth A.	Vancouver
Bozman, Patricia R.	Campbell River	Gale, Anne E.	North Vancouver
Bradbury, Russell W.	Nanaimo - Ladysmith	Gaspar, Patricia A.	Surrey
Bradley, Lorraine W.	Trail	Glanfield, Patricia Joan	Shuswap
Challenger, Doreen J.	Kamloops	Greenough, Loretta	Coquitlam
Colombo, Joy	Cranbrook	Groff, John	Port Hardy
Conway, Jean M.	Sooke	Hall, Kenneth A	S. Peace River
Copping, Joyce W.	Campbell River	Hamel, Johanne	Penticton
Cordoni, Alfred	Burnaby	Hancherow, Robert L	Kamloops
Crawford, Roy	Cowichan Valley	Hattrick, Andrew	Vancouver
Crossley, Patricia	Vancouver	Hehn, Teresa	Victoria
Dailyde, Victor K.	Victoria	Hendel, Mary A.	Richmond

Higginson, B. Irene	Kimberley	Roots, Frederick F.	Vancouver
Holoboff, Lawrence	Vancouver	Saunders, Gary M.	Vancouver
Hubner, Leo	Howe Sound	Say, Anthony	Shuswap
Huggins, Doreen E.	Vernon	Shannon, David C.	S. Peace River
Imrich, P. Jim	Prince George	Shepherd, William Harry	Vernon
Kirby, John	Cariboo-Chilcotin	Shipmaker, Doris B.	Shuswap
Kopan, Joyce	Sooke	Shulhan, Ronald D	Maple Ridge/ Pitt Meadows
Laidlaw, Katherine	Surrey		
Leard, Sylvia	Victoria	Siemens, Kathy	Vancouver
Loss, S. Linnea	North Vancouver	Smiley, William A. G.	Nanaimo - Ladysmith
MacAdam, Doreen L.	Vancouver	Stockand, Karen	Revelstoke
Major, George	Chilliwack	Thompson, Robert	Courtenay
McGill, Shirley	Cariboo-Chilcotin	Tkachenko, Ann	Vancouver
McKinnon, Donald C.	North Saanich	Tomlinson, Maimee E	Courtenay
McLaren, Robert F	Kamloops	Trestain, Marianne	Kamloops
Mee, Bryan M.	Victoria	Trowbridge, Barbara M.	Cowichan Valley
Mitchell, Ann P	West Vancouver	Van Iderstine, Marilyn	Surrey
Moran, Reginald F.	Vernon	Walker, Jacqueline	Burnaby
Mostardi, Gretchen	North Vancouver	Warren, Loretta	Lake Cowichan
Nelson, Iris	Kamloops	Watton, Ronald J.	Delta
Nemeth, Elizabeth	Vancouver	Whiskin, Barbara Lynne	Vernon
Peto, Elizabeth-Ann	Delta	Wilhelm, Ernest	Vancouver
Phelan, Patricia	Langley	Williams, Margaret L	Maple Ridge/ Pitt Meadows
Pizarski, Ted A.	Vancouver		
Prett, Myrtle	Kitimat		
Ritchie, Ron	Courtenay		

# HOPES AND DREAMS FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

BY STEVE CARDWELL

We know there are significant pressures facing our valued public education system: overcrowding, chronic underfunding, a growing teacher shortage, and inadequate support for students with diverse learning needs to name just a few. These cracks in our school system command our immediate attention and require our concerted advocacy.

However, when we're focused on the problems and pressing for much-needed solutions, it can be difficult to create the space to talk about the future of public schools and learning. But shouldn't we be talking about our collective aspirations and ideals? What are our hopes and dreams for public education in BC?

The Institute for Public Education/BC (IPE/BC), a non-partisan, independent organization that provides analysis, research, and leadership, has launched a community engagement research project posing that very question. Through our Hopes and Dreams project, we're asking British Columbians to share their perspectives. At the conclusion of the consultation, we'll publish a report to help inform education policy development and decision-making in BC.

IPE/BC firmly believes that high-quality, inclusive, and accessible public education is key to a strong democratic society and equally important, that our school system must be democratically governed. That's never more important than in these turbulent and frequently disturbing times. But to do their very best in their roles, school trustees, the Minister of Education and MLAs need a deep understanding of all that public education can achieve. What do communities value

about their public schools and what do they hope and dream can be achieved? We see this project as an important discussion among British Columbians.

The impetus for the Hopes and Dreams project is linked to the Charter for Public Education, created through an extensive community consultation that took place in 2003. At that time, a five-member panel traveled the province asking the questions:

- What is an educated person; what are their characteristics?
- Which of these characteristics are developed through the public schools?
- What is an educated community?
- What are the principles of public education?

Based on the submissions and dialogue, an eloquent and compelling charter was created, a document that can still be seen on the walls in many public schools around the province today. However, the Charter is now twenty years old, and a lot has changed in our schools since that consultation took place. For example, the commitment to act on reconciliation and decolonization in schools was not yet in place, nor was the clear understanding that all children, including those with special and diverse learning needs, must be welcomed and well-supported in public schools. The curriculum changed considerably over the subsequent years and technology plays a much greater role in education today than it did in the early 2000s. So, it became clear that there was a need to hear from British Columbians again, and the Hopes and Dreams project was born.





How is the consultation being conducted this time? Firstly, IPE/BC is determined not to rush the process. We want to ensure there's enough time for as many people as possible to learn about and participate in the project. Therefore, we're committed to taking at least a full year to collect submissions. Additionally, we have created a number of different pathways to engagement - in person and online. At <https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/hopes-and-dreams/> you'll find all the information you need to share your thoughts through a handy submission form, by email, or on social media. We've already met with many people directly at conferences, meetings, and other gatherings and would certainly appreciate additional invitations.

What are YOUR Hopes and Dreams for Public Education in BC? What do you think public schools need? What would a truly equitable, inclusive, and diverse system look like?

We certainly hope that you'll join in this project and share your perspectives with us.

**STEVE CARDWELL** is chair of IPE/BC. He is a former teacher in Kitimat, superintendent in Delta and Vancouver, and university administrator.

A version of this article previously appeared in BCTF's *Teacher Magazine*.

## TO LEARN MORE

### IPE/BC Mission and Values

<http://instituteforpubliceducation.org/about/our-mission>

### The Development of the Charter for Public Education

<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/projects/charterforpubliceducation/>

### Revisiting the Charter for Public Education

<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/revisiting-the-charter-for-public-education-a-powerful-process-and-a-deep-commitment/>

### Full Report of the Charter for Public Education Panel

<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/charterfull.pdf>

### Hopes and Dreams Project

<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/hopes-and-dreams>



## RR SMITH MEMORIAL FUND FOUNDATION GRANTS

This year the R.R. Smith Board of Directors approved over \$44,000 to the following 23 organizations. All of the R.R. Smith fees collected were spent in funding these projects to support educational endeavours in BC and in developing countries.

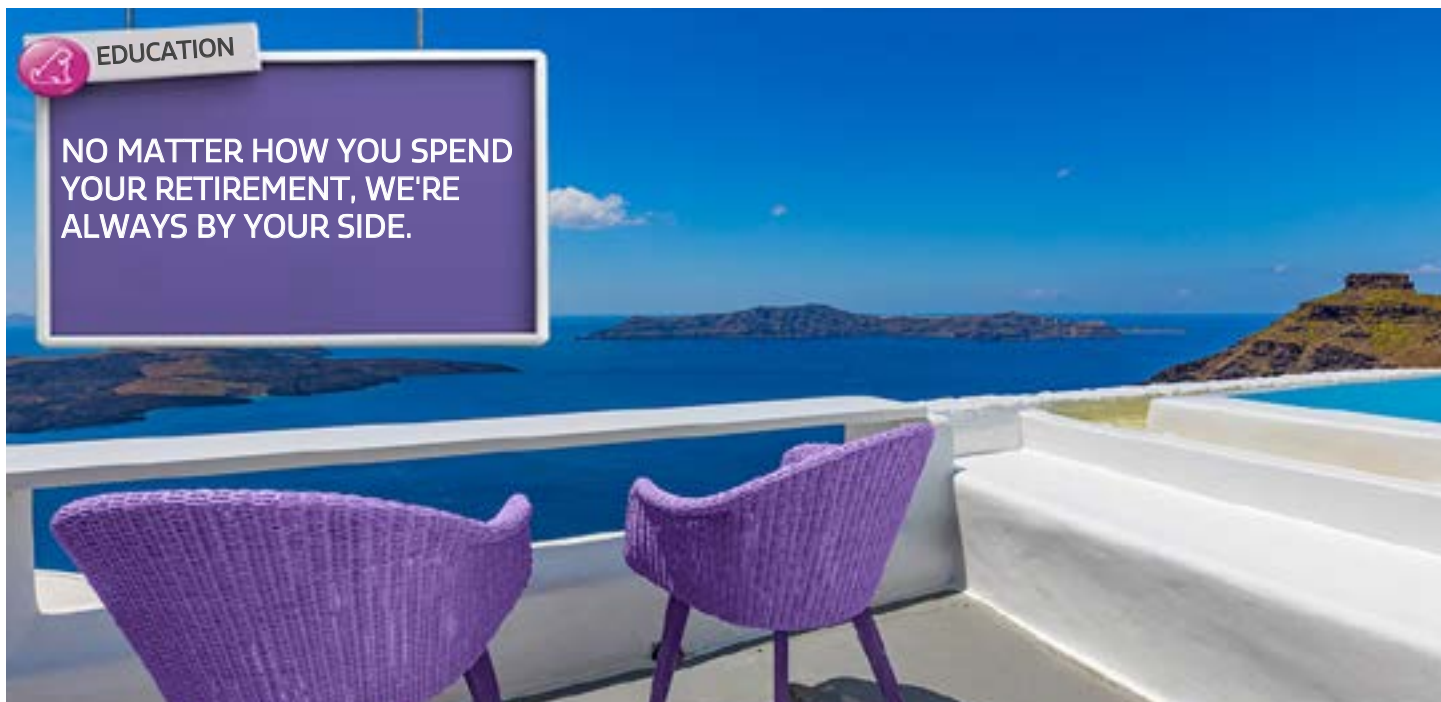
- 1. KAKAMEGA, KENYA** (ACCES): To provide post-secondary scholarships for students who perform well in secondary school but cannot afford to attend post-secondary institutions.
- 2. B.C. HERITAGE FAIRS:** To provide supplies for Cultural Enrichment Activities and for the Provincial Heritage Fair.
- 3. SURREY B.C.** Bright Beginnings Foundation: To provide bursaries (tuition, student fees and educational materials) to Surrey students who have the potential to further their education after high school but do not possess the financial means to do so.
- 4. OAXACA, MEXICO** Canadian Friends of Oaxaca: To support two university students for two semesters beginning in September 2024. This and monthly stipends will assist the students to remain in university and to receive added support from the staff of the Oaxacan Learning Centre.
- 5. KENYA/TANZANIA** Canadian Harambee Education Society (CHES): To provide girls with school supplies including exercise books, pens, pencils, protractors, calculators, dictionaries, rulers and erasers.
- 6. AFGHANISTAN** Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan: To provide 6 tablets, one computer, 8 power banks and eleven monthly data packages to empower individual Afghan women and girls and organizations that serve them to pursue education remotely.
- 7. INDIA** Children's Care International: to support the schools in the slums of Ekalvya and Chittibabu in India. These are transition schools upgrading or introducing children to educational opportunities, preparing them to enter regular schools.
- 8. CO-DEVELOPMENT CANADA:** Co-Dev and Cuban educators have worked together since 1977(SNTECD) providing basic materials for students and the educational community.
- 9. GUATEMALA** Compassion Fruit Society-SOMOS: To run a large sustainable garden providing nutrition for students as well as for the community. Students are taught reading/life skills and trades.
- 10. BELIZE** Days for Girls. Port Moody Chapter: To provide washable menstrual kits made by

volunteers for girls in poor countries to allow them better attendance at school.

- 11. DHAKA, BANGLADESH** Families for Children: To fund games, books and other educational materials for children many of whom require special care in Bangladesh.
- 12. TANZANIA** For the Love of Africa: To fund teaching materials such as charts, books, puzzles, and also sports equipment such as soccer balls, badminton and cricket for 73 youth, 51 of whom are in special care.
- 13. TANZANIA** Innovative Communities Org Foundation: To support appropriate textbooks for all grade levels at pre and primary schools. Since 2008, 22 initiatives have been funded in 22 countries.
- 14. KENYA** Kenya Educational Endowment (KEEF). To support tuition and book fees for exceptional Kenyan students in Kakamega County.
- 15. UGANDA** Niteo Africa supports literacy skills. To provide five mobile storage units each holding 150 books which will rotate among five schools which do not have libraries.
- 16. KENYA** One Girl Can Society: to support a young woman completing her 5th year of medical school at the University of Nairobi.
- 17. SURREY, B.C.** Pacific Community Resources Society - host agency for Foundry Surrey. Their mission is to provide a safe and inclusive place for young people(12 -24) to find flexible support for their needs. One computer will help them access workshops and programs including mental health care, substance use and employment skills.
- 18. ETHIOPIA** Real Humanitarian: To provide funds for one year for 26 Ethiopian girls to stay in school.
- 19. NORTHERN INDIA** Step International: To purchase materials for libraries in two schools. These schools service approximately 310 students from K - grade 8.
- 20. SIERRA LEONE** The Victoria-Taiama Partnership: To provide funds for two young women to complete a two year program in tailoring and for ten to complete a one year business program. The partnership is currently run by a group of retired educators in Victoria.
- 21. TANZANIA** Tumaini Fund Canada: To improve the lives of AIDS/HIV orphans in the province of Kagera. This grant will go towards supplying 300 students notebooks ('Daftari') which are required in order for them to attend school.
- 22. UGANDA** Umoja Operation Compassion Society: To provide financial support to grade 7 students who would otherwise drop out of school before they could complete their secondary education. In addition it will aid in acquiring a staff computer for needed on-line teaching resources to support this effort.
- 23. QUALICUM AREA B.C.** Wonderful World of Books: To promote literacy by purchasing books for early learning. The books are delivered monthly by volunteers.

**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:

- Extended Health Care
- Dental Care
- Prestige Travel with Trip Cancellation
- MEDOC Travel Insurance
- Trip cancellation, interruption, and delay coverage<sup>1</sup>



Give Johnson a call at **1.877.989.2600** or visit **bcrtajohnson.ca**  
write to : **pbservicewest@johnson.ca**

**Johnson is ready when you are.**



**1.877.989.2600 | bcrtajohnson.ca**

© 2024 Johnson Inc. A member of Intact Financial Corporation. Johnson Insurance is a tradename of Johnson Inc., a licensed insurance intermediary, and operates as Johnson Inc. in MB. Johnson administers the EHC Plan and the options for Prestige Travel and Dental Care ("Options"). The EHC Plan and Dental Care Option are underwritten by Desjardins Financial Security ("DFS"). Coverage under the EHC Plan is subject to proof of enrolment in the applicable Provincial Pharmacare program. Prestige Travel Insurance is underwritten by Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Company of Canada ("RSA"). 1Coverage for Trip Cancellation begins the day of booking your trip provided your insurance is in effect. If a trip is booked prior to Trip Cancellation insurance being in effect, coverage for that trip will begin the day that the insurance premium is paid and the policy is issued. Trip cancellation, Interruption & Delay Insurance benefits apply only to travel arrangements booked prior to departure. Valid provincial/territorial health plan coverage required. Johnson and RSA share common ownership. Travel assistance is provided by Global Excel. Eligibility requirements, limitations and exclusions may apply and/or may vary by province/territory. Eligibility requirements, limitations and exclusions may apply.