

PostScript

FALL 2025



THE MAGAZINE FOR RETIRED EDUCATORS

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PostScript

FALL 2025



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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).

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Home and away, two of our favourite places. Starting at home, in this issue of PostScript we look in on the good people of **Aging With Ease**, a.k.a. AWE, who are doing awesome work. These community members, or as *Jennifer Chrumka* labels them, *heroes*, are ensuring that home remains a safe and welcoming place for the seniors in the neighborhood of Seymour Arm on Shuswap Lake. The positive effects of community spirit have been felt by all, so much so that the phrase “it takes a village” comes to mind.

We associate the concept of the cooperative village with raising a child, and in a column reminiscent of BCRTA's own Golden Star Awards, *Lloyd den Boer* offers some reflections on the role seniors can have for students. Teenagers and elders alike discover that the great thing about giving the gift of yourself is the new friendships you get back.

Thinking about kids, the purposeful support of the needs of children is something that is important to every educator. *Amber Freer* revisits her part in the important history of the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**, a formative document for legislation and advocacy here in Canada and around the world.

I suggest you have a look at a recent video produced by BCRTA in cooperation with our friends from sister retiree associations. Together we are BC's **Public Sector Retiree Group**. The video focuses on the emotional and social adjustments of retirement. See details about this program on page 20. We would love to hear your thoughts on this topic - postscript@bcрта.ca.

But let's not forget our theme, and our other favourite place, *away*. A warning: ideas may form in your mind about new places to explore when you encounter colourful Romania with your guide *Marlene LeGates*.

And since we are on the road of your imagination, I invite you to join me as we look at island life in Scandinavia. We head to Denmark, with a stop in Copenhagen and then on to the magical island of Ærø. It's one of those places you want to revisit with friends. In fact, I hear a plate of *smørrebrød* calling me now. Pull up a seat and join me - we have a lot to talk about!

Wishing you the best for this fall,

The Editor
postscript@bcрта.ca



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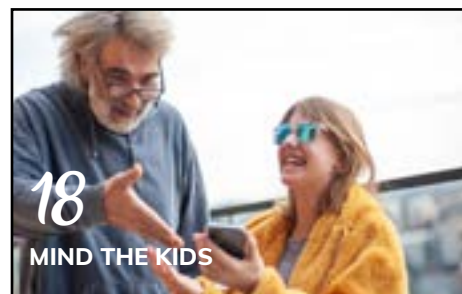
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SEPTEMBER BEGINNINGS

When students and teachers eagerly head back to school in September, for BCRTA members the fall holds the excitement of fresh pages in our calendar, too. At our September AGM, we celebrate the start of a new year and look forward to the months ahead. Our team of Directors, Committee volunteers, Branch Executives and BCRTA staff bring summer-kissed energy, creative ideas and commitment to serving retired educators. Our work is guided by the values that define the BCRTA: service, advocacy, connection, and respect for public education, our legacy to BC.

This year, we have welcomed over 1,500 new members! We are now more than 18,500 members strong! We continue to reach out to retirees who missed the chance to join upon retirement. If you have a friend who would benefit from joining BCRTA, please encourage them to join.

Our strength has always come from our members—your stories, your service, your

encouragement and support. The fall is a great time to connect with your local branch and to participate in upcoming events. Your involvement continues to be at the heart of what makes our BCRTA community special.

Our office is now fully staffed and the Board looks forward to working with this team of talented individuals whose enthusiasm, purpose, and respect for members shines through in all they do.

There are also some big changes coming to BCRTA.

Executive Director Tim Anderson will retire on New Year's Eve after seven years of outstanding service to BCRTA. Tim joined our team in 2018 and has provided guidance and support to the Board, staff, Branch Executives and members. Throughout the fall, Tim will work alongside our new Executive Director during a transition period. We thank Tim for all he has done to build BCRTA and equip us for the future!



By the time you read this, Lisa Hansen will have joined staff as Executive Director. A long-time friend and partner to BCRTA, Lisa brings



comprehensive knowledge of the insurance industry. She has been our main contact with the insurance industry as we have developed our EHC, dental, travel and home insurance offerings. The connection is also personal - through her extensive Branch visits over the years, Lisa

We are now more than 18,500 members strong!

is well acquainted with BCRTA members and leaders. Lisa will work alongside Tim for a four-month transition period. While Tim's retirement will mark the end of an era, Lisa's appointment marks the beginning of another.

But not everything will change. Since 2017, Tim has been editing and designing PostScript Magazine, with awesome results. I am pleased to let you know that he will continue in that role on a renewable contract basis.

There are changes to the Board, too. Directors Margaret Sutton and Pat Thiesen have completed their maximum six years of service with distinction. We thank them for their dedication and hard work as members of the Board and as committee chairs and members.

Another significant development has been a long time in the making. In keeping with our strategic plan, we have taken full ownership of our own insurance plans and are moving to a new governance model that will keep both the benefits and our association secure. Fitting BCRTA's strong BC identity, we have a new name for our program: Dogwood Retiree Benefit Plans. The BCRTA Board approved the formation of the

Dogwood Retiree Benefit Plans Board that will manage the plans going forward. Congratulations to all involved in attaining this significant milestone!

After many months, and in some cases years, of preparation, BCRTA's Board, Committees, Branch leaders and BCRTA staff are well-equipped to meet the moment of these exciting developments.

September is a good time to renew, revisit, and reinvest in what make retirement great. I invite you, too, to embrace this "new" year. Just as you encouraged your students to grow, now it's your turn to explore, engage, and evolve. Say YES to opportunities—whether that means taking a trip, joining a committee, or showing up at Branch events to connect with fellow retirees. You are a vital part of our BCRTA community, and your experience, energy, and voice matter. Retirement is the perfect time to try something new! You have earned the freedom to explore, learn, and connect in ways that weren't always possible before. Stepping out of your comfort zone might just lead to your next great interest or friendship. So go ahead—say YES, try something new, and have some fun! •



CAROLINE MALM is President of BCRTA

PostScript Letters

What Do We Want to See

Please consider cultural differences, with ours being one which often aspires to give dignity to animals in life and in death, before making any decisions similar to the one which saw publication of the photo of a plate of dead animal heads at a market. One of the snouts reminded me of a much loved family pet. We can still respect that in different places of the world, different species are food sources for fellow omnivores—without being surprised with photos such as the one published in your Summer 2025 edition.

In my opinion, that photo was one to be best kept in the private collection of the travellers.

Joan Carruthers

Editor's Note: This is a useful question to consider. While most of us gladly eat meat products, we don't really want to see the scenes that lead to it arriving at our table. Even our pets consume meat from other domestic animals. It is undoubtedly correct that our cultural norms mean we do not encounter such realities, but as our letter writer touches upon, other people around the world have a much more direct and dare we say realistic relationship with their food.

Assistant Editor Karen Cooper adds: *We produce an enormous amount of animal waste by our food choices. I respect a culture which uses ALL of the animal. We were served, for example, sheep tail, while in Uzbekistan. So while I found the picture a little weird and grisly, I was glad we included it.*

PostScript Partners

May I suggest a contest that combines jingle writing with support for stronger government action on climate. Perhaps putting your best "Climate Change" jingle at the bottom of every email you send, or to emails you send to government officials could be other challenges.

Humour wins where Facts Fail.

If wildfires
are our lot
time for fossil fuels
it is not!

Rob Hollins

I absolutely love your Sudoku puzzles. Keep them coming – thank you!.

Ilona Eberle

Thank you for the great work you do on the magazine. I look forward to it coming every term.

Hoshier Dhaliwal

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

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Awards



Congratulations to BCRTA member **Larry Kuehn** for being awarded CoDevelopment Canada's 2025 International Solidarity Award!

Larry has been a dedicated advocate of international solidarity for decades, with CoDev and at the BC Teachers' Federation. Larry also co-founded the Tri-national Coalition in Defense of Public Education, uniting educational activists and unions across Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. in cross-border collaboration and advocacy.

Alongside his work on the BCRTA's communications and heritage committees, Larry continues his dedication to education and teachers' rights as a board member of CoDev and the Institute for Public Education/BC. CoDevelopment Canada serves to build partnerships between Canadian unions and organizations with aligned organizations in Latin America to establish solidarity in creating a more just and equitable world.

Learn more at www.codev.org

Among recent recipients of the King Charles Coronation Medal was music educator and BCRTA member **Donna Otto**.

The nomination for the Medal was made by the Royal Commonwealth Society of Canada, and recognizes the long contributions of Donna as secretary of the RCS Vancouver Island branch. RCS VI President, David Spence, who had received his own medal in September 2024, made this Commonwealth Day presentation.

In a statement of thanks, Donna wrote, *"The King's Medal holds new significant meaning in the context of growing awareness and appreciation of Canada as a Constitutional Monarchy and Commonwealth connected nation."*

Congratulations, Donna!



important dates

CPP and OAS

Payment Dates

- September 25, 2025
- October 29, 2025
- November 26, 2025
- December 22, 2025

Teachers' Pension

Payment Dates

- September 26, 2025
- October 30, 2025
- November 27, 2025
- December 23, 2025

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BC Retired Teachers Association Insurance Program in partnership with Johnson

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Are We Doing All We Can?



REVISITING THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

BY AMBER FREER

It was always comforting, as a Canadian, to have a picture of my country as a peacekeeping nation, perhaps even a peace-building nation. A country, we always hoped, that supported those in need or facing oppression here at home and around the world. Certainly that desire to address children's needs was an element in our teaching experience, as we looked to build up all the kids we taught, perhaps especially the ones with bigger challenges. As teachers we recognize the right of every child to have a future.

In my career in education I had the chance to help bring together that national impulse into the public education system.

TEACHING CHILDREN ABOUT THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Between 1992 and 1994 I developed two curriculums for PLEA (Public Legal Education Society of Saskatchewan). The first was a curriculum for grades 5/6 on the 1989 *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Funded by The Department of Canadian Heritage, the project was to recognize that Canada had become a signatory to the Convention in 1991.

The second curriculum, on the Canadian Justice system including the implementation of sentencing circles, was for middle years students in Band-controlled schools in Saskatchewan.



As conflict expands, children suffer the loss of basic security and the educational opportunities they need for the future.

ORIGINS

During the 1880s an international social movement began to grow with the purpose of giving children basic civil rights, primarily because of concern for their safety in the workplace. In 1919 an English woman named Eglantyne Jebb established *Save the Children*, an organization to help children left destitute by the First World War. In 1922, Jebb put forward the idea of establishing a code for children that “lay down the duties toward children” and that would be “recognized in every country, by the state and private agencies.”

In 1924 Jebb’s seven-point *Charter of Rights of the Child* was adopted by the League of Nations, the forerunner of today’s United Nations. The Charter codified children’s rights on an international basis. It was expanded over the succeeding years to form the basis for the *Declaration of the Rights of the Child* which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1959. During the 1980s (a full century after the international social movement began) representatives from United Nations member states, Commissions on Human Rights, and non-governmental organizations expanded the articles in the Convention. These expanded articles were approved in 1989 by the UN General Assembly and came into force in September 1990 when 149 countries ratified it, including Canada. It’s influence on Canadian law and practice began shortly after.

THE NEED

In 1990 it was estimated that 100 million children worldwide were living on the streets with no access to primary schooling, and that 155 million children under five lived in absolute poverty.

A 2015 UNICEF report indicated that some 50 million children had been “uprooted” during their lives. Because so many of these children live in regions with little stability, it is difficult to get reliable current statistics, but as conflict expands, children suffer the loss of basic security and the educational opportunities they need for the future.



*Right: Bombed-out Kindergarten, Pripyat, Ukraine.
Images by iStock/Getty*

Who will step forward to champion the needs of the child?



THE RIGHTS PROTECTED BY THE CONVENTION

For purposes of the curriculum, I organized the rights into three general categories and added a fourth general category to include freedoms to reflect the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms:

- 1. The right to survival including the right to life, the right to adequate food, shelter, clean water and basic health care.*
- 2. The right to protection including the right to be safe from all form of abuse, neglect and exploitation, as well as the right to be protected in times of war or natural disasters.*
- 3. The right to develop including the right to formal education, a right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities and to participate in cultural life and the arts.*
- 4. Freedoms include freedom of thought, conscience, religion, expression and association.*

RESPONSE IN CANADA

While the Convention does not have the same legal effect as if enacted by statute, by ratifying the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* on December 13, 1991, the Canadian government committed to protect the basic rights of children. During that time period, the adoption of the Convention spurred a number of pieces of legislation and creation of provincial bodies including:

- Canada implemented a nation-wide educational program on youth justice in 1994. The objective of the *Youth Justice Education Program* (YJEP) was to coordinate efforts across Canada to educate youth about the

law. I co-wrote a curriculum on the Canadian Justice system for Band-controlled schools in Saskatchewan.

- Manitoba created the *Coalition on Children's Rights* to support the rights described in the Convention.
- Saskatchewan established the *Office of the Children's Advocate* in 1994.
- The *Canadian Council on Children and Youth* published in 1990 *On the Right Side: Canada and the Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

Over the past few years, I have frequently thought about the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Have we done what we could? Not always. By failing

Young girls, Afghanistan.
Images by iStock/Getty





to speak up in the interim, have I—has Canada—been complicit in what has been happening by our failure to do what we should at every level?

ACTING ON OUR HOPE

Just a few days ago I encountered a picture of hope in action. The Democracy Now podcast (link at the end of this article) featured Rachel Griffin Accurso, known to children around the world as Ms. Rachel. In this interview, a video segment showed her interacting with a child from Gaza who had lost limbs in a bombing and was learning to be mobile on her new prosthetic legs. Encouraged by Ms. Rachel, this young girl joined in dancing to the song being sung to her.

See the bunnies. Shall we wake them with a merry tune?

Wake up, little bunnies!

Skip, little bunny! Skip, skip, skip, skip, little bunny!

Against the backdrop of senseless violence and suffering, Ms. Rachel built a moment of joy and trust. In that moment she had no political agenda – her only base was love. It was an embodiment of a vision we as educators have for kids everywhere, and a moment that confirmed to me that we can and must do more to make that vision a reality.

In times of crisis such as now, we need true leaders and true role models like Ms. Rachel. Who will step forward to champion the needs of the child? When I think of the qualities of care and intelligence shown by so many of my colleagues I have a thought: Perhaps it can be us.

Are we doing all that we can? •

AMBER FREER is a member of the BCRTA Communications Committee. She taught in Saskatchewan and BC, last in Saanich. She lives in the Comox Valley.

LEARN MORE



• **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

<https://www.unicef.org/media/56661/file>



• **Democracy Now Podcast** featuring Ms. Rachel

www.democracynow.org/2025/8/13/ms_rachel



• **BC's Representative for Children and Youth** highlights the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as fundamental to its purpose.

rcybc.ca/get-help-now/your-rights/children-and-youth/



• At our 2024 conference, BCRTA featured **Classrooms Without Walls**, a Canadian non-profit led by a retired BC teacher that offers tutoring and support to children from conflict zones around the world.

bcrtc.ca/classrooms-without-walls/
www.classroomswithoutwalls.ca



• November 12 is **National Child Day in Canada**, in honour of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.



UN RIGHTS OF THE CHILD: ARE WE DOING ALL WE CAN?



Credit: iStockPhoto

MIND the KIDS

BY LLOYD DEN BOER

Students have differing interests. Should you ask a group of Grade 10 students which of their courses means the most to them, you would expect a range of answers.

Imagine my surprise, then, when every student in the classroom I was interviewing chose the same course. Not that these students had lots of deadening courses with one enlivening exception. They attended a small high school where the usual subject areas were delivered through innovative teaching and learning activities, like integrated

subject areas, project-based learning, and literary book clubs. Yet when I, as a researcher fulfilling a graduate school assignment, asked them for their favourite course, they answered with one enthusiastic voice, “Our service-learning project.”

What was this service-learning project that generated so much loyalty? One day a week, the Grade 10 students were bused to a seniors’ living facility where they each spent time with “their own senior.” They played games, shared snacks, and, importantly, talked about their lives.



Credit: iStockPhoto

The best thing about spending time with seniors, they insisted, was how much they learned...

During each visit, the seniors had opportunities to develop relationships with the students and to share insights from their experiences.

I was surprised that spending time with people so much older than themselves could appeal to this age group, but a bigger surprise was yet to come.

When I asked these students why they liked their service-learning course, I expected to hear answers like “being free from the classroom,” “forming significant relationships over time,” and “feeling useful.” Indeed, they may have appreciated getting away from school, becoming friends with a senior, and playing a useful role, yet the best thing about spending time with seniors, they insisted, was how much they learned.

What do you think? Should I have been surprised that Grade 10 students liked spending time with seniors because they learned so much from them? We assume that young people are oriented toward the influence of people their own age — which they are. We also assume that, as far as the adults in their lives go, young people are most closely linked to their parents, guardians, teachers, and coaches. But, what if young people, by their nature, are equally, and perhaps uniquely, open to the influence of seniors, and particularly open to learning from them?

When it comes to the influence of elders in the lives of younger generations, parallels exist. For example, elephants have grandmothers. The matriarch of an elephant herd, who may be up to sixty years old, guides the herd toward sources of food and water, helps the herd identify and defend

itself against threats, and leads the socialization of the young elephants. Grandmother elephants draw from a store of practical wisdom developed over decades about how to live long and well together. Researchers say that good grandmothers position their herds to thrive.

Many of us have young people in our lives — perhaps grandchildren, children of relatives, or neighbours’ children. To whatever extent they may be open to learning from us, are we showing them how to live long and well together? In other words, are we taking opportunities to develop relationships with young people, and are our messages wise? Wise messages point toward love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These are the kinds of attributes that support living long and well together.

Is there a benefit to sharing wisdom with the young people in our lives? The young people I interviewed felt that the time spent learning from a senior was one of the highlights of their week.

Do you know who else felt that way? The seniors who spent time with them. •

LLOYD DEN BOER is a retired educator living in Edmonton. He and his wife Audrey have eight grandchildren. Lloyd says, “Sharing in their lives is one of the great joys in ours.”

This article was originally published by the Alberta Retired Teachers’ Association in the Summer 2025 issue of *News & Views*. Our thanks to the author and to ARTA for permission to share it here.

BCRTA PRESENTS

IN COOPERATION WITH THE BC PUBLIC SECTOR RETIREE GROUP

What They **DON'T** Tell You About Retirement



There are significant resources to help people get ready to retire, and many of them create a sense of urgency about what you must do before the big day. Fair enough. But what happens when you actually do retire? How does your life change? Are you ready for that?

BCRTA recently teamed up with our friends from other BC Public Sector Retiree Group (PSRG) organizations to record a roundtable discussion about retirement life. The focus was on the personal adjustments that the move into retirement requires. Many retirees experience surprising changes, some positive and others that require time to sort out.

To see this video presentation, visit our website at the address noted below, or visit BCRTA's YouTube channel at youtube.com/@bcretiredteachersassociation.

We'd love to hear what you think about the program, and what your own experience has been. Write us with your comments: postscript@bcrt.ca

The PSRG comprises the BCRTA, the BC Government Retired Employees Association, the Municipal Pension Retirees Association, and the College Pension Plan Retirees of BC. Together we advocate for our 40,000 members and the well-being of all seniors in British Columbia.



bcrt.ca/psrg-presentation/



MEET THE HEROES OF AGING WITH EASE

BY JENNIFER CHRUMKA



Seymour Arm. Photo by Jennifer Chrumka

It's spring in the lakeside community of Seymour Arm in the B.C. Interior. The water is calm like a sheet of ice that mirrors the stone-grey sky. Snow still clings in patches on the mountain ridges that flank the northernmost end of Shuswap Lake. Besides the call of loons and the odd boat motor, it's quiet. The kind of quiet that comes during the off-season, when summer dwellers still have their boats buttoned up and docks pushed out.

The quiet is one of the reasons why the 90 or so year-round residents have chosen to live so remotely at the end of a rough 50-kilometre logging road in a community where there's no power and few services. That, the towering cedars, the glaciated mountains and the interconnected web of neighbours who lean on each other like family.



Susan Howie, left, lives in Seymour Arm and works for Ageing With Ease, or AWE, an organization that helps seniors like Judy Reimer, right, access supports that are vital to their well-being. Photo by Jennifer Chrumka

As an outsider who comes to Seymour Arm to holiday, there's much to admire about the residents and their way of life. Resilience is built into every act — overcoming isolation, the lack of services and extreme weather. And for those who've embraced the necessary self-sufficiency that comes with an off-grid lifestyle, they don't want to leave.

That's how Ageing With Ease, or AWE, began.

Twenty years ago in 2005, a woman named Dorothy Marks didn't want to leave her home in Seymour Arm to receive the health care she needed. Marks was quadriplegic and had multiple sclerosis. She was able to afford a live-in caregiver.

Her dream was to enable that for others — to have friends and neighbours become caregivers and support other seniors to stay longer in their homes.

"She was trying to feel her way to being the person she knew she could be," said Lois Bradley, a life-long resident of Seymour Arm and director of AWE.

"And AWE was the tool she chose."

"We're stepping in at the level a family would"

Of the people who live in Seymour Arm year-round, the vast majority are over the age of 65.

"To get to town, to a hospital, to anywhere where you can get medical help is a big ordeal," said Lorraine Thomson, who has lived in Seymour Arm since 1978 and has also been involved with AWE from the beginning.

Like most seniors, they would prefer to stay in their community where they've lived for decades rather than leave what's familiar to access health care in a bigger centre.



AWE Director Lois Bradley. Photo by Jennifer Chrumka

“The longer we can help keep people in their own homes or in Seymour Arm, the happier those people are,” said Thomson.

Dorothy Marks passed away in her home in 2015 and her vision for AWE has become her legacy. Over the years, AWE has helped at least 23 permanent residents continue to live in Seymour Arm for longer than they otherwise would have.

The program has also supported dozens of others, usually seasonal residents, with temporary levels of support; for example, people who are recovering from surgery or a short-term medical condition.

With regular fundraisers and a partnership with Interior Health, AWE been able to hire and pay a small group of employees. Currently there are six employees who work mostly part-time and five volunteer directors.

Employees provide safety checks, act as compassionate companions, help with meals and housekeeping, pack in potable water to homes where people may be housebound, fill and pick up prescriptions or medical equipment and advocate for people who need support navigating the health care system. None of those things require any special medical training beyond basic first aid and a criminal record check.

Thomson described one neighbour who is completely housebound.

“He has no Internet, no phone, no services, he can’t make a doctor’s appointment, he can’t organize his prescriptions, he can’t buy dog food,” she said.

He’s able to stay in Seymour Arm because of the employees who work with him and manage those situations.

“I think there’s a handful of people who receive services from AWE that just would not survive if they lived in town. And they more than survive here,” said Thomson. “They thrive.”

“I would say we’re stepping in at the level a family would,” said Bradley.

“When the family is not physically in the community, I think we cover that, and it often becomes quite an affectionate bond.”

‘A more generous community’

Bradley moved to Seymour Arm when she was 10 years old and never left. She has a home that is accessible only through boat access, where she keeps chickens and tends a garden that feeds her all year.

At this time of year in the spring, the primroses and daffodils are blooming, and she’s doing the hard work of replacing her fence posts around a large veggie garden to keep out the deer.

“To go back to Dorothy Marks,” Bradley said, “one of her visions was actually improving health care by having volunteers, often in the younger senior group, stepping up and making the system work better by volunteer work.”

And while volunteers remain a fundamental part of managing AWE, it’s estimated that the program has brought in one million dollars in revenue to employees and services since it began.

“That’s huge for this little community,” said Bradley.

Bradley and Thomson also credit the program for changing the actual feeling of the community. While the setting is certainly idyllic, Seymour Arm has endured the same challenges any small remote community would — its wild remoteness attracts a whole variety of individuals almost like the characters in the TV series *Twin Peaks* without the crime drama at its heart.

There are multimillionaires and people who are living in poverty. There are those who moved to the

community to live close to nature and some who want to escape the confines of society. There are artists, doctors, carpenters and lawyers — a wide spectrum of humanity.

Back in 2005 the tiny community made national news after 16 people were arrested in connection with a marijuana drug bust that RCMP called a major operation.

That was then. Today Bradley describes how AWE goes beyond the practical fact of helping individuals.

“It has made the whole community different. It is a kinder, more generous, more connected community,” she said.

*“It has made the whole
community different.
It is a kinder, more
generous, more
connected community...”*



The local health authority is paying attention. Jennifer Anderson is the clinical operations manager with Interior Health.

“[AWE] supports seniors staying in their homes safely... and our experience with AWE has been very positive and successful,” she said. The partnership between Interior Health and AWE has also resulted in residents being able to use some of the health authority’s services like a food hamper program.

Late last summer, I tagged along on an AWE visit with employee Susan Howie. We met at the community-owned wharf. Howie is exactly the kind of person you would go to if you needed help. She exudes equal parts warmth and know-how. She’s one of eight first responders in the community and has a background in wilderness first aid. We hopped in her side-by-side — a small two-seater ATV that handles the bumps of the dirt

roads and winding driveways that bisect this small community.

“AWE is unique in that I don’t believe there is any other organization in rural areas that has this opportunity that we have,” Howie said. Beyond that, she and others believe AWE could serve as a model for other rural communities.

“I think it would save our health care system an enormous amount of money,” she said. “By people staying in their homes longer, it doesn’t put the strain on the medical system.”

In her role with AWE she teaches yoga, helps fill and pick up prescriptions. She also checks blood pressure and oxygen levels on a weekly basis for the people who need it and performs safety checks.

We bump along the dusty dirt road passing kids riding bikes with flip flops and holding inflatable toys headed for the beach. We’re off to

visit Judy Reimer, who first came to Seymour Arm in 1979 and never really left.

As we pull up to the Reimers' home, it's easy to understand why. Judy's husband Bob designed and built a grand log home that took 14 years to complete perched on five acres of land.

Judy recalls scraping, scrubbing, bleaching and painting every single log. "It was a real labour of love," she said, joking that the cost of living in Seymour is all the labour involved.

The result is something out of a fairy tale. Wind chimes and hummingbird feeders hang from a deck and before the trees grew up so tall they had a direct view down to the lake.

Bob Reimer was the manager of the local water user's community for 23 years and according to Judy, he loved the lifestyle provided in Seymour Arm.

When we arrived, Bob was sitting on his front porch in a lawn chair with a gentle smile. He developed a condition that led to fluid in his brain. When he first became ill, AWE stepped in to stack firewood, mow the lawn and most importantly, visit Judy so she had people to confide in and speak with.

When Judy opens the front door, she greets Susan Howie like she would a daughter. They start in on a conversation they hadn't finished from a day or so ago.

Once we've settled down at a table in the kitchen, Judy spreads her hands out across the tablecloth, and I pick up on a sadness.

We talk about her log home and I ask what it is that kept the Reimers in the community for so long. "My house, and the people," she said.

Judy breaks into tears. "This is home."

It's then I realize that after 45 years, the Reimers are making plans to leave Seymour Arm. It's come to the point where Bob needs more intensive care, which they can receive in the city of Salmon Arm, about two and a half hours away.

"It's hard, but we just have to make that transition," said Judy. "AWE has been a lifesaver for me. We've stayed at least three years longer than we otherwise should have."

Howie offers a correction: "I wouldn't say should have. I would say that you stayed three years longer because you were able to."

It's clear that Howie has been a fundamental support for the Reimers. Judy describes how she'd phone Howie:

"I'll say 'Susan', and I'll pause, and she'll say, 'Are you okay?' I'll say 'No', and then five minutes later she's up here," she said, "and I get a big hug."

For her part, Howie said, "I've never lived in a place where I felt so comfortable being around the people in the town and feeling like a family. We're a family in Seymour Arm, and sometimes the family, like most families, don't get along, but when push comes to shove, they are there."

I think back to something Lorraine Thomson said, that giving back to the community fulfills something personal in her. "It sounds so hokey, but I get back as much as I give," she said. "I like to be able to make a difference and I think AWE makes a huge difference in this town."

Several months after our September visit, Judy's husband Bob died in early April 2025. Judy now lives in Salmon Arm but hopes to spend much of the summer in Seymour Arm with support from AWE.

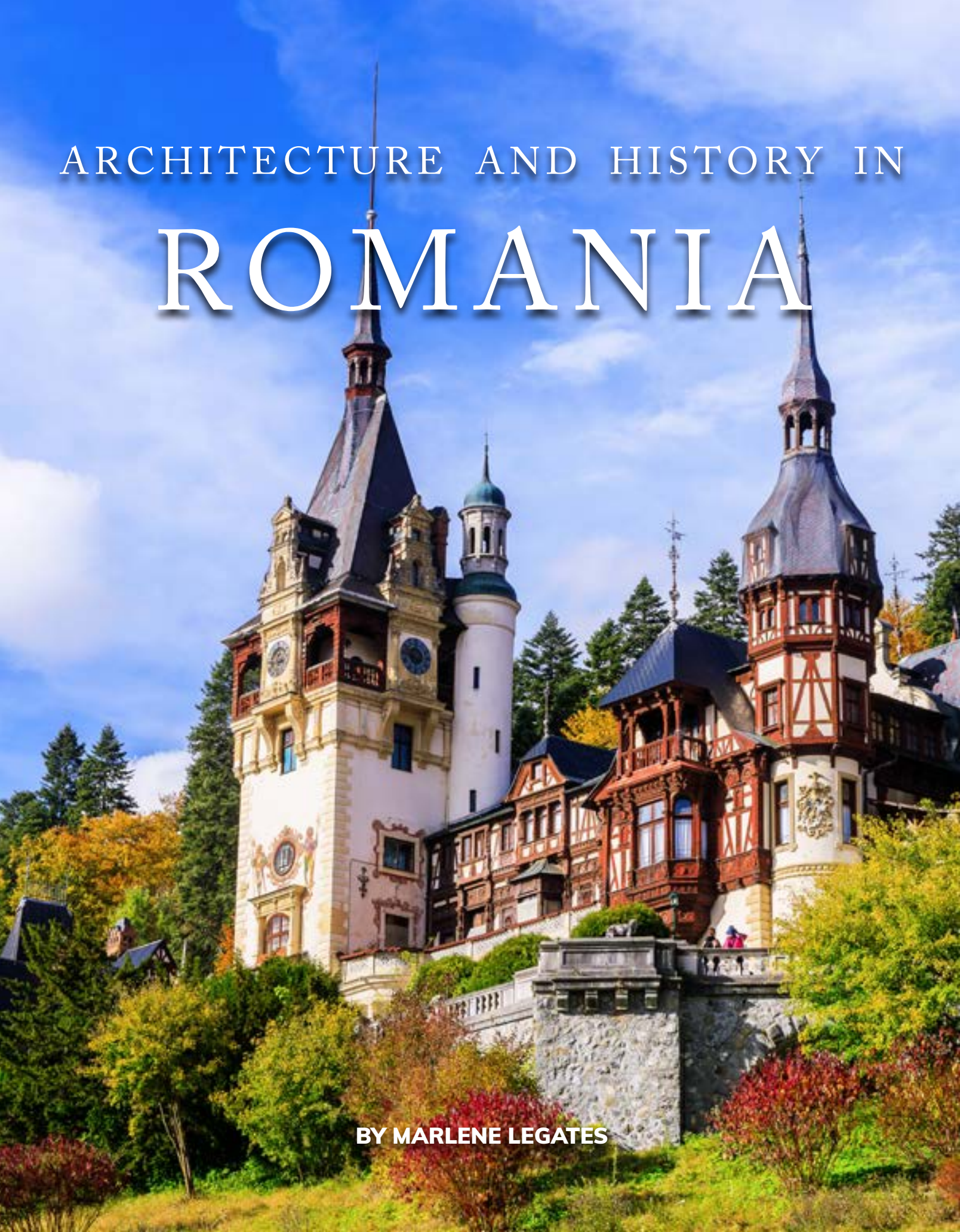
Howie hopes when she gets older someone will take care of her so she can stay in her home longer. "Because I love this rural community," she said, noting that the residents of Seymour Arm use solar energy and batteries to power themselves in the community, and operate their own water system.

"We are pretty much self-sufficient for most things. I love everything about Seymour. I love how we run our town." •

JENNIFER CHRUMKA is an award-winning journalist whose freelance articles have appeared in *Maisonneuve*, the *Globe and Mail*, and on CBC. She lives in Kamloops, B.C., on the traditional lands of the Secwépemc people. Find her on Bluesky @jenniferchrumka.

This article first appeared in The Tyee Weekender, thetyee.ca. Reprinted with permission.

ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORY IN ROMANIA



BY MARLENE LEGATES



Wooden churches of Maramures. Photos by iStock/Getty.

The inspiration to visit Romania came from a book of pictures a friend brought back by from a recent trip. The book featured the 16th-century painted monasteries of Moldavia, famed for the frescoes painted on their outside walls, often in vivid blues and reds. One glance and I was hooked.

Those churches met our expectations, indeed. But what went beyond was the variety of other architectural styles, which ranged from stocky medieval fortified churches to graceful wooden buildings with steep roofs and narrow soaring towers, to “onion-dome” Orthodox churches (80% of Romanians are Orthodox) with brightly coloured murals or glowing icons, all reflecting the varied history and cultures of Romania. As we travelled from the Danube Delta in the southeast

through German and Hungarian Transylvania to the northern border with Ukraine, these churches bore witness to the influences of Ancient Rome, medieval Germany, and the Kingdom of Hungary. This diversity was also reflected in the languages spoken in Romania. In the south, we relied on Romance languages (our Spanish for their Italian), in the centre we used German, and switched to French in the north.

We started with the vast flat expanses of water and marsh around the Danube, some five hours east of Bucharest. Host Livia showed us the Roman ruins that once marked the imperial frontier while Marion led us on an all-day birding tour in his boat. He was a roofer, working every spring to renew the thatched reed roofs in the area. Many houses still lacked electricity, he explained, because of the



Left: The milk wagon. Right: Bringing in the hay. Photos by author.

expense. From the window of our accommodation, we saw our first horse-drawn cart, one of many used throughout the country.

From there we drove back west, to the town of Sinaia – the gateway to Transylvania. Peles Castle, a neo-Renaissance palace full of lavish wooden carvings and furnishings and a former home of the royal family, beckoned for an evening visit. Imagine our surprise to find a crowd of elegantly dressed guests, the women in quite elaborate hats and high heels – on cobblestones! The occasion was the palace’s 150th anniversary. We gawked but didn’t gate-crash.

Southwestern Transylvania is hobbit-country, with lovely valleys and pastures and the Carpathian Mountains above. However, our first two hikes proved quite challenging. We started out through beech forest in Piatra Craiului National Park but at the top of the mountain we were met with fog, then hail and a cacophony of sheep bells, their wearers guarded by menacing dogs. The second hike was even worse, weather-wise. We rode a cable car up the mountain to be greeted, in our sandals, by 50 cm of fresh snow (in mid-May).

On to German Transylvania. As a historian I knew about the eastern migration in the Middle Ages, but it was revelatory to see its lasting impact eight centuries later.

The three “German” towns of Brasov, Sighisoara

(pronounced Sigg-schwara), and Sibiu (Sib-ee-you), as well as the fortified churches built to protect them, were settled by “Saxons” (actually from the Rhineland) who were invited in the 12th century to defend the area from marauders. We



Above top: The storage towers have the scent of centuries of bacon. Directly above: bucolic Transylvanian countryside. Photos by author.



The triptych in the church at Malancrav. Photo by author.

“Maria, the key-keeper, even opened the fifteenth-century triptych for us to admire...”

visited eight of these churches, the largest being Plejmer, which in case of siege could shelter 250 families. It even had a school. Most had a “Bacon Tower” (for storage) which still smelled like bacon. During the summers it would open once a week to allow families to take their allotment. Many churches also have small ethnographic museums with furniture and exquisite embroidery.

Our favourite was Malancrav where Maria, the key-keeper, gave us a private tour and even opened the fifteenth-century triptych for us to admire. Maria was one of the elderly residents who stayed behind when over 90% of German Romanians emigrated in 1989. Germany had offered citizenship, which was hard to refuse, and the exodus left villages depleted. Many of these areas show the effects of depopulation with houses in disrepair, while others have been restored. Between the years 2000 and 2013 The *Mihai Eminescu Trust* engaged in over 1,000 restoration projects in the area, at the direction of the Chair of the Trust, then the Prince of Wales, now King Charles III.

The medieval interiors of most churches are intact and sport the addition of lavish Anatolian carpets donated by German merchants). But the 16th-century Protestant Reformation had left its mark. A scar left by an axe on a church door testifies to Protestant anti-Catholic violence. Some Catholic clergy responded by hiding priceless reliquaries and

vessels, some of which remain “hidden” today. A photo exhibition at the church in Cismădie whetted our appetite to see the originals but no one knew where they were! We spent an afternoon on the hunt, finally tracking them to the History Museum in Sibiu where they lay, apparently forgotten, in a third-floor locked room which was unlocked, albeit reluctantly, for us.

We were usually the only ones visiting a particular church and had to phone the local key-holder to open it. But at many sites, work was in progress - building parking lots - a foretaste of things to come.

As we headed northeast, our entry into Hungarian-speaking Transylvania had its own markers, namely, the lavishly decorated gates that flanked the road. At the riding school where we stayed for a few days riding Icelandic horses, our host explained that even though her family was Hungarian and she spoke mostly Hungarian, she had gone to school in Hungary and she planned to live there, she was Romanian! She led us on a fine walk through the nearby forest, accompanied by a deer (and wild boars in the distance) and her 92-year-old grandfather, who needed assistance only to cross a creek.

Finally, we came to the painted monasteries! Voronet, circa 1488, is considered “The Sistine Chapel of the Orient.” The detailed Last Judgment



The “judgment day” fresco on western wall of Voronet monastery. Photo by iStock/Getty.

on the west wall depicts a river of fire into which poor souls are dragged by devils. To the right, Jonah represents the resurrection (following three days in a whale) but the whale looks suspiciously like a trout (there are not many whales in Romania).

But we weren’t done with churches yet. Tall wooden ones, built to suggest trees and constructed without nails, dot the northern region of Maramures. Their interiors are stuffed with carvings, icons and richly embroidered textiles. Seven of them have UNESCO status.

Romania is much more than churches, of course. We explored the large open-air museum of folkloric culture outside Sibiu, the Icons Painted on Glass Museum in Sibiel, the forestry narrow gauge steam railway near Viseu de Sus (the last of its kind in Europe), the beautifully-reconstructed 18th-century fortress city of Alba Iulia, and the forbidding large prison, housing the Sighet Memorial Museum, dedicated to victims of communism. The “Merry Cemetery,” in the northern most town of Sapanta,

is named for its colourful tombstones. They depict the deceased’s occupation such as winemaking, woodcutting, healthcare and everyday activities such as music-making, praying, milking, and eating. There were even mentions of prized possessions such as tractors or cars.

The food was local, healthy, fresh, and usually delicious. Breakfasts were of the “Turkish” kind, long buffets of cold cuts, cheeses, fruits, pastries.



Jonah and the salmon. Photo by author.



The “Merry Cemetery” depicts the occupations and interests of the people interred there. Photo by iStock/Getty.

We found rural Romania especially charming with its small villages, pastures, and valleys. We saw no mechanized equipment, just women cycling to the fields, each with a hoe and a hat on her back, or women and men harvesting hay. One Sunday we stumbled upon a wedding, all participants decked out in colourful traditional dress (except for the high heels, which we assume is a modern addition).

Of our five-week trip, we only spent one afternoon in Bucharest, where we took a four-hour “slow” bike tour. But four hours was enough (especially as it was a Sunday afternoon and rock-concert time to boot). After threading our way with great caution through the crowds, we were content to head off to the airport and home. •

MARLENE LEGATES taught History and Women’s Studies at Capilano University until her retirement in 2008. Since then, she has balanced travel with teaching in the SFU Liberal Arts and +55 Program. She recommends William Blacker’s **Along the Enchanted Way: A Romanian Story** as a must read for travelers.



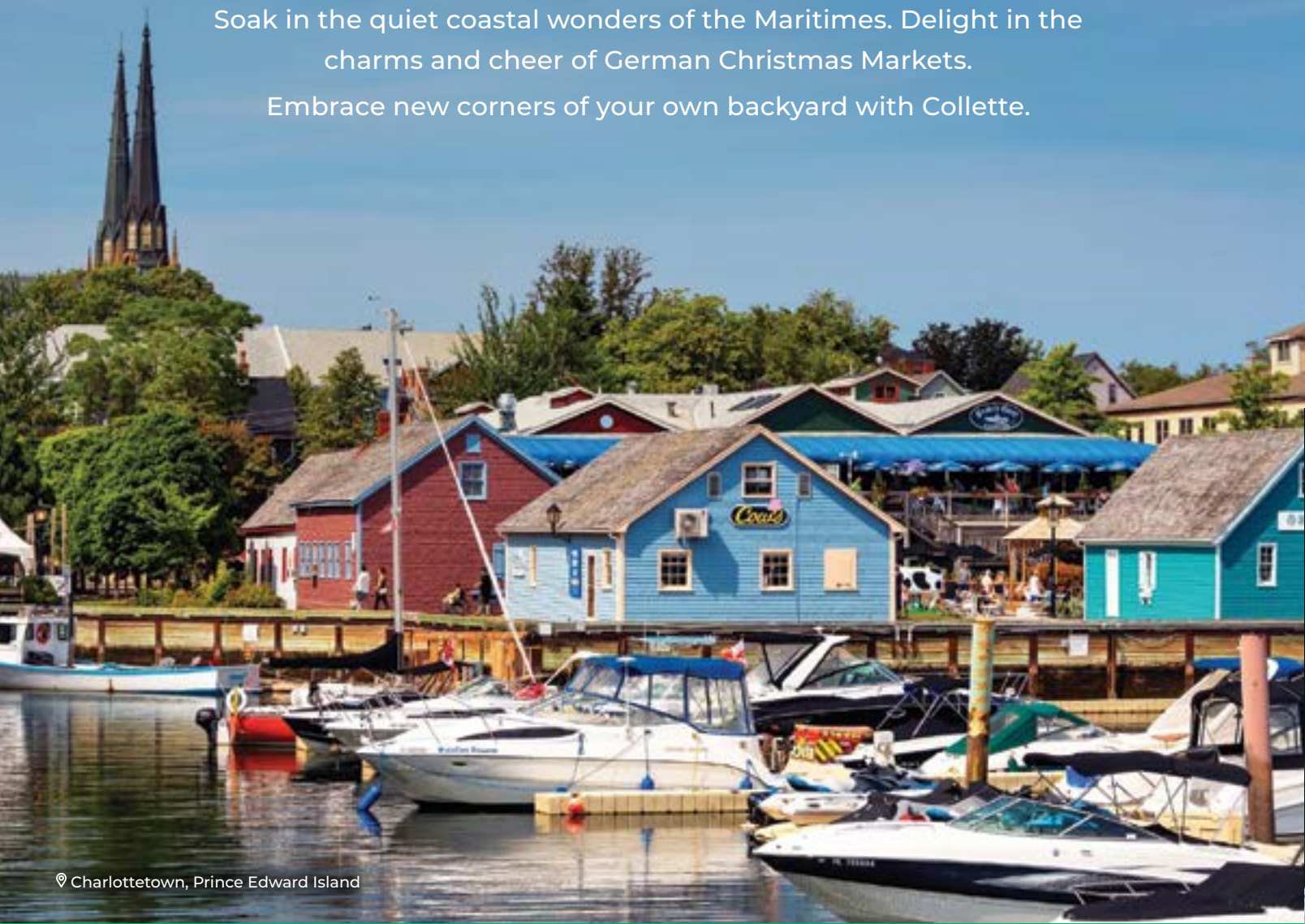
Traditional wedding with modern footwear. Photo by author.

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KØBENHAVN AND ÆRØ

A SCANDI ISLAND ADVENTURE

TEXT BY TIM ANDERSON

PHOTOS BY TIM AND JANET ANDERSON

When a Danish speaker applies their language's unique set of intonations and colourful vowels to English, the results can be rather melodious. The announcements at the Copenhagen airport metro station begin in Danish, then shift to English, and the lilting words "Normal service will now resume on Lines 1 and 2" sparkle like the opening of a H.C. Andersen fairy tale.

We're in Scandinavia for a tour of a number of waterfront locales, and to track down some historical connections. After decoding the metro ticketing machines, we're safely off to the old quarter of København; our hotel is just a hundred metres from the famous Nyhaven waterfront. The modest price of the metro might indicate that all will be well for the finances, but a stop at a local café quickly corrects any misunderstanding about the cost of visiting this part of the world. The hotel bill promises to be just as eye-watering. We're trading *kronors* for time, though, choosing to base ourselves at the center of the action rather than commute in every day. We'll have plenty of time outside the cities later, but now we want to see what this waterfront city has to offer.

When I asked what to do in Copenhagen, the advice I got from a veteran tourist was pithy and non-negotiable. "Get on a boat!" It turns out that the historic waterfront of København, like so many European cities of old, was built up by forces of necessity and envy. The necessity was extensive waterborne commerce during the 17th through 19th centuries. The envy? Hot off a 1616 visit to

Amsterdam, King Christian IV hired a Friesian designer to reclaim embarrassingly swampy bits around the capital. When the facelift was complete, there was a whole new district across the water from the King's palace, modestly named Christianshavn, and the waterfront on both sides of the channel now featured lots of canals, just like the Dutch capital.

A not-too-expensive boat tour (by Danish standards) offers unique perspectives on many of the sights of the Copenhagen waterfront, including the dramatic Opera House, the now-generously unregulated district of Christianshavn, old navy installations, and patches of sunbathers on rocks. The tour guide's narrative is anything but reverent. He exemplifies Danish *bonhomie* with a thread of their sardonic side. Among his non-stop quips, he takes aim at the famous Little Mermaid sculpture, or as he describes it, "the most overrated tourist stop in the world! Wave at those sad tourists on shore who walked all day to find it, it will help them feel better!" We laugh and wave, but the tourists seem to be too tired to wave back.

Of particular interest in that part of town is the dramatic National Library building known as the "Black Diamond" – the steeply pitched glass façade sits at the water's edge. The dark surfaces reflect both sky and sea and shape-shift with the changing light. Back on shore, we visit it, and find that it is part of a complex that connects historic library buildings. The library system invites public participation and welcomes visitors. Its collections are redolent of Denmark's "Golden Age" in the 19th century when Danes were leading the edge of art, science, and philosophy. Billed as one of the largest collections in the world, access is free to anyone over 18 "who has a genuine need" to research.

A free exhibit on the second floor includes a Gutenberg Bible, manuscripts by Martin Luther, journals of Søren Kierkegaard, and early manuscripts of Dante. It is remarkable that viewing these priceless exhibits is free, considering that in the gift shop a 5cm x 3cm box of mints featuring Kierkegaard's face retails for about C\$15, which I think would leave a bad taste in anyone's mouth. It's an example of the mix of public subsidies and personal expense that typifies life in Denmark.



Above: The Black Diamond – Royal Library of Denmark. (istockPhoto)

Facing page: Evening walk, Årø. Photo by Tim Anderson



Our hotel has a wonderful rooftop deck where one can enjoy a drink. No staff manage the area; the drinks are available at the “honesty bar” and you keep track of your own expenses. After being initiated into Danish “honesty culture”, one cannot help but notice that the city of bicycles – again like Amsterdam – seems to almost have no bike locks. People prop up their ride and pop into their destination, unworried about thievery. For visitors from Vancouver, this is a remarkable sight.

Also free are a number of excellent parks, and an affordable way to dine is to stop by the local 7-11 (yes, that’s right) and grab some surprisingly fresh packaged meals and enjoy a picnic.

But after a few days of city life its time to head south for an island adventure.

ÆRØ

It takes about three hours south by train to get to the coastal city of Svendborg, where we walk on a small ferry to take us to the port of Ærøskøbing on the island of Ærø. Situated in the South Funen Archipelago, Ærø looks west towards mainland Denmark and south to the Baltic coast of Germany.

We are here because our youngest daughter has regaled us with stories of her stay on the island. She stayed with a local family on an organic farm, processing apples and helping out with other chores. The island got hold of her.



*Above: A 14th Century manuscript of Dante’s Divine Comedy.
Below: Royal Library Garden, Copenhagen, with statue of Søren Kierkegaard in the background.*

Photos by Tim Anderson



The ferry at Svendborg. Photo by Tim Anderson

“Once you go there, you won’t want to leave,” she said. We’re taking the risk.

The first discovery we make is that Google Maps is somewhat disoriented on the island. Perhaps it is the lack of cellular towers, or maybe the ancient isle resists being tamed by our 21st century tricks.

But in due course we find that our first target, the bus stop, is closer than we think, and – oh Danish joy! – the service is free, seven days a week. After a short ride, we are a few kilometers away at *Gæstgiveri Bregninge*, a bed and breakfast that features a series of small rooms upstairs (at one sixth the cost of our Copenhagen room) and a more expansive one-bedroom suite downstairs, also reasonably priced.

In the morning, our hosts Hanne and Steen put together a breakfast tray that features coffee, cheese, sliced meats, eggs, and local fruit preserves that we spread on warm-from-the-oven cardamom buns. The fresh baking is so good it makes us a little weak in the knees.



Looking northeast on Ærø. Photo by Janet Anderson



Gæstgiveri Bregninge. Photo by Tim Anderson

At the bus stop out front, a young man helps us interpret the elaborate explanations in Danish on a bus schedule that turns out to be quite simple. Falling easily into conversation – his English is excellent – we get a sense of the dilemmas facing young people on the island. If a young person does not want to be a farmer (or has no farm) there is not a lot of other industry on the island. Jobs are not plentiful outside of tourist season. The only post-secondary option is the boat-building school, meaning those going to university or seeking work must head to the mainland.

Over the coming days we have a number of conversations that show Ærø has ties that endure: the Australian girl visiting her Danish grandmother, the students on summer break working the crepe stand, the “granola” crowd who visited once and have come back to set up an artisan shop.

Ærøskøbing’s old quarter has cobblestone streets with little car traffic. It is known as one of Denmark’s most perfectly preserved 18th Century



Ærøskøbing's well-preserved streets. Photo credit: iStockPhoto

towns. We want to do some cycling and find our way to a local shop run by cheerful ex-pat Brits. There are ample cycle paths which extend to all corners of the island. These trails are rather cryptically marked, however, and a wrong turn or two can put you on the asphalt of the main road, which is narrow and not suited for cyclists. But a course correction has us safe again, winding up hills through wheatfields and groves of trees and suddenly we are on the high backbone of Ærø and the ocean re-appears on two sides. To the south it is bright and blue, to the north the choppy water is dark like silk under a steady wind.

We have had dry weather for our entire trip, but the day we are heading to the eastern end of the island the sky looks mixed up and brooding, like the old Norse gods want to assert themselves to the tourists. Strange as it sounds, the old Nordic god Freyr had both rain and sun in his portfolio. He has shown us his sunny side, but today things are changing. We stand at the bus stop, peering up at the sky, then up the road where the bus emerges around the corner, on time and just in time.

Ærø has faced a lot of storms since it emerged from the sea after the last ice age, but a storm in 2023 wreaked havoc unequalled for over a century. Seaside roads and paths were destroyed, beach huts leveled, and low-lying areas that had been safely behind dikes for 175 years were overrun by the surging sea. The storm's force nearly bisected the island, and only the main road kept Marstal connected to the rest of Ærø. Njord, the old god of the sea, had nearly swallowed that part of the island.

Now Freyr's rain floods the windshield and

hammers the roof of the bus – or is that Thor? Trees wave feebly in submission under the downpour. Then, just as we arrive at Marstal's waterfront, the deluge fades, then stops. We disembark and see that our freshly cleaned bus is sparkling in the sunshine.

The church in the port of Marstal is built like a ship. The columns that support the balconies look suspiciously like the steel pillars one finds on a coastal ferry. Suspended by wires above the pews are models of the sailing vessels that Ærø's families sailed on over the generations. Raised toward



*Above: The votive ships at the church in Marstal.
Below: Jesus calms the angry sea. Photos by Tim Anderson*

heaven, these “votive ships” are carefully detailed with complex rigging and painted markings. One senses that the modelmakers were expressing the pride in their fleet but also being careful to remind God for which vessels they prayed.

The painting above the altar reinforces the theme. A placid Jesus, just awoken from his slumber in the disciples’ boat, raises his hand in authority as the waves buffet from all sides and his little crew of fishermen cower in fear. With dozens of the local seamen lost each generation, this was no idle doctrine. The faith of the sea-going families of Aero required a revisiting of that scene every Sunday and every sailing day.

Danish writer Carsten Jensen’s novel *We, the drowned*, is set in the sea-going society of old Marstal, and you can get an audio accompaniment to a walking tour of the town that provides segments from the novel as you move through the old streets. It helps if you speak Danish.

A few blocks away is the *Marstal Søfartsmuseum* (maritime museum), which has as much maritime art as you could handle in an afternoon, and extensive exhibits about marine equipment through the ages. Dropping through the hatch of an old fishing vessel gives one a sense of the close quarters that sailors live in. Especially charming is a collection of carved figurines recalling Marstal’s sea-going captains and shipwrights of old. Only about 20 cm tall, they are astonishingly life-like.



Photo by Tim Anderson

The town also has excellent cafés and gift shops. Looking for unique mementos? You can’t go wrong at the antique shop.

The island has lots of cultural events happening through the summer season, and we were fortunate to take in a choral concert in Ærøskøbing featuring young singers from around Denmark. The island also occasionally hosts rock concerts and a jazz festival too, or perhaps you can get tickets to the volunteer-run film-house, which proudly proclaims itself “Denmark’s smallest cinema.”

It is only on the last day on Ærø that we finally make time to visit the Bregninge church which sits directly next door to our accommodation. A quick check of the bus schedule gives us just enough time to walk over and have a look.

The church was first established in the 1200’s and was built in a small vale between high points. This was to prevent the church tower from being visible to passing sailing vessels. Medieval churches often held the most valuable items in the town



The watchman tour. Photo by Daniel Villadsen, Ærø Turist & Erhverv



The duelling preachers. Photos by Tim Anderson

centers – items of gold or silver, which were targeted by raiding parties from the mainland. Hiding the church's location gave some measure of safety from those strangers.

The ornate 1612 pulpit has an aura of authority. From this significant height generations of preachers have looked down upon their parishioners as they proclaimed their truths. But if those clergymen did not look down, but directly across at the sloping ceiling of the opposite side of the church, they would have to repent of any self-righteous pride. There, where a void has opened up in the plaster, an artist has painted the face of a jester around the hole, such that the empty space becomes a large, open mouth, pouring forth *blah blah blabs*. From his position directly opposite to the pulpit, the comical figure of the fool preaches day and night. It's a duel for the centuries.

It is time to leave. We collect our things and step out to the bus stop. There two young women are engaged in soft talk, sometimes laughing, then embracing and dabbing at their eyes. One, it seems, is off to college on the mainland, and the other will remain on the island.

Their goodbyes are more fraught than the farewell we give to Ærø, but as the bus winds its way past the shorn wheat fields and back to Ærøskobing, we feel the pang of missing it already. •

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TIM ANDERSON is Editor of PostScript Magazine and the outgoing Executive Director of BCRTA.

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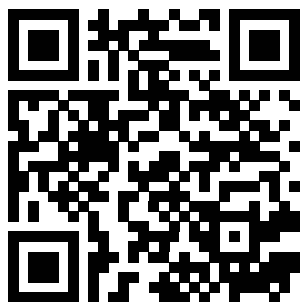
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When you purchase an annual supply of contact lenses.*



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- 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 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.

DID YOU KNOW?

FASCINATING HEALTH FACTS

BY PAT THIESEN

LIGHT SLEEPER? TRY WEIGHTED BLANKETS!

Weighted blankets can be a simple solution for those of us, young or older, looking to get better sleep each night.

A weighted blanket is exactly what it sounds like—a heavier-than-usual blanket designed to help you feel calm and grounded. They generally come in one of 2 styles; the duvet-style that utilizes glass beads or similar materials for fillers, or the knitted style using thick, dense yarn.

Whichever type is chosen, the weighted blanket activates a technique called deep pressure stimulation, applying gentle, firm pressure across the body which helps to promote relaxation. This calming sensation can help lower stress hormones, slow the heart rate, and signal to your body that it's time to rest. Weighted blankets are often used to reduce anxiety, improve sleep quality, and support overall well-being, like a constant warm hug or a snug swaddle. Best results come from a blanket that is about 10% of your body weight, and fits snugly to the size of your bed .



FOR MORE HEAVY-DUTY INFO

search “WebMD weighted blankets”

and “Healthline weighted blankets”

CAULIFLOWER? I'M SUPPOSED TO EAT THIS STUFF?

Yes dear, you should. And elbows off the table! Researchers from Australia found eating more cruciferous vegetables (such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, kale, and cabbage) could be the key to better blood vessel health, lessening the risk of cardiovascular diseases and death.

The women in the study who ate more than 45 grams of cruciferous veggies each day - equal to about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of steamed broccoli or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup raw cabbage - were 46% less likely to have calcium build-up in their aortas. Calcium build-up in the aorta was not related to overall vegetable consumption or consumption of other types of non-cruciferous vegetables. Thus, it seems that there is something special, possibly Vitamin K, about cruciferous vegetables in particular. Don't stop eating other vegetables, though, since they promote health in other ways.



www.webmd.com/diet/health-benefits-cruciferous-vegetables

or search “Cambridge cruciferous calcification”

NEW SCOUT WALK FROM JAPAN!

(ACTUALLY THE METHOD WAS JUST INVENTED IN JAPAN. NO ONE ACTUALLY WALKS HERE FROM JAPAN.)

As a Girl Guide, I was taught the Baden-Powell method of increasing one's stamina and speed over a distance by walking for 50 paces and then running/jogging for another 50 paces, then continuing this pattern until destination's end. Now a new version of “Scout's Pace” has come along called “Japanese walking” or *interval walking training* (IWT) to improve cardiometabolic health. It's safe for people of all ages and fitness levels.

To practice IWT, you alternate between 3 minutes of fast walking, at a pace that still allows you to talk, but where holding a full conversation would be more difficult, and then 3 minutes of slow walking, at a level where talking is more comfortable. Five sets of intervals (amounting to 30 minutes of walking time) four to five times a week reaps the full benefits of IWT.



Search “Guardian Japanese walking”



From Report Cards to Picture Books

My Six-Year Retirement Writing Adventure

BY LINDA MAH

When I retired from teaching, I was sure of two things: I wasn't a storyteller, and I definitely wasn't going to write a book. I was a good report card writer, not a creative writer.

Then a student's mom casually said, "You could write a children's book." In my head I thought, "No way. Not interested." But that little comment planted a seed. And I thought, "Linda Mah, Author—has a nice ring to it."

My inspiration came from Grumpy, the Goffin's cockatoo I've lived with since 1988 (not to be confused with my husband, though they share similar traits). These birds are very intelligent—some have solved 5-part locking mechanisms—and can live into their 60's in captivity. Grumpy, now in his mid-50s, is loud, funny, dramatic, and definitely the boss of the house. He makes me laugh every day. Naturally, he became the star of my story.

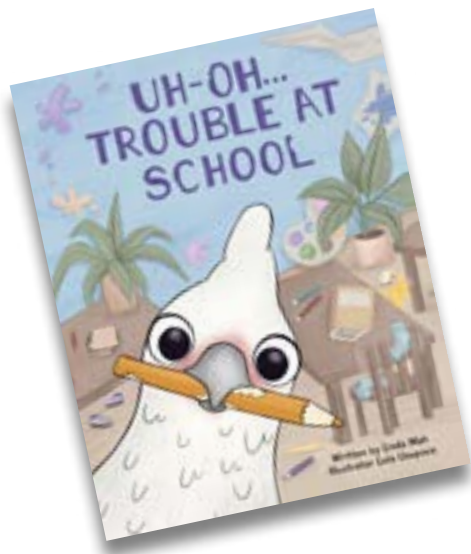
I wrote the first draft while on vacation in Mexico. It took less than two hours and came in at 1,600 words. I was so proud. I actually thought,

"This is it. I'm going to be the next Robert Munsch." Then I told my family I was going to self-publish. My brother-in-law replied, "You can't write a book. You don't know anything about writing books." That comment irked me, so I decided then and there that I was going to prove him wrong.

When I got home, I started doing some research and quickly realized he wasn't completely wrong. I didn't know much about writing for kids, so I got to work. I read how-to books, watched YouTube videos, joined Facebook groups for writers, and took online courses, both free and paid.

With my new knowledge, I looked at my draft with a more critical eye. I made an outline, labelled beginning, middle, and end. I grabbed a red pen and started crossing things out. Every word had to earn its place. That 1,600-word story shrank to 600.

My book, *Uh-Oh! Trouble at School*, is about Grumpy, a young parrot who struggles to follow the rules at school. He causes chaos—flying, squawking,



chewing, and eating with his foot—but with the help of his human classmates, he discovers that his differences make him a valuable part of the group. It's a funny, heartwarming story that opens up conversations about character strengths, inclusion, and being proud of who you are. It's especially for kids aged 4 to 8.

Once the manuscript felt solid, I hired three editors to polish it further. I searched for illustrators and I researched printers. I learned about ISBNs,

Right: Perfect day to sell at a Farmers' Market.

Below: Dancing with the kids to Grumpy's favourite song, I'm a Gummy Bear. Photos provided by Linda Mah.

paper weight (GSM—grams per square metre), barcodes, kid-friendly fonts, and matte vs. gloss pages.

Then came the challenge of social media. I was already on Facebook, but my daughter said I needed to post on Instagram. I didn't even know what a reel was—a short video, apparently. My first reel took me an hour and a half to make. I added music, text, stickers, and hashtags. I was proud—until I pressed a button and it disappeared. Gone. I had no idea what I had done. Through trial and error, I made it again. The second try took only an hour. That 30-second clip got 124 views and 21 likes!

I slowly learned that reels have to hook viewers in the first three seconds, else people scroll on. I started using trending music, adding captions, and figuring out the best times to post. To date, I've made nearly 500 posts. One of my reels has over 28,000 views. I now have over 1,500 followers—





Above: An image from the book, by illustrator Lola Usupova.

not a huge number, but Grumpy has some very loyal fans.

At some point, the YouTube channel, GeoBeats Animals, discovered Grumpy on social media and reached out to interview me about his story. Of course, I said yes and, unknown to Grumpy, I shared all his little secrets. The resulting video has since reached nearly 4.4 million views and remains one of their most popular. No, I don't get paid, but I'll take the publicity!

On December 16, 2024, the books finally arrived by ship, after delays caused by port strikes and a border inspection. The late arrival meant I missed the winter markets. I had ordered 1,500 hardcover copies, confidently assuming people would be lining up at my door for signed editions.

In reality, I had no idea how hard it would be to sell them. My upstairs bedroom currently holds over 30 boxes of Grumpy books—more than 1,000 pounds. I actually worry about whether the floor can hold the weight. I've sold books to friends, family, acquaintances, and kind strangers. I've done a local market, paid vendor and insurance fees, printed Grumpy T-shirts, stickers,

magnets, and made parrot keychains. I've created teacher and parent guides, activity sheets, and SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) lessons. I've done author readings and school presentations with Grumpy-themed arts and crafts—some paid, most complimentary.

The Vancouver Public Library found me online and hired me to teach four workshops on writing picture books for their summer writing camp. I've entered my book in a contest and applied to be a speaker for Canadian Children's Book Week 2026.

Marketing is the next mountain. I've sent out books for reviews, reached out to wholesalers, and contacted businesses and organizations to sponsor book donations. I donated books to a Rotarian who will distribute them to libraries and schools in Uganda.

My next challenge is Amazon. Right now, my book is sitting at #1,094 in "Children's Books on School and Education." I'm slowly learning about keywords, categories, and ads—and trying to figure out how to boost visibility. I also gently remind people that reviews help rankings (and make new authors feel slightly less invisible).

And while all that's happening—I'm working on book two. I write at a snail's pace, and that's okay.



Above left: Grumpy loves his toys.

Above right: A Grumpy craft made with real feathers.

Photos by Linda Mah

I didn't plan to write a book in retirement; maybe I just wanted to prove my brother-in-law wrong. But I've discovered a creative world I never knew I needed. I've learned how to write, market, edit, post reels, run booths, talk to customers, and pick up a few tech skills along the way. You can teach an old dog new tricks—or in my case, an old parrot guardian.

In a way, I'm a one-woman business startup. And yes, they say most authors lose money in their first year. But maybe I'll be the exception.

So, to my fellow retirees: take on something that feels impossible. Try the thing you're convinced you can't do. There's nothing exceptional about me: if I can do it, so can you! You just might surprise yourself.

And who knows? Maybe someday Grumpy will be picked up by Disney. I like to dream big. •

IF YOU WANT TO CHECK OUT GRUMPY...

lindamah.com

[instagram.com/grumpythebird](https://www.instagram.com/grumpythebird)

[facebook.com/grumpythebird](https://www.facebook.com/grumpythebird)



LINDA MAH retired from the Richmond School District and continues to work as a teacher-on-call. Her teaching career also took her to Vancouver, Bella Coola, Agassiz, and Aldergrove.



Ten Steps to Jump-Start a New Career

(From Report Card Writer to Storyteller)

1. Tell everyone – It keeps you accountable.
2. Write your draft – Get your ideas down; don't worry about rules.
3. Research and learn - Take (preferably free) courses and read children's books.
4. Take a break – Step away for a few days, weeks or even months to return with fresh eyes.
5. Edit – Apply what you've learned and be a critic.
6. Get feedback – Ask experienced children's writers or critique groups—not friends or family. Test your story with kids.
7. Hire a pro - Choose a professional developmental editor in your genre, not an English teacher.
8. Pick your path – Self-publish or go traditional. Avoid vanity publishers—they charge to publish. Traditional publishers never ask for money. Traditional publishing is highly competitive.
9. Have grit - Believe in yourself and keep going.
10. Celebrate each step. Writing is a journey.

Resources

Eevi Jones – Tips, videos, and resources: www.eevijones.com

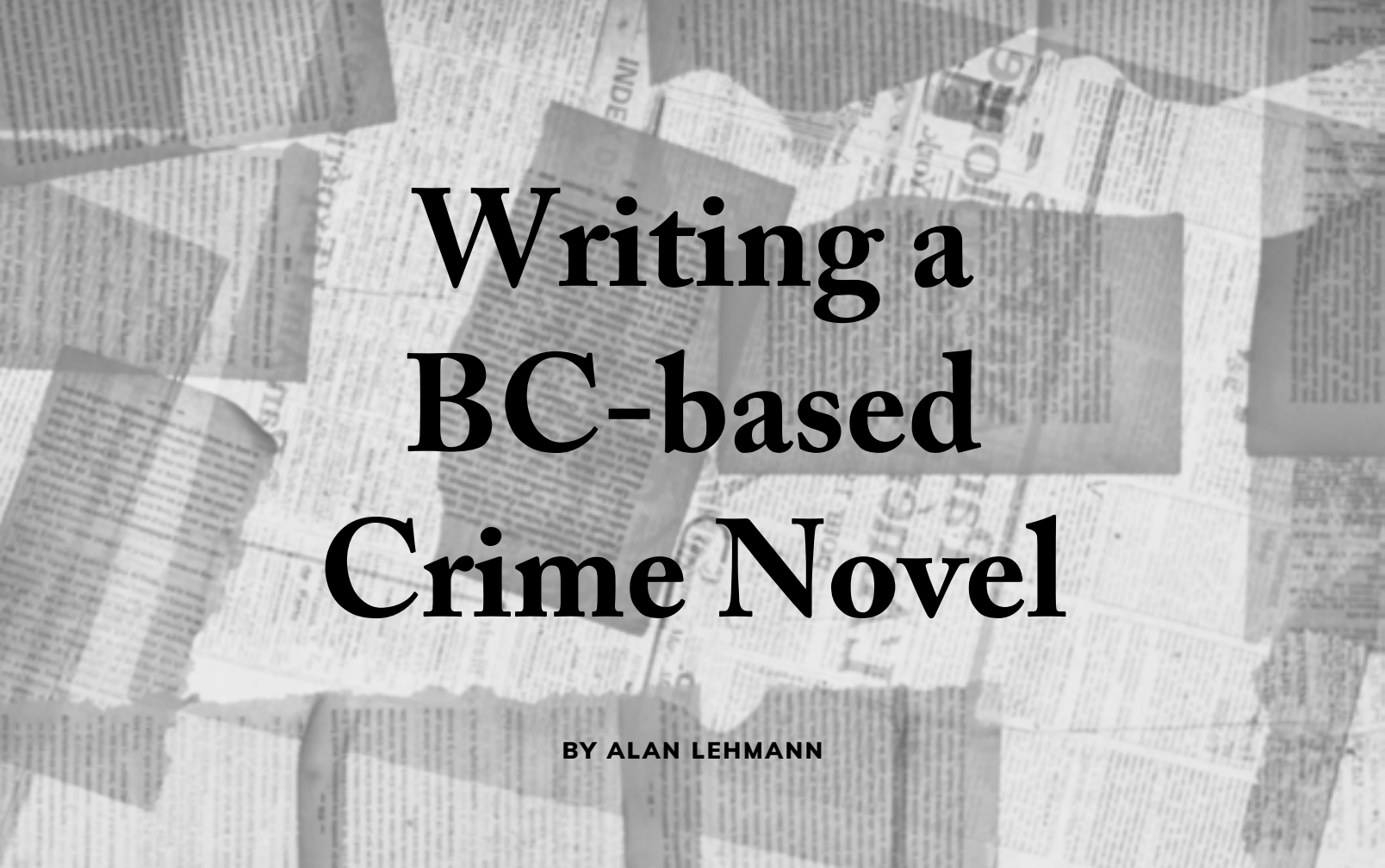
Facebook Group – Children's Book Authors and Illustrators:

Publishing, Marketing and Selling: Resource group for business-minded authors (please read rules): <https://www.facebook.com/groups/187350425346975>

Coursera – Browse many free courses: www.coursera.org - Free course: Writing for Young Readers.

Brooke Van Sickle / Journey to Kidlit – Resources and practical tips: www.journeytokidlit.com

Karen Ferreira / Children's Book Mastery – Advice and resources: www.childrensbookmastery.com



Writing a BC-based Crime Novel

BY ALAN LEHMANN

For many years, people lacking transportation alternatives used hitch-hiking to get around the Northwest. Highways here are long and comparatively empty, and for decades the unwritten ethos of the region dictated that drivers stop to offer help or a ride to anyone who signaled their need for such assistance.

In more recent decades, however, the assumed generosity and goodwill of both drivers and ride-seekers have been tarnished by danger. Both drivers and hitchhikers have had among their numbers dangerous criminals—rapists, human traffickers, and killers.

Numerous women and girls, many of them from First Nations, have disappeared along Highway 16, earning it the sobriquet “Highway of Tears.” Most of these women are likely dead. And the wilderness that dominates the region on both sides of the highway offers a would-be killer thousands of places in which a body could be secreted until natural predators and decay dispose of the remains.

The motives driving these killers remain something of a mystery, as there have been few arrests. One young man arrested in 2010 was found to have killed four women. An on-line commentator reported that the killer “had come from a normal family, and no one had ever pinned him as being violent.”

Following her coverage of the trial of a World War II war-criminal, German philosopher Hannah Arendt coined the term “banality of evil,” an effort to depict a normal, civilized population becoming willing participants in creating the Holocaust. Something that is banal is commonplace, trite, and predictable. If killing becomes banal, it becomes expected, almost normal.

I decided to write a novel about such banality set in British Columbia’s Northwest along Highway 16. As I began the book, the men who committed the first killing practically invented themselves. Two features of their lives led to conditioning their personalities. One of them is

a Canadian veteran of the war in Afghanistan, where he participated in casual brutality and rape. The other suffers from marginal schizophrenia, in which condition he experiences command hallucinations, demands that he kill like those reported by New York serial killer David Berkowitz (aka Son of Sam) in the 1970's.

As the story began to unfold in my imagination, other characters revealed their own weaknesses, and even their personal proclivity toward violence. Generally, citizens rely on the government's legal monopoly on use of force to prevent unjustified brutality or physical cruelty. But sometimes those seeking eye-for-an-eye justice ignore the niceties of the legal system, and evils of retaliation can unfold in unexpected ways.

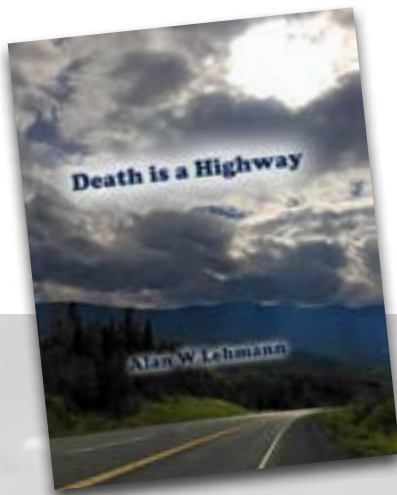
In the midst of everyday life, ordinary people can become indirectly involved in criminal cases, finding themselves in compromising situations, or simply stumbling into danger by chance. Our varied wishes for fulfillment (love, achievement, social significance, or even survival) can become

tainted through failures and disappointments, sometimes leading us into utterly surprising, dangerous situations. Further, behind all our supposed free choices lies the fact that, as Arthur C. Clarke observed, "All human plans are subject to ruthless revision by nature."

Despite whatever may lie hidden within our "hearts of darkness," sometimes we may also experience redemption. This fact, too, is part of the human condition. Life may nearly overwhelm us with reasons for despair, but we are rarely completely without hope. This, too, is evident in *Death is a Highway*.

The events of this novel contrast the familiar, casual carelessness of contemporary life with the focused, professional determination to bring criminals to justice, despite the complex factors militating against success.

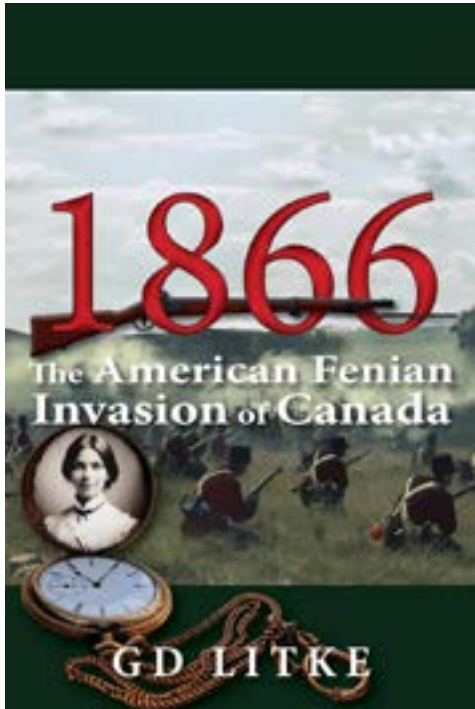
Discussions with early readers have become conversations about crime and victimhood, and the nature of justice, perennially critical issues in contemporary society. •



ALAN LEHMANN retired from teaching English and creative writing in Terrace in 2012. Since retirement he's written four novels, frequent columns for the local paper (the Terrace Standard), and the odd freelance assignment. He lives with his wife Elaine and their loyal cat, Rudy.

“Discussions with early readers have become conversations about crime and victimhood, and the nature of justice...”

books OF NOTE



1866: THE AMERICAN FENIAN INVASION OF CANADA

by Garry Litke

Interrupted by the Civil War after capturing half of Mexico, America's thirst for expansion continues. Canada is next.

At his father's insistence, Toronto medical student William Tempest has begun military training with the Queen's Own Rifles. Despite the rumors, he doesn't believe an invasion is about to happen, but when an army of seasoned Civil War veterans crosses the Canadian border, he is forced to leave his young wife and unborn child to pick up a gun and defend his country.

1866 is a dramatic retelling of true events that propelled Canada into nationhood.

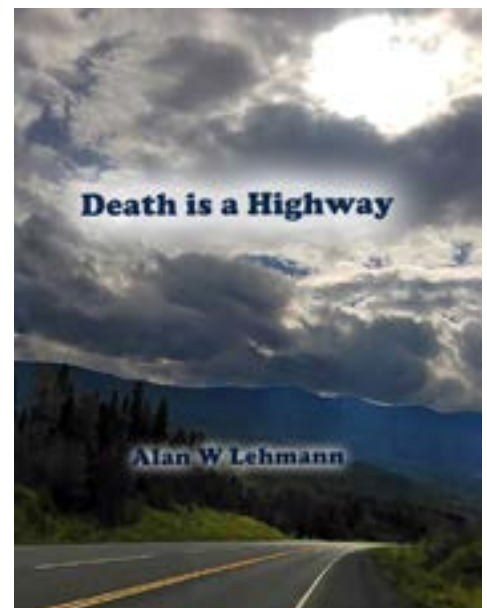
Available at Amazon.ca and Goodreads.

DEATH IS A HIGHWAY

by Alan W. Lehmann

In Canada's Pacific Northwest along the "Highway of Tears," the dangers of hitch-hiking, particularly for young women, once again become evident when a teen girl is brutally raped and murdered in a regional campground. RCMP investigators find promising leads, but lack crucial evidence to apprehend the suspects. Meanwhile, other individuals find themselves drawn into the events of the case, and it may be only a matter of time before another similar murder. As the investigation proceeds, surprising forces emerge to propel the action toward a startling conclusion.

Available at Chapters-Indigo and Amazon.ca.





PEPELJUGA: AN IMMIGRANT'S TALE by Albina Wright

Pepeljuga: An Immigrant's Tale offers a rare glimpse into the close relationship between a mother and daughter and their life stories. Marija, a young child, is a typical child living in the town of Milna, on the Island of Brac when all of a sudden war breaks out.

After her mother and elder brother make the voyage to El Shatt, Egypt, Marija and her siblings end up in a monastery in Makarska. Marija's story of being abandoned is interwoven with the stories she shares about her young life as well as leaving Yugoslavia in the fifties.

Pepeljuga: An Immigrant's Tale unearths the stories of immigrant life that can readily be lost. Both a daughter's love letter to her mother and the sharing of her mother's story, this book is an affectionate celebration of the universal bond between a parent and child.

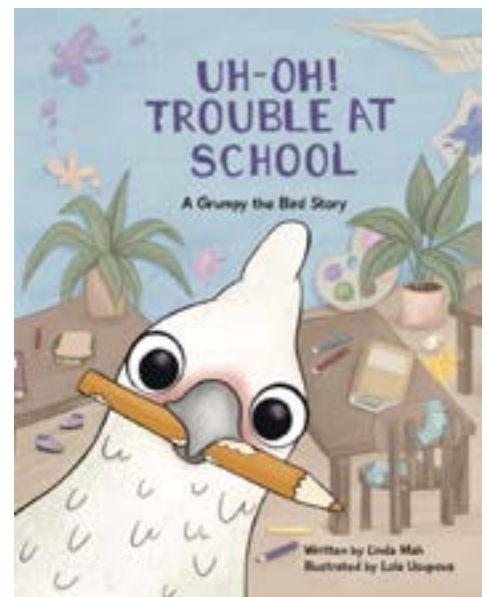
Available at Amazon.ca in print or as an e-book.

UH-OH! TROUBLE AT SCHOOL - A GRUMPY THE BIRD STORY by Linda Mah

Get ready to soar into a world of adventure and laughter with Grumpy the Bird! As he spreads his wings and enters the classroom for the first time, Grumpy is filled with worries and doubts. Will he fit in with his classmates? Will his teacher like him? But Grumpy's biggest concern is whether a parrot can truly belong in a classroom. Prepare for birdy mayhem as Grumpy unintentionally causes chaos in the classroom.

Author Linda Mah, an elementary school teacher, knows all too well the craziness that can happen in a school setting. Her own pet Goffin's cockatoo, Grumpy, has been living with her since 1988, providing endless entertainment.

Available at Amazon.ca.



Books of Note features publications by BCRTA members.
To have your book included, send the details to postscript@bcrt.ca

NOTICE OF 2025 AGM

80th BCRTA Annual General Meeting (9:30AM)
called for Saturday, September 27, 2025

BCRTA Positions for Election

President - 1 year term
1st VP - 1 year term
2nd VP - 1 year term
ACER-CART Representative - 2 year term
2 Directors (2 yrs) from outside the Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley
2 Directors (2 yrs) from inside the Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley

Annual General Meeting of the RR Smith Memorial Fund Foundation
(9:00AM) called for Saturday, September 27, 2025
RR Smith Positions for Election
8 Directors - 1 year terms

This meeting will be held in person AND online.

Location: Hilton Vancouver Airport Hotel
Details to follow.

BCRTA CONFERENCE 2025



- Sustaining Age Friendly Programs – Devona Putland, STS
- Teaching from the Stone Age to AI - Crawford Killian
- Gift of Knowledge - Steps to Consider Before the End – Vicki Robinson
- Golden Star Awards

Join us online on September 26 at 9AM
bcрта.ca/conference

NOMINATION FORM FOR 2025-2026 BCRTA DIRECTOR POSITIONS (SEPTEMBER 27, 2025 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) - 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)

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:

Arnie Lambert, 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

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

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 2026 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 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 27, 2025. 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 2026 BCTF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOMINATION FORM

Must be in the hands of BCRTA staff by 5 p.m. on September 26, 2025.

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

2025-2026 BCRTA COMMITTEES - APPLICATION FORM

DEADLINE for receipt of applications: September 27, 2025

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

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), 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 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

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

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.



CLASSIFIEDS

TRAVEL

DISCOVER CUBA Cuba1tours of Courtenay, BC takes groups to Cuba and offers a safe and fulfilling experience. You will travel from location to location in a modern, comfortable bus with space to relax and enjoy the scenery of the Cuban countryside. All special tours are guided by professionals and your tour guide is with you throughout. Tours are run through Square1travel, Courtenay BC which is a full service BC registered agency.

www.cuba1tours.com

BCRTA member Alex Campbell is organizing and leading two group trips:

EASTERN EUROPEAN TRIP September, 2026 (14 days)

Stops will include Berlin, Warsaw, Auschwitz, Krakow, Budapest, Vienna, & Prague, among others.

COSTA RICA TRIP January 14 - 26, 2027

Alex has been to sensational Costa Rica 21 times and has taken many groups.

Email Alex at kocho@shaw.ca for a no obligation look at the full itinerary of either trip.

Vancouver Opera Guild Tour to Copenhagen, Hamburg and Berlin May 16-28, 2026

Join the VOG visiting opera houses, old and new, in Northern Europe. In Copenhagen see MacBeth and Idomeneo. In Hamburg attend a concert at the recently opened Elbphilharmonie, and two operas, The Barber of Seville and Louisa Miller at the opera house. In Berlin see Nabucco at the recently renovated Staatsoper Unter den Linden.

For information visit www.vancouveroperaguild.com or call Great Expeditions 604 257 2040 or

tours@greatexpeditions.com

BCRTA MEMBER DISCOUNTS

Have you explored the savings?

Endless Savings, Perkopolis, IRIS, HearingLife, Collette Travel, Trip Merchant and more...

www.bcrta.ca

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ACCOMMODATION OFFERED

Rent – April 2026 - Tri Palms Resort, Palm Desert CA

2 bedroom home. This is a 55+ resort with an 18 & 9 hole golf course. Clubhouse with restaurant, bar, billiards room, library, card room, 2 swimming pools, 2 hot tubs, tennis, pickleball, shuffleboard. \$2000 per month plus damage deposit. Nonsmoking, no pets.

Email barbara_grundy@yahoo.com
or call 604 855 5536.

Available for October 2025 and January & February 2026. Large one bedroom character home in the heart of **VICTORIA / Oak Bay** close to Oak Bay Village and all amenities. Cozy hot tub off livingroom & fireplace. Big country kitchen. Two washrooms. \$3000/month all inclusive. Flexible with times. Suit a single or retired couple. Please call us at 250-813-0432 or email cjcscapes@gmail.com for photos and information.

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. mano936@gmail.com

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Open a world of reading to a child and become a volunteer tutor! **ONE TO ONE Literacy** is looking for enthusiastic, compassionate, and open-minded individuals to share the joy of reading by becoming a volunteer tutor. Learn more at <https://one-to-one.ca/>

crossword

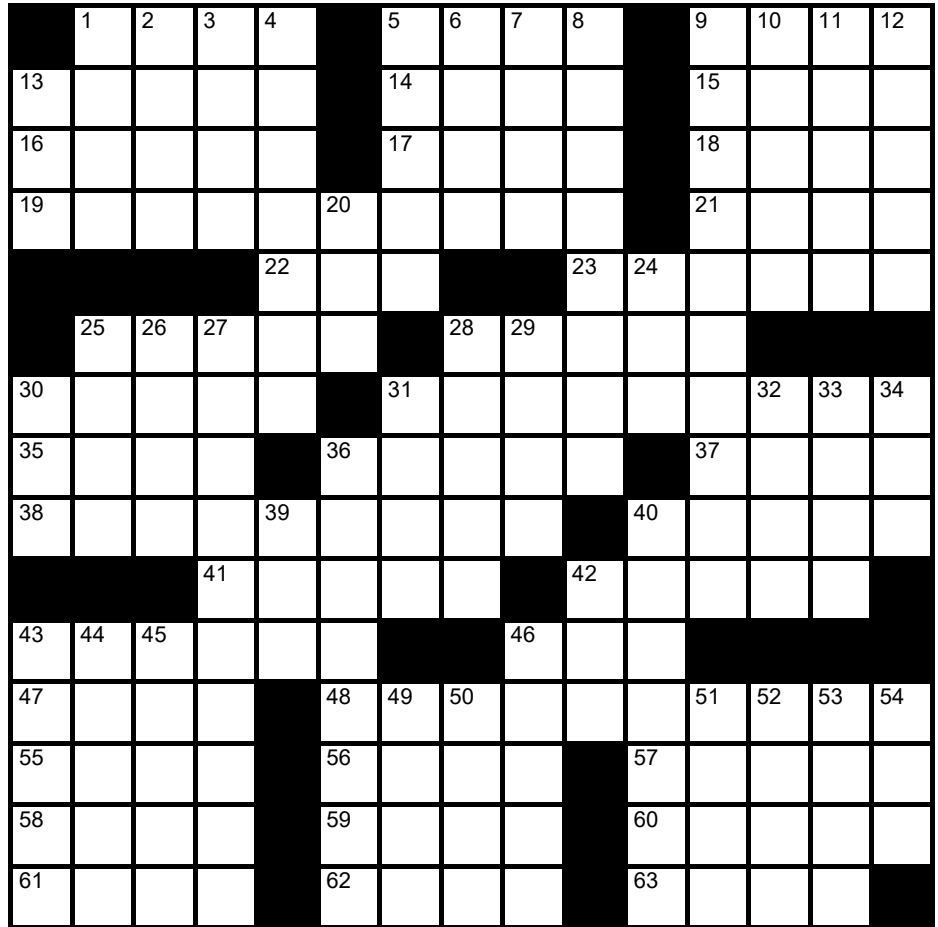
Rocket Science

By Lynn Hembree

Email: crossword@bcrrta.ca

ACROSS

1. Farfetched
5. Clothing
9. Bind
13. Pie cuts, essentially
14. "In ___ of", instead
15. Misfortunes
16. Scale
17. Brews
18. Cut, maybe
19. Laura Dern 1999 drama (2 wds)
21. Citrus fruit
22. Before
23. Cleaning toilets?
25. Ad ____, 2019 Pitt film
28. Family
30. Asian caregivers
31. Anagram of 38-across (2 wds)
35. Where you always are
36. Like a chimney sweep?
37. Ending with "hard" or "soft"
38. Galaxy nearest to the Milky Way
40. Cake serving
41. Corpulent
42. An olive-grey bird
43. Tree that grows on the savanna
46. Anger is one
47. Dungeonlike
48. Anagram of 19-across (2 wds)
55. Pasta similar to penne
56. Court panel
57. Artist's stand
58. Gaelic language
59. Ontario insurance acronym
60. May begin with "f-" or "d-"
61. Some beans
62. Honey
63. Hogwash



DOWN

1. After-bath powder
2. Mine entrance
3. Hired car, abbr.
4. Advocates for liberation
5. Dirty look
6. Afflicts
7. Big stink
8. Buttinsky
9. Surrender? (2 wds)
10. Any "Platters" platter
11. "The Kiss" painter
12. ___ Park in Colorado (see 27-down)
13. Royal College of Organists
20. Victorian, for one
24. Acronym for "International UFO Reporter"
25. Final word?
26. May end in "-onic" or "-ine"
27. Backbone of N. America? (2 wds)
28. Crystal-lined rock
29. Pro ___
30. "I found it!"
31. Buck passers?
32. Earned
33. Jason's ship
34. Born as
36. Use of negative propoganda (2 wds)
39. ___-Wan Kenobi
40. Cooler seasons
42. Compete
43. Carpentry tools
44. City of a 1000 minarets
45. Restless
46. Video call service retired on May 5th 2025
49. "That's not enough change, I'm ___ dollar!" (2 wds)
50. Game with pegs, briefly
51. Walk out?
52. Most populous city of Norway
53. Canine cry
54. Mischievous

Sudoku

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

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

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 6th Avenue,
Vancouver BC V5Z 4P2

FOR MORE ONLINE SUDOKU PUZZLES:

www.websudoku.com/

DEADLINE FOR SUDOKU AND CROSSWORD SUBMISSION IS:

October 31, 2025

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

Crossword:

Robyn Chambers, Coquitlam
Shirley Smith, North Shore
Pam Hand, Vernon

Sudoku:

Doris Hewitson, Central Okanagan
Carol Kennedy, Surrey
Sandy Adams, Revelstoke

SUMMER 2025 CROSSWORD SOLUTION

S	K	E	E	T		B	A	L	M		T	E	N	T
W	I	L	C	O		A	C	A	I		H	A	I	R
A	W	E	O	P		C	H	I	N		U	R	S	A
P	I	C	N	I	C	K	I	N	G		N	E	E	D
				C	A	S	E		L	A	D	D	I	E
M	I	L	D		I	T	S		E	R	E			
E	R	I	E		R	A	T	S		E	R	O	D	E
C	A	M	P	I	N	G		T	R	A	I	L	E	R
S	N	O	O	D		E	T	A	S		N	E	A	R
			P	E	R		E	N	V		G	O	D	S
T	R	A	U	M	A		N	D	P	S				
R	O	L	L		N	I	T	P	I	C	K	I	N	G
A	S	I	A		T	O	P	I		A	N	N	O	Y
L	I	S	T		S	T	E	P		R	I	C	E	R
A	N	T	E			A	G	E		S	T	A	L	E

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Obituaries

Location listed is the area given as "last taught"



Anderson, Carrie	Central Okanagan	Clark, Donald	Vancouver
Andrews, James	Peace River North	Coleman, Ruth	Greater Victoria
Arnold, Marilyn I	North Vancouver	Davies, Emmalyn	Courtenay
Azzi, William A.	Coquitlam	Deluca, Antonio	Kootenay Columbia
Barwell, Sherea	Burnaby	Dickens, Glenda	Surrey
Baumbrough, Harold	South Okanagan	Dockendorf, Maureen	Coquitlam
Berry, Roberta	Penticton	East, Pauline	Greater Victoria
Birkhiem, Victor	Shuswap	Falcon, Mary	Maple Ridge
Blais, Walter	Southeast Kootenay	Foster, Walter	Nanaimo
Brigden, Lerae	Beneficiary	Gordon, Judith	Vancouver
Brink, Gregory	Quesnel	Gosling, Avrille	Saanich
Brookes, George	Prince George	Grosjean, Garnet	Vancouver
Brown, Barry	Langley	Hattrick, Janet	Abbotsford
Burgar, Donna	Abbotsford	Hedrick, Ida	Surrey
Butler, Gary	Saanich	Hunter, Susan	Richmond
Caldwell, James	Prince George	Ireland, Rainseford Michael	New Westminster
Carpenter, Yvonne	Cariboo-Chilcotin	Jackson, Sandra	Greater Victoria
Carroll, Shirley	Merritt	Jones, Michael P.	Campbell River
Cawley, Peter	Nanaimo	Kohlhase, Renate	Ridge Meadows
Clark, Sharon	Richmond	Larsen, Nancy	Kootenay Lake

Lennox, Leslie	Burnaby	Ryan, Eileen Marjorie	Vancouver
Macfarlane, Stuart	Greater Victoria	Sandford, Roger	Cowichan Valley
Matthews, Lea	Surrey	Schneider, Jill	Telkwa
McQuillan, Warren	Surrey	Simpson, Lucinda	Campbell River
Meikle, Robert	Sooke	Smid, Hennie	Langley
Mitchell, Branton	Delta	Stuart, Grant Melvin	Cranbrook
Mountain, John	Burnaby	Tait, John	Central Okanagan
Neufeld, Dianne	Central Okanagan	Thomas, Ruth	Coquitlam
Nichols, Karen	North Vancouver	Tombs, Catherine	Richmond
Nicholson, Garth	Central Okanagan	Vance, Lois	Creston Valley
Nielsen, Gary	Kamloops	Waldo, Ann	Central Okanagan
Nielsen, Deena	Sooke	Walsh, J. Martin	Cowichan Valley
Oberg, Shirley	Surrey	Whidden, Barbara	Vancouver
Patterson, Linda	Cowichan Valley	White, J. Ross	Nanaimo
Perrin, Stephanie	Vancouver	Wilchek, Jill	Prince George
Phillips, Gordon R.	Vancouver	Wilkie, Allan	Vancouver
Pridy, Raeburn	Courtenay	Winter, Peter	Campbell River
Read, Cliff	Trail	Young, Jim. H.	Nanaimo
Robinson, George	Castlegar	Yule, David	Surrey
Ross, Betty Joan	Shuswap		

Photo File



Common Yellowthroat - also known as the "Yellow Bandit". This photo was taken in June. By the time you read this, he may be in Central America.



Lazuli Bunting - these birds migrate as far south as Arizona and Mexico.

EVELYN THOMSON is a member of BCRTA. These photos were taken at Colony Farm in Coquitlam.

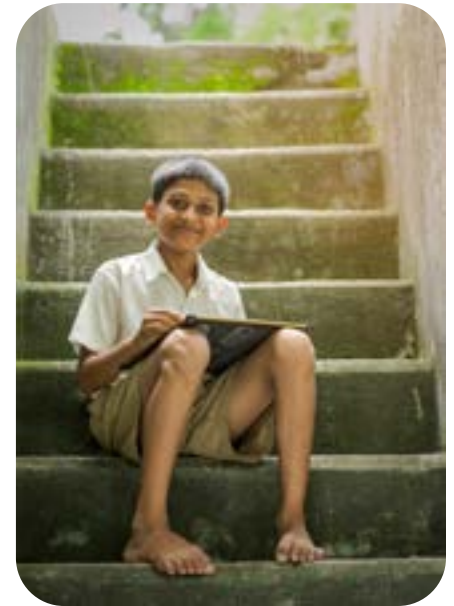


R. R. Smith Memorial Fund Foundation is the charity established by the BCRTA in 2002 through which BCRTA/R.R. Smith members could raise money and donate to educational charities and receive a tax receipt.

Our Purpose

To advance public education in British Columbia and in developing countries by :

- Providing scholarships and bursaries to doctoral students in any area which advances public education and deserving students, to enable them to attend post-secondary educational institutions.
- Making and administering grants to Canadian registered charitable organizations, the purposes of which are similar to those of the society.
- Acquiring school materials, books, equipment, and supplies of all kinds, and donating them to schools.
- Providing funding to support innovative projects which advance public education.
- working cooperatively with governments in Canada and other countries, and other charitable organizations.



2025 GRANTS

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Afretech | • Days for Girls-Port Moody chapter | • One Girl Can Society |
| • African Canadian Education Society | • Families for Children | • Real Humanitarian |
| • Blue Act Marine Society-Sunshine Coast | • For the Love of Africa | • Right to Learn Afghanistan |
| • Bright Beginnings Foundation-literacy | • Innovative Communities Foundation | • Spinoza literacy |
| • Canadian Friends of Oaxaca | • Into All the World - education | • Wonderful World of Books |
| • Canadian Harambee Education | • Love Guatemala | • Tumaini Fund |
| • Children's Care International | • Niteo Africa Society | • Umoja |
| • Compassion Fruit Society-literacy | | • Victoria-Taiama Partnership Society |

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