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Travel Industry Council of Ontario Reg#3206405 BC Reg#32337
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The Bridge Club

by Doug Mirtle

When I see young people today, especially those who work in the electronics industry in one form or another, I am astonished at how my world has changed, and how quickly it changed—right before my eyes. I find myself on the sidelines, figuratively watching the passing parade of progress; but I am destined to remain on the sidelines.

However, it has occurred to me that I, and all of us who are retirees and seniors, are, in part, responsible for this transformation. We moved society from old crystal sets or Marconi radios that were as big as a modern entertainment centre to the new hi-tech realities of today. The last fifty or so years have witnessed incredible changes in our society and lifestyle, and we were there! We were cogs in the dynamics of social, economic, and political changes. The old world reached the new world through us.

Yes, you, too, are responsible! Think of this: all societies stand on the shoulders of their predecessors to carry on, to emerge, to seek out improvements to their physical and social structures. In this way they form a link, a connecting bridge by which the new generation is able to take what it finds useful, and discard that which no longer fits the realities of their time. Each of us was given many roles during the course of our adult life: like a game of cards, like bridge, we used our talents, knowledge and skills to play out the expectations of those roles with the resources available. We were given the realities of a post-war society; and with the emergence of new demands, became the facilitators of implementing change. We started in a climate of political, social, and economic stability. We were the ones who, when the realities changed, opened the doors to new possibilities. We took possibilities and turned them into realities. We had to continually adjust our sails according to the winds of change. It was our blood, sweat, and tears that were the grit that enabled society to be transformed into this brave new world. We carried the burden of experimenting, sorting, and finally transforming the world of the past into a new world driven by technology. We can take a collective pride knowing that we led—and lead—the way for the next generation to seek their own new worlds. As Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote:

Why should we grope among the dry bones of the past, or put the living generation into masquerade out of its faded wardrobe? ... There are new lands, new men, new thoughts. (Works, Volume 1, p. 9)

I do not like looking at myself as being one of the ‘dry bones of the past,’ but I guess I was. I guess we all were. That is just what we had inherited, that is what we had to work with. We had to change and change fast! Look now and see how far we carried the next generation! When you look around at the positive fruits of our labours, I am sure you will agree that we must have been a strong bridge.

Unfortunately, societal values have not matched the growth of technology, but this is an issue the next generation will have to sort out. I did my job; you did yours. We carried them this far. We bridged the old world into this new world and are therefore more than a group of retirees or seniors. We are members of a far more important club. We are members of a bridge club: The Bridge Club! That is pretty exclusive when you think about it.
Greetings from the President

The People We Worked With

“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.”
—Nelson Mandela

Calgary Retired Teachers have a great project under way to celebrate ARTA's 50th year. Entitled Remember an Inspirational Educator, CRTA is collecting anecdotal stories about Calgary educators who, through their exemplary service, inspired students and colleagues during the past fifty years.

I have to apologize, because I have not done my homework yet, but I have been thinking. There is a long list, and it’s hard to narrow down; but here are some of the major impacts on my teaching and career:

R.B. Walls, my first principal, 1966. He was nine feet tall and a legend, and I was a humble and uncertain beginning teacher.

“What do you teach?” “Math and Science, and I could do Social Studies.” And then came the thundering response ... “In this school we teach children!”

Norm Holden, my second principal, 1973. He encouraged us to innovate and take risks. And when we met with success, he was quick to give credit ... and on those rare occasions, when an idea cratered, he shouldered the blame. He also taught me that the best way to handle an introduction to an irate parent is to smile, give a warm handshake, and hang up their coat—being a welcoming host dissolved many a problem, and made many a new friend.

So many colleagues impacted my practice and thinking. I wish I could acknowledge them all; but as space is limited, I will highlight just two:

Sharleen Kapp and Doris Barber, Grade Seven teachers, 1981. It was my second school as principal, and my first real experience with a high-needs community. It was so easy to echo the chorus, “These kids can’t ...!” However, these two teachers, in the early years of their careers, just assumed that their students would be successful, and that was the only outcome they would accept. With commitment, caring and expectation, they made a difference; and they were rewarded, every day by smiling eager faces and active learners. The principal learned a valuable lesson too.

Garfield Anderson, 1983. (I was his assistant superintendent.) On those days when the phone was ringing, and there seemed to be a line-up of suspensions, new policies, and upset parents, he would say, “When you applied for this job, this is what you wanted to do.” It was a great line, and it still echoes during the occasional meeting or debate.

Chuck Rose, long-time colleague, and CRTA President in 2005 taught me to telephone late at night when volunteers are most vulnerable... tell them there will be only three or four meetings a year, and that you can launch them into a great ‘second’ career working for retired teachers. Seven years later, both of us are still engaged in ARTA pursuits, although I do not know what happened to the three- or four-meeting limit.

And finally, my dad, a small town doctor, but in his own way a philosopher and teacher, influenced my career as well. Again, many thoughts echo through my head. One thing that he taught me was the greatest rubric for evaluation: “Is it worth the wear and tear on the chicken to lay the egg?”

When we look back on our careers, it is those people we worked with who dominate our memories. When we speak, we hear the echo of their voices. When we act, we know they would approve. Above all, their impact continues because we are now on the lists of our former students and colleagues.

All the best for the holiday season and the rest of our anniversary year.
Executive Director’s
Report

Keeping Our Balance

“Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving.” —Albert Einstein

Keeping our balance and moving forward has been a direction of the Alberta Retired Teachers’ Association (ARTA) since its inception in November 1963. As the association enters into its 50th year of operation, it keeps moving forward. Through this movement, we are forever striving to ensure perfect balance. The last six months have been an intricate act of moving and balancing to ensure the long-term sustainability of our association and the overall wellness of our more than 12,000 members. Over the last six months, ARTA has kept moving by developing new relationships and partnerships that ensure proper balance will be in place for all of its members for the next fifteen to twenty years.

ARTA has entered into a partnership with Aon Hewitt to provide consultation and marketing support to our association to help ARTA protect and grow our brand, to ensure the long-term integrity of our benefit plan and to provide guidance when entering preferred strategic partnerships that give our members access to the best value, and they also help to ensure and preserve the balance and long-term sustainability of our association. Keeping balance while managing competing priorities, industry and economic changes, and other emerging factors, is hard to do; but the new relationships and partnerships truly allow ARTA to be balanced as we move forward.

These new relationships and partnerships fit together to give our members access to the best value, and they also help to ensure and preserve the balance and long-term sustainability of our association. Keeping balance while managing competing priorities, industry and economic changes, and other emerging factors, is hard to do; but the new relationships and partnerships truly allow ARTA to be balanced as we move forward.

To some, these changes may seem to be somewhat overwhelming. I, for one, feel overwhelmed some days; but when I reflect on the potential and the long-term effects of securing these new strategic partnerships, I know we are serving our present and future members in the best way possible. ARTA is building a strategy to reach out to all retired teachers and affiliate partners, creating a plan to support the health and welfare of our members, and bringing an added level of financial stability that will serve us best, well into the future.

These changes have also been challenging in that, as we have fostered new relationships, old relationships were impacted. The long-term relationship we have had with Johnson Inc. is one of those relationships that will change as a result of our change in business philosophy.

The Retired Teachers’ Association is especially grateful to Johnson Inc. for their dedication and service throughout the past seventeen years, and to that I would like to add my personal thanks. They have enabled the association to expand between 1995 and 2012, helped us maintain balance in our initial phase, and were behind us when we needed them.

Our organizational changes are no reflection on their service or dedication. Rather, it was a result of ARTA’s growth as an organization.
that required us to establish a more dynamic set of services and infrastructure. These were available in the market at competitive costs. Such new services and deliverables are what will allow us to secure ARTA’s future and maintain ARTA’s course towards more independence and autonomy in our operations. In short, these changes will help the association to move ahead while allowing us to maintain the balance Einstein mentions. Balancing and moving has been ARTA’s mandate for almost fifty years. As we look back and reflect on what changes have occurred over the last half century, we need to take the time and thank those who have brought us this far—past ARTA Executives, tireless volunteers, dedicated staff and corporate partners. ARTA has done a masterful job in managing the delicate, sometimes difficult—but always rewarding—task of balancing and moving forward.

Attention All ARTA Authors: ARTA Book Fair

by Ardith Trudzik

Thank you for submitting the titles of books that you have written. (And if you have not done so yet, please do.) The following information is required to include on the website for our book display: the name of your book, a brief description of what your book is about, your mailing address, phone number and the price of your book, so that those wishing to order the book can contact you directly.

Please forward a copy of each book you wish to donate for the display to Ardith Trudzik, c/o ARTA, Barnett House, 409, 11010 – 142 Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5N 2R1.

A Tribute to a Writer

by Ardith Trudzik

Jeannette Evangeline Romaniuk (née Gaumond), born in the French community of Shell River, Saskatchewan, completed much of her secondary education through correspondence. She obtained a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Alberta. Jeanette just loved teaching!

After her retirement in 1984, she continued to tutor many children at various levels. Her passion to write about her own life experiences resulted in two books: Bread Upon the Waters and Gathering Roses Among the Thorns ( Trafford Publishing). Both books can be found on the ARTA website and will be included in the ARTA book display at Barnett House, or at a Book Fair at branch level celebrations. Copies of each book are available for purchase and can be ordered by contacting the author directly.

Jeanette urges retired teachers to devote their skills and energy toward voluntary literacy programs for adults who have not yet mastered the written word.
ARTA’s 50th Anniversary Launch

The ARTA 50th anniversary celebrations were launched at the first annual Recognition Banquet held on the evening of October 3.

The festivities began with a happy hour in the ATA cafeteria. ARTA delegates, past presidents, and past executive secretaries along with their guests were greeted in the Barnett House Auditorium, transformed for the occasion, by the master of ceremonies for the evening, the CBC’s Mark Connolly. ARTA President, Gordon Cumming, welcomed banquet attendees, and Paul Boisvert delivered a soul-stirring blessing. A delectable prime rib dinner, topped off by a dish of tiramisu, was followed by the presentation of brass school bells to retiring board members.

Entertainment was provided by Bill and Myrna Lasecki who sang three songs: “The One-Room School,” a folksong from Newfoundland; “What a Wonderful World,” by Bob Thiele; and “ARTA and Retired Teachers’ Tribute,” an original work by NEARTA members.

Chuck Rose shared a brief timeline of events that led to the formation of the Alberta Retired Teachers’ Association in 1963. Dean McMullen followed Chuck’s presentation with an invitation to retired teachers throughout the province to participate in one or more activities planned to celebrate the anniversary at the provincial or branch level.

The evening concluded with the screening of a six-minute video produced in recognition of ARTA’s golden jubilee.

Thanks to the hard work of members of the office staff, ARTA Executive, Human Resources Committee and the 50th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee, the kick-off of ARTA’s anniversary celebrations was a memorable occasion.
The ARTA 50th anniversary celebrations were launched at the Annual General Meeting banquet on October 3. Thanks to the hard work of members of the Human Resources Committee, the office staff, the 50th Anniversary Committee and the ARTA Executive the kick-off of ARTA’s anniversary celebrations was very successful.

The special touch of the table centrepieces, the great job done by CBC’s Mark Connolly as master of ceremonies, and the special entertainment provided by Bill and Myrna Lasecki made this an evening to be remembered. My thanks go out to all.

SO, WHAT IS NEXT?
The first membership-wide activity is the ARTA 50th Anniversary Bonspiel sponsored by the Central East branch on November 16 and 17 in Vermilion. The bonspiel will “Remember Floyd Sweet.” Floyd served as the ARTA president for three years and as the president of the Canadian Association of Retired Teachers for two years.

The Photography Contest is ongoing. Special recognition and prizes await winners in the many categories.

A Feature Quilt is being created from the many quilt squares submitted by our members. This special project will be on display in the ARTA office and will serve as a great reminder of the 50th anniversary commemoration.

The Ponoka and District branch is sponsoring the 50th Anniversary Golf Tournament in Ponoka on June 19. This event will be the fourth annual golf tournament and will feature special 50th anniversary touches.

A Book Fair will feature the creative works of retired teachers. Let the ARTA office know if you have literary works you would like to have included in this project.

A 50th anniversary Volunteer Recognition Program, outlined in detail in this magazine, will recognize many outstanding retired teacher volunteers with a special award.

Branches are encouraged to compile a brief Branch History that can be featured in future issues of News & Views. The history should include some significant photos.

Many branches are planning special 50th anniversary activities of their own. The committee commends these efforts and will support the branch whenever possible.

More information on all of the projects and activities relating to the 50th anniversary can be found on the ARTA website. Visit this site often for all things ARTA.

LET’S CELEBRATE OUR 50th, A VERY SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE IN OUR HISTORY!
ARTA’s New Benefit Plan Partners:
January 1, 2013

by Katie Gates

If you have ever made an investment, purchased a home or even booked a flight, you know that markets can change minute-by-minute. Sometimes staying ahead of the curve means shifting strategy to ensure that you are getting the most for your money.

At ARTA, we have done just that. ARTA’s goal is to ensure our members continue to receive the same great ARTA Health and Wellness Benefit Plan coverage, rates, benefit options and service, while protecting the long-term sustainability of our plan. We are shifting to new benefit plan partners effective January 1, 2013, when we will be able to provide you with more comprehensive and easy-to-access service for your benefit needs, while adding some features and programs that add even more value to the ARTA benefit offering.

What Does This Change Mean for You?
There will be no change to your current coverage. Your rates, options and benefit plan provisions will remain the same. You will enjoy the same great ARTA education and public sector benefits coverage with more options for managing your overall health and wellness.

The following ARTA Health and Wellness Benefit Plan’s new provider partners have an exceptional depth of understanding of the benefits needs of retirees because these providers already provide coverage for active and retired teachers and support staff across the country.

- The Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan (ASEBP) and their partner Alberta Blue Cross (all administration, EHC and dental claims—including drugs);
- SSQ Financial and their partner AXA Assistance (travel and emergency travel assistance); and
- TW Insurance Brokers/The Ontario Teachers’ Insurance Plan (OTIP) (for home and auto).

ARTA’s new provider partners will provide a very good match for ARTA’s current benefit plan participants’ needs. There is a schematic at the end of this article that summarizes the changes in partners for the respective services provided to ARTA and plan participants as of January 1, 2013.

ARTA’s Benefit Services and New Features
There are more tools coming in the first six months of 2013 to support all aspects of your health and wellness. These tools will include the following:

- Online Access to Your Benefit Account—Using your ARTA member login (you need to register on the ARTA site), you will have access to your benefit account at all times, allowing you to check your health and travel benefits, and get information about the nearest service

Did you know?
The new ARTA provider partners have some of the most comprehensive interactive online benefit service options available in Canada. You will be able to access your health claims information online, while taking advantage of the improved electronic access to information on coverage and new health and wellness tools. Over 90% of health and dental claims (including vision care and most paramedical claims) will be handled electronically in the new ARTA partner environment.

With the ARTA online member’s portal, you can review all of your coverage, plan information and options at any time, from anywhere in the world that you have Internet access!
provider should you have a travel emergency.

- **Mobile Access to Claims Information**—You will have access to details on your health and dental claims using a new mobile application designed by ARTA’s new administrator.

- **Planning Tools for Health and Wellness**—You will have access to new tools to manage your individual health and wellness:
  - If you want to better understand your health care risk factors, there is a general tool, Health Risk Assessment. There are also more specific tools such as the Heart Disease Risk Calculator, Stroke Risk Assessment or Target Cholesterol Calculator.
  - Use the “Ask an Expert” webpage to get answers to your health and lifestyle questions.

- **Educational Member Programming**—ARTA members will be able to enjoy highly rated wellness education tools. In addition to tips on diet and exercise, there is lifestyle coaching, which connects to a fitness expert, dietician or counsellor to help set personal goals, create an action plan and then follow-up to support and encourage healthy behaviours.

- **Informational Libraries**—ARTA’s new websites will also be a resource for credible information on health-related information. The medication library provides up-to-date information about prescriptions from top medical experts. There is also access to a library on diseases and conditions to inform about treatment options and symptom management. These libraries supplement the health advice you receive from your professional health care practitioners.

By July 1, 2013, ARTA members will be able to access this new support for health and wellness. Along with with many new tools and services to help achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle, there is a wealth of experts and resources available. If you have further questions about these partnership services or need support in understanding these new features, please check the ARTA website [http://www.albertarta.org](http://www.albertarta.org) or telephone our administrator at 1-877-438-4545, or the ARTA office at 1-855-212-2400. The timetable for the introduction of these services will be published on the ARTA site in December 2012.
The nineteenth annual To Hell With the Bell golf tournament kicked off on September 4th at River Bend Golf Club in Red Deer. Fifty-nine male, retired teachers from all over central Alberta attended. They were treated to excellent weather, a great golf course and superb hospitality.

Net winners were Larry Pizzey of Red Deer with a score of 62, followed by Ross MacEchern of Edmonton, Lawrence Sidebottom of Red Deer, Alex Weber of Rocky Mountain House, and Al Rimer of Red Deer.

The low gross winner was Hugh MacPherson of Red Deer with a 74, followed by Phil Boston of Lacombe.

Golfers in attendance were from Red Deer, Stettler, Rocky Mountain House, Lacombe, Wetaskiwin, Edmonton and Camrose.
This year we were able to raise $3,000 for the Alberta Cancer Foundation, which brings the total in the last ten years to approximately $21,000. Thanks to all of the golfers and sponsors who had such a great time and were able to help us raise this amount. This kind of support is encouraging as we may be able to, in some small way, help to find a cure for this disease.

Next year, we will once again hold the tournament at River Bend in Red Deer on Tuesday, September 3. We encourage all male retired teachers to join us in such a worthwhile cause and in having such a great time.

We are especially grateful to our major sponsors Canwest Travel of Red Deer, River Bend Golf Club, Henry's Eavestroughing of Red Deer, Ron Olney (Sun Life) and Johnson Inc.

Our thanks is extended as well to the rest of our sponsors who very generously donated enough prizes that every golfer went home with something.

Current members of the tournament committee will be stepping down after this year. It has been a good run, but after nineteen years, we need some new blood with some new ideas.

Anyone wishing to get on the mailing list and to join us next year should contact Norm McDougall at 403-347-3491 or Don Taylor at 403-342-5493.
Lynne Butler, BA, LLB is a senior Will and Estate Planner for Scotiabank, with an extensive background in elder law in Alberta. Her blog is at www.estatelawcanada.com.

What Do I Need to Know About Tax on My Estate?

Tax is the area of estate planning that many find to be the most confusing of all. There is a great temptation simply to push all tangled thoughts of taxation aside for the accountants to worry about later. However, doing so would be bad news for those we leave behind. When we do not understand how taxes will affect our estates, we leave our loved ones holding the bag. Overlooking taxation is one of the most common mistakes made by individuals.

I hope to clarify some of the tax concepts and rules that are important to your estate planning. I hope you will find that you can apply what you read here to your own situation.

Canada does not have a specific tax that is levied against beneficiaries inheriting under an estate. You may leave money to any individual in Canada without their having to pay tax on it. There is no specific tax on dying either. So, you may be wondering why, if there is no inheritance tax or death tax, there is so much talk about planning ahead to minimize and pay for taxes in an estate.

There are two major sources of tax in an estate. They are income tax and capital gains tax. Both of these apply to almost all of us.

Income Tax

There are plenty of tax consequences when a person passes away. This is largely because of the fact that a person’s assets are deemed by law to have been disposed of by the deceased immediately before he or she died.

For example, everyone who owns an RRSP or RRIF likely knows that we do not pay tax on the money we put into our plan until we take it back out. In other words, the money is not tax-free: it is tax-deferred. The deferral refers to the fact that tax is not paid on the funds until we take them back out again.

Every time we take out a portion of the funds, we pay the tax on that portion. So if you were to dispose of your entire estate one minute before you died, and as part of doing so you took all of the money out of your RRIF, then you would have to pay the taxes on all of it.

In reality, your estate would pay those taxes, even though the person named as the beneficiary of your RRSP or RRIF may not be your estate. For example, you could own a RRIF worth $100,000 and have designated your son as the beneficiary of the plan. When you pass away, your son would receive $100,000. Interestingly, it is not the son who pays the tax on that. Let us say the tax on your RRIF will be $30,000. This $30,000 will come out of your general estate, not out of the RRIF (though if there is not enough in the estate to pay the tax, Canada Revenue Agency might well pursue the son to pay the rest of the tax).

You can defer paying those taxes if the beneficiary you designate is your spouse or a disabled child. If you named your spouse as the beneficiary of that same $100,000 RRIF, the entire RRIF could roll over to your spouse with no tax
payable at the time. The tax would be further deferred until your spouse takes money out, or passes away.

Most of us receive this advice at the bank or from our financial advisors at the time we first set up our RRSP or RRIF. However, I often still see individuals who have named a son or daughter, especially in a second marriage situation, without realizing that the tax bill is going to be footed by someone else.

Capital Gains Tax

Another tax liability that arises when a person passes away is capital gains tax. This is a tax on capital property that has increased in value since the day you acquired it. For most of us, the capital property in question is real estate. Shares of privately owned corporations are also capital property, so business owners need to be aware of who will pay this tax.

The tax is payable on the increase in value. For example, if you bought a cabin at the lake for $50,000 years ago, and by the time you die the cabin is worth $90,000, then the value of your property has gained $40,000. Half of that gain is taxable. Your executor would then have to include $20,000 (half of the gain) on your last tax return as income.

This tax is also payable out of your estate. If you leave your cabin to your son and the rest of the estate to your daughter, the capital gains tax on the cabin comes out of the daughter’s share.

There is an exception to the rule that taxes the increase in value of land. Your estate does not have to pay any capital gains tax on your principal residence. This is referred to as a capital gains exemption. If you have a home and a cabin, or a home and a rental property, you can claim the exemption only on one property, that being your usual place of residence. A husband and wife can only have one principal residence between them.

It is worthwhile to sit down with an accountant or estate-planning lawyer to make sure that you are aware of all of the possible tax consequences of your death and that of your spouse. You also want to make sure that you are aware of ways to reduce taxes and to have cash flow available to pay the portion that cannot be avoided.

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**When Your Car Conks Out at –30°**

*by Robin Carson*

Here are a few tips to help you prepare for the off chance that you are stranded in winter.

- Always keep your vehicle at least half-full of gas.
- Dress as if you had to walk to where you are going.
- Keep a winter survival kit in your vehicle. If you become stranded, your car provides shelter, but not much else.
- Stay with your vehicle unless it has stopped in a dangerous place.

Include these items in your survival kit:

- Snowbrush and ice scraper
- Small shovel
- Sand, rock chips, or other traction aid
- Booster cables
- Road flares, folding warning triangles or warning lights
- Gas-line antifreeze
- A hand-crank flashlight, or a flashlight with reliable batteries
- First aid kit
- Fire extinguisher
- Small tool kit or a multi-tool
- Extra clothing and footwear
- Blankets, or a sleeping bag
- Non-perishable energy foods such as chocolate or granola bars
- Bottled water (Today snow is not fit for consumption.)
- Candles and a small tin can to use as a candle holder
- Matches or a butane lighter
- Cellphone with a charging cable

The candles in your emergency kit will provide at least some heat in your closed car—as well as light. If you do become stranded and you intend to run your vehicle, make sure the tailpipe is not blocked with snow.

Pushing a vehicle is a great way to have a heart attack. If you can, wait for help.
To the Editor:

Regarding the Tai Chi article by Steve Burger in the fall issue, it was an excellent review except for the reference to “signing out a DVD.” You can’t learn anything of a kinaesthetic nature by watching a DVD.

My ‘acquaintance’ with Tai Chi goes back to 1986, shortly after retirement, when about a dozen of us met above the bicycle shop on Whyte Avenue, across from Earl’s restaurant.

The teaching of the Taoist Tai Chi Society (now the Fung Loy Kok Taoist Tai Chi Society) has always been very good, and the Society, twice a year as part of Taoist outreach, cooks for and feeds up to 400 people from the Mustard Seed Church and beyond. There are now thousands of people in Edmonton practicing Tai Chi, many in the Taoist tradition introduced to Canada by Mr. Moy fifty years ago.

Tai Chi is now recognized medically, and a physician has always been on the Board of the Taoist Tai Chi Society. In my case (written up for the National Headquarters in 2000), I would not be able to walk if I had not become a constant practitioner (again, DVDs are for the dilettante), beginning over twenty-five years ago, since I had Guillane-Barre’s Syndrome (mistaken for polio) at age twenty-five. I was paralyzed for ten days and in constant pain thereafter, with polymyalgia rheumatica by age seventy-five.

Since I spent fifteen years as a professional physical educator, including supervision and national level projects, I can verify the physical aspects of Tai Chi being curative. Also, as a society, the Taoist movement lends itself to “The Way” and reliance on the good work and efforts of the many.

It works. I and hundreds of others are proof of well-being therefrom—but, you have to work at it!

Regards,
Jim Lavers

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News & Views Special Issue

The 2013 spring issue of News & Views will be a special 50th anniversary issue. We would love to have your input about what it should contain. In addition, we are also looking for original writing, photographs or anything else that you feel might be appropriate for the issue. The deadline for material is January 25, 2013.

Contact Robin Carson at newsandviews@shaw.ca or send a letter addressed to the ARTA office at 409, 11010–142 Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5N 2R1.
What Are We Doing Now?

A Tribute to ARTA’s Anniversary

By Marilyn Bossert

Retirement is a time to do what we want, when we want, if we want. My column is designed to share with you stories of how retired teachers are doing just that.

—Marilyn Bossert

Bill and Myrna Lasecki’s gift of music was instrumental in initiating the kick-off to the celebration of ARTA’s 50th anniversary held at Barnett House on October 3.

It all started at the last Christmas NEARTA meeting when Paul Boisvert put forth a call for members to contribute to the 50th anniversary celebration. Bill and Myrna Lasecki took up the challenge, along with Viv Plouffe, Claudette Proulx and Jeanne Robinson. They decided to compose lyrics for a song.

The five of them met in September to brainstorm for the ideas and concepts for the lyrics. Myrna polished the final outcome. In the meantime, Bill composed the music.

Myrna describes her husband as someone who lives and loves music. He plays piano and the saxophone, but it is his guitar that is never far from his side. Although his major was Physical Education, he taught many music classes. Even now, when he goes to a school to substitute, his guitar is with him.

At the kick-off banquet, Bill and Myrna Lasecki performed the song composed by the five of them, with Bill on guitar. These are the words.
ARTA and Retired Teachers’ Tribute

Refrain
When you think about your teaching and the students you’ve been reaching
Just remember, another best is yet to come. (X2)

When you became a teacher
You had lofty goals to reach:
You were set to fulfill dreams and change the world.
Then realities came at you:
You were overwhelmed by challenge,
You worked twenty-four and seven to succeed
To meet your students’ many needs.
You gave all that you could muster,
Making everything worthwhile when they achieved.
The next decades kept changing:
New curriculum, new methods;
You adapted, you learned and you improved.
New initiatives were constant; never time to rest on laurels,
There was always the latest thing you had to do
And always those new terms would come at you!

(Spoken) Technology, balanced literacy, multiple intelligences,
integrated centre-based learning, moral intelligence, learning modalities,
hands-on math, modified curriculum, personal PD,
individual education plans, PAT exams, changing modes of evaluation,
pillars of accountability, coaching, staff meetings,
parent meetings, committee meetings, supervision (voice trails off tiredly)

At the heart of all your efforts
Were the students touched forever.
You planted seeds you know will grow always.
You took the time for listening and you took the time for caring:
You wanted them to know that you would stay.
And now your treasured memories of successes you have fostered
Still help you feel the value of your days.
Now retirement is your lifestyle;
You’ve found change is still around you,
But at your pace, on your own whim each day.
Bells are gone, and so are plan-books,
Free from working in the classroom.
Just wake up every day to pension pay!

(Spoken) Supervision is now grandparenting;
Meetings—coffee dates and volunteering;
Coaching—yoga, walking, curling, golf;
Art is quilting, woodwork, hobbies;
Field trips—international travel;
Busily chasing goals and dreams since classroom work is done,
We all pursue our ‘bucket lists’ as time goes marching on.

ARTA’s celebrating fifty
Years of connecting and supporting.
It informs and advocates for us
Who enter senior years.
May retirement life continue
To be graced by friendly colleagues
As ARTA carries on to be a strong and vibrant team!

Final refrain:
When we think about retirement, and the teachers ARTA’s reaching,
Just remember ARTA’s best is yet to come! (repeat)
ARTA Office News

Two Items of Note  
by Evelyn Morin

When ARTA members receive new ARTA cards, the left-hand side of the page shows the name and address. This is the receipt for payment, and may be used for income tax purposes.

ARTA members can pay memberships online. After making a payment, select ‘Continue,’ or ‘Submit.’ The screen will then show an order number, and indicate that the transaction was completed. An emailed receipt will follow that will show name, address, date, order number and amount paid.

If you do not receive a card and receipt from the ARTA office within two weeks, please contact the office at 780-822-2400.

Rockin’ Retirement@ Your ATA Library  
by Sandra Anderson, BA, MLIS

It is a little-known fact that lifetime members of the ATA can still access the ATA Library after retirement. Even better, did you know that the library will send out books, videos and articles to you anywhere in the province free of charge? And the library will even pre-pay the shipping back! How cool is that?

Interesting... but what does the library have that would be of interest to retired teachers? Well, if you are curious about the online world, your ATA Library has books and videos about using Facebook, Twitter, Linked In and other Web 2.0 web tools. We have materials on how to get started blogging and podcasting. We have books like Life after Teaching: Road Map To Retirement Happiness, How to Love Your Retirement, and How to Retire Happy, Wild, and Free. We also have books about the history of teaching in Alberta and across Canada. You will be surprised by all of the interesting things you can find at your library!

You can visit the library online at http://library.teachers.ab.ca and browse through the catalogue. But do not miss our amazing webpages full of links to great websites on many different topics. Visit http://bit.ly/Rky9qQ to access these pages at home.

Did You Receive Your New Provider Information Letter and ID Cards?

If you are a member of the ARTA Health and Wellness Benefit Plan, you should already have received a letter notifying you of the change in ARTA partner providers, along with a new ID card for health and travel benefits. Also included are some answers to the most frequently asked questions about the ARTA partner provider changes that will occur effective January 1, 2013.

If you did not receive your letter from ARTA, go to the ARTA website at: http://www.albertarta.org or call the ARTA service line at 1-855-212-2400 to ensure we have your most up-to-date mailing information.

It is important that we have your address (and email address too!) on file so that you will receive your full Welcome Package in December. You will also receive further updates in 2013 with more information about the new ARTA health- and benefits-related tools and services that you will be able to access later in 2013.
Diane Britton is a registered dietitian who has worked as a sports nutritionist at the U of A, and who has done contract work for the RCMP, Health Canada, and the Southwest Alberta Child and Family Services. She worked for nine years at the University of Lethbridge, and now works for Alberta Health and the Lethbridge Health and Wellness Centre.

The Holidays? Just weight!

Holiday Survival Tips

Holidays are a time to relax and rejuvenate your energy levels. All too often, the holidays become a time for weight gain as well. Here are some tips to help prevent ‘waisted’ calories this holiday season.

• **Eat before a party or Christmas dinner.** Not eating all day to ‘save up’ for the feast is a sure way to overeat. Eat a nutritious breakfast and lunch. Snack in the morning and afternoon on vegetables such as carrot sticks with dip and fruit such as mandarin oranges. This way you will arrive at the party or the dinner table pleasantly hungry, but not starved.

• **Control portions.** Take small portions of your favorite foods; savor and enjoy them. Be choosy! If you do not love it, leave it. Most people will eat all the food in front of them; so, avoid overfilling your plate. A good trick for portion control is to not let any foods touch each other on your plate.

• **Limit alcohol.** Packing a whopping seven calories per gram, alcohol is an easy way to increase calorie intake without even feeling full. Try alternating alcoholic drinks with a glass of water. Drink lower calorie festive beverages like wine spritzers, Bloody Marys, or mix spirits with water or diet pop.

• **Drink up!** Staying hydrated helps you to avoid overeating. Health Canada recommends nine cups (2.25 L) of fluid daily for women and thirteen cups (3.25 L) of fluid per day for men. Focus on water for best weight management.

• **Get active!** Enjoy winter activities like skating and skiing. Go for a walk with family and friends. Enjoy indoor activities such as swimming, badminton, racquetball or shooting hoops at a community gym. Make the holidays an active time to visit and have fun with loved ones.

New Year’s Resolution: Stop Dieting!

“Lose 10 pounds this week!” We have all read it, some have tried it—and it even worked for a few; but weight always comes back this way. Fad diets, celebrity diets, quick weight-loss promises do not work long term and cause the yo-yo effect: the weight loss—weight gain cycle. So start this year by not dieting; and, instead, focus on healthy eating.

When calorie intake is too low, your body simply decreases the amount of energy it burns. The result? A lower metabolism that means when you stop dieting (which inevitably happens) and begin eating ‘normally’ again, your body is very good at putting energy that is not used to receiving into fat stores. Research shows after quitting dieting, most people put on the weight they lost—plus a bit more. Why? Because they did not change their ‘normal’ eating habits and lifestyle choices. Weight loss that lasts requires two things: permanent changes to the way you eat, and physical activity as a part of your daily life. In order for those changes to happen, they have to be enjoyable. Here are some tips to get you started.

**Eat yogurt.** Research at the University of Tennessee found that people who ate three servings a day (one serving = 175g) lost 61% more body fat and 81% more stomach fat than people who did not eat any yogurt. Calcium in yogurt (and other dairy products) is thought to help burn body fat and prevent fat storage—especially on the belly, hips and thighs. In fact, research tells us that people who eat a low calcium diet have twice the risk of being overweight. New data from Health Canada show most Canadians are not consuming even the minimum recommended number of servings of dairy products each day, the main source of calcium in a Canadian diet. Is it a coincidence that the number of
Obese and overweight adults in Canada has reached almost 60%? Pass the yogurt please!

**Eat breakfast.** An alarming number of people skip breakfast. Breakfast skippers are more likely to be overweight and have a lower intake of key nutrients like calcium, fibre and vitamin C. Even a small amount of food counts; coffee alone does not.

**Snack smart.** Breakfast increases your metabolism (a good thing) and you may find light snacks (fruit, vegetables and dairy/soy choices) between meals curb your appetite so you can enjoy a smaller meal and still feel full. Smaller meals and snacks spread throughout the day help boost your metabolism, and the body does not convert as much energy into fat stores.

**Taste. Savor.** Enjoy. When was the last time you really enjoyed eating? With the fast pace of life it is easy to ‘gobble and go,’ making it even easier to overeat. Any extra calories from protein, carbohydrates or fat that your body cannot use will be converted into fat stores. Slow down and enjoy your food and you will soon find you are full!

**Check your portions.** Most food served in restaurants is enough for two meals. Save some for the next day or share a meal with a friend instead of finishing your plate by yourself. Recommended portions are smaller than most people think.

Get active. It does not take much to boost your metabolism. Health Canada’s Physical Activity Guide recommends thirty to sixty minutes of physical activity a day. You can add activity up in ten-minute sessions. Take a ‘walk break’ instead of a coffee break. You will feel more energized, and physical activity helps your brain focus better. Remember, though, to check anything strenuous with your doctor. Stay within your limits, but stay active. So, stop dieting this year. Healthy eating means a balanced nutrition plan that includes foods you enjoy. Incorporate enjoyable physical activity into your day. Little changes go a long way toward permanent weight loss and better health.

**ARTA Volunteer Recognition Award**

by Dean McMullen, 50th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee Chair

A great number of retired teachers provide invaluable volunteer service to their communities and beyond. ARTA believes that these retired teachers deserve special recognition. The 50th anniversary gives ARTA the opportunity to initiate a recognition project for such efforts; and so, a special recognition award is being introduced to do just that.

Those retired teachers who provide exceptional volunteer services to their community or beyond their immediate community will be eligible for this award. Where ARTA branches exist, it is the ARTA branch that will select award recipients. Retired teacher volunteers working in areas where there is no ARTA branch can be nominated by ARTA members directly. These nominations should be sent to the ARTA office. A limited number of the 50th Anniversary Outstanding Volunteer Awards will be presented to worthy recipients selected from all of the nominees.

The Volunteer Recognition Award Project provides ARTA branches with the opportunity to select worthy recipients for this award. Branches can identify the same number of award recipients as they have eligible voting members representing their branch at the ARTA Annual General Meeting.

This project will operate during the 2012–2013 school year so it is important to begin now to identify worthy recipients. Award presentations will be arranged by the branch or in the community where the recipient lives if there is no ARTA branch.

This is a significant project, and we hope that both branches and ARTA members will help to identify worthy retired teachers in their communities who have given of their time and energy to provide assistance where it is needed.
Our Next Great Debate

by Paul E. Boisvert

“Power is power. It exists of and for itself. And the power to sway the human mind is the greatest and most lethal power of all.”

Jack Whyte—The Eagles’ Brood

Language has been called the most powerful drug known to humanity. The words we hear and speak distort our points of view and affect our innermost feelings. Consequently, words, either clearly understood or misunderstood, have a greater impact on our lives and relationships than we sometimes want to admit. Words are most poignant when the conversation is centered on either the quality of living or on dying with dignity.

There was a time in the not-so-long-ago when we knew that certain illnesses were an absolute death sentence. Upon the receipt of the ‘bad news,’ preparations began for the arrival of that final heartbeat. Generally, the duration of one’s suffering, while perhaps more arduous than it is currently, did not last for a protracted period of time. Death seemed to be more readily accepted as a fact of life.

At the present time, the treatment for ailments and afflictions to which we are subject has intensified to the point, where unconsciously, we begin to believe and act as if we will live forever. This possibility lies either in the advances made through conventional medicine with its overabundance of drugs or amid the plethora of non-conventional treatments, which cover the spectrum from naturopathic
reasons, today the door appears to swing open at the slightest nudge. Over time, is it the question of a right or wrong that has supported each of these practices or legalities, or is it the fact that, with increased use and familiarity, comes acceptance?

While the intrinsic right to live a life of personal dignity is revered, it is not limited to seniors (approximately twenty percent of the population). We must pause to consider not only what is, but what is yet to come. The following question needs to be asked: is it possible that a vision that embraces new ethics and social norms—and which integrates euthanasia and assisted dying in medical practices—would greatly alter our acceptance and understanding of the end of our life, of dying, of life supports, of medical practices, of the relationship between patient and doctor, and the relationship amongst those who provide health care in all its forms?

Given the volatility of this discussion, it is absolutely necessary that we reflect upon the implications of our sentiments for our institutions of justice, ethics and societal supports; for, eventually, the legal justification of a medical practice which supports assisted dying will become common practice by a consensus which may be both socially acceptable and totally irreversible. While universal acceptance is no more possible for this issue than it has been for the previously mentioned historical cultural changes, euthanasia, assisted dying and suicide must be dealt with in our time.

In current reports and other literature that supports the right to a dignified death, there are some key words that keep arising and seem to be used to define the same or even different meanings. Euthanasia and assisted dying (also known as assisted suicide) are often presented as if no other way to die with dignity exists. It is also essential that we understand that euthanasia, or choosing to end one’s life with the assistance of a trained medical specialist, are, in fact, two very different actions.

The discussion of this fundamental topic has been rather limited in Alberta. Albertans often seem to be unwilling or unable to discuss matters such as these in a public forum. The arguments for or against these matters are very much a testimonial of how words can incite uncontrolled hysteria. Is it justifiable to believe that those who oppose euthanasia or assisted dying will die without dignity while all others who condone such practices are somehow guaranteed a dignified death? This ambiguity is very much promoted by pro-euthanasia interest groups pushing for a rapid political solution steeped in thought subject to great emotion. Why has this demand for the right to die with dignity arisen? One needs to look no further than the rise of therapeutic practices, which are relentless in their commitment to ‘fight tooth and nail’ for extending living. A case in point is the Karen Ann Quinlan case. Although in an irreversible coma, she was kept ‘alive’ from 1975 to 1985, when the courts finally decreed that all forms of life support be removed.

The strongest voices in our midst seem to have reached a consensus that the human right that supports the individual’s right in matters relating to the quality of one’s life must be maintained and protected at all costs. Only then can we be assured that, when circumstances demand it, we will have the justifiable right to make the final determination of when and how our life will end.

Where do you stand on these matters?
An Opportunity of a Lifetime

by Barbara Olynyk

To retire, or not to retire? That was the question I faced in 2005. What will I do with all the skills I had acquired over my thirty-five years of teaching? What a waste to not make use of them! Substitute teaching would be an option. So retire I did, and life hummed along—a wonderful mix of work, play and travel.

But then one day in 2007, an interesting email from a fellow Friendship Force member traveling in Africa sparked my interest. She said that they desperately needed native English-speaking teachers to help them set up an English school in Burundi and to conduct two-week Math and English workshops for the teachers in Tanzania. “WOW!” I thought, “I could do that for one month!” I had the skills, the time, the means, the health—and now I had the opportunity. So I called a teacher friend and put the bug in her ear because having a partner would be much more fun. Well that bug began buzzing! She had received the same email and, in time, became involved with the school project in Burundi through the sender of the email, who had established an organization (Tanbur African Aid Society) to get the projects going.

I decided to accompany my friend to Burundi for three months instead of going to Tanzania for one month. Tanzania I had knowledge of, but where in the world was Burundi? I had never heard of it!

Burundi is a very small country located near the equator, bordering Rwanda, Tanzania and Lake Tanganyika. The country, known as the land of a thousand and one hills, covers an area from Vegreville to Spruce Grove and then south to Red Deer. In order to advance the economy of the country, Burundi has joined the East African Economic Union. To become a member, English had to be adopted as an official language.

Eight million people live in Burundi, most of whom belong to one of three tribes—Hutus, Tutsies or Twa. Major discord and even genocide has occurred between the first two.

Safety was a big concern. But I was assured by the Burundian founders of the school that the problems were over and that Burundi was safe. Once I came to terms with that, it was all signals go: booking flights, applying for a visa, getting vaccinations, preparing a Grade One program to teach there and then deciding what to pack. We knew we would be living in a secure house and that there would be a gardener and a ‘houseboy.’ All would be provided for us. After packing two suitcases, each with fifty pounds of school supplies, there was little room left for clothes. Mosquito repellent and sunscreen were a must.

On the day of departure at the beginning of September 2008, I was off to the airport laden with 100 pounds of checked luggage, a carry-on packed to the max and a ‘purse’ loaded to overflowing. After a tearful goodbye to my husband, children and grandchildren, I flew to London, then Nairobi, and finally to my destination, Bujumbura, the capital city of Burundi.

My first sense of being on an adventure came when I was in the Nairobi airport. I was distinctly aware that I was the only white
person in the room, and it seemed that all eyes were on me. It was my first such experience. There was also a distinctly different smell, a smell I had come to know as Africa. When I landed in Bujumbura, I was met by the school founder, so all was well.

My first sights of Africa—of Burundi—left me awestruck! What an incredibly different world! Bicycles laden with huge loads of bananas, sacks of charcoal, grass for cows, buckets and almost anything imaginable shared the road with vehicles and people. There were people everywhere—men and women working in fields of rice or vegetables; activity of all kinds in the streets—and colour, so much colour in people's dress.

When we arrived at our very comfortable gated house, I met the cook and gardener, shared a delicious, nutritious supper with my friends and then slept and slept and slept.

The school was an old abandoned seminary rented from the Catholic Church. It required some work before we were ready to welcome students on Monday. I was excited to meet the staff, particularly the Grade One teacher I would be mentoring for the next three months. She was very eager to learn, but it was obvious that, though she had taught in an English Montessori School, she would be challenged by the program we would be implementing. But learn she did! I am sure she must have felt completely overwhelmed at times, but she persevered. And work we did! There was so much to do and such a short time to do it all.

The teachers were amazed at our stimulating methods of instruction. Education to them meant 70 to 100 students in one class with limited supplies and equipment, sharing a few old textbooks. Teaching and learning was by rote. Post-secondary training had been very poor and did not prepare the teachers for teaching. Because teachers are so poorly paid (as little as US$60 per month), teaching was not a job to aspire to.

Our school offered many advantages, both to the teachers and the students: very small classes, much professional development for the teachers, and plentiful supplies, books and equipment, which were sent in a container from Edmonton in 2008. They came to know about Canada. St. Maria Goretti Catholic School in Edmonton adopted the school as their social justice project and became their pen pals and sponsors.

The children were amazing and easily won my heart! How quickly they learned! All the children, aged three to six, started with no English at all, but through a variety of methods, they learned vocabulary, letters and sounds. There was no opportunity for the students to get help from home, but we still sent 'home study' with them so they could practise what they had learned. During ‘read-alouds’ students built both vocabulary and general knowledge because their teachers could translate when needed. Both drama and songs built comprehension, and toys sent from Edmonton built bridges between our western content and their lives. These were kids just like kids in Canada, but with a different language and different customs—customs that we had the privilege of enjoying.

On weekends, we were often taken out to the country to see life outside the city, where traditional customs were more strongly observed. We saw many little villages joined with windy, rough roads that either went up a hill, down a hill or around a hill; hillsides spotted with shacks where families lived and worked the rich, reddish-brown soil with crude, heavy hoes, growing vegetables of all kinds; worn paths up the hills where people walked to their shacks, carrying water and other staples on their heads; women dressed in the traditional bright colors of Burundi with babies tied to their backs, working in the
fields, cooking over braziers, carrying loads on their heads or just sitting in the shade with their laundry drying on the grass; barefoot children dressed in tattered shorts and T-shirts, playing with sticks in the dirt. The men often worked in the city, leaving their families for months at a time.

We attended a traditional dowry party, which celebrated a couple’s engagement. What an incredible, unique celebration! We also attended an anniversary of a church, a wedding, a funeral and a baptism, each with its own unique customs. Graceful, agile, strong dancers and drummers performed at most of the celebrations.

Sunday was a great day to spend on the beaches of Lake Tanganyika, the third deepest lake in the world, with a view of the hills of The Republic of Congo to the northwest.

I went back again in 2009 for another three months, this time with another teacher friend who implemented the Grade Two program. This time it was easier because I already had my shots, I knew what to do, what to pack, what to expect. It felt like I was going home. This time I enjoyed watching my new partner experience Africa for the first time, and I was very pleasantly surprised to see how much the students had learned from the time I left in November. They grew some more during the three months we spent with them.

Participating in an opportunity like this has many perks: a wonderful holiday in a warm, tropical setting; a chance to be pampered making one feel like royalty (wholesome, nutritious, meals cooked for us using natural, locally grown foods; very comfortable lodging; laundry and cleaning done; with the added bonus of losing at least ten pounds—it just happens). There are also opportunities to extend your travel to unique places you might not go otherwise. After all, you ARE in Africa. For me it was a visit to Egypt and a safari in Kenya.

We never know what life will bring us. I did not wish for this experience: it happened because it was meant to be. I am hoping that reading this article will move you to respond as I did. We are always looking for volunteers for projects both at the school in Burundi at any time during the school year and summer school in July and August, and in Tanzania to deliver math and English workshops at any time of the year. If you would like more information, please contact the TAAS project coordinator, Diana McIntyre at dianamci@shaw.ca or at 780-469-4140.
**ARTA–Johnson Scholarship Degree Program**

The ARTA–JOHNSON SCHOLARSHIPS are made possible by the generosity of Johnson Inc., the Plan Administrator for ARTA’s benefit package. Johnson Inc. provides, through ARTA, scholarships for undergraduate students in the second, third, or fourth year of their first degree and who are related to an ARTA member. These scholarships recognize academic achievement as well as community involvement and volunteer work. Future goals, personal accomplishment and supporting letters of reference are also significant in the determination of scholarship recipients.

**ARTA Scholarship Certificate/Diploma Program**

The ARTA Certificate/Diploma Scholarships are made possible by the generosity of the Alberta Retired Teachers’ Association (ARTA). ARTA provides scholarships to students in a certificate or diploma program of two or more years at an accredited post-secondary institution. These scholarships recognize academic achievement, community involvement and volunteer work. Future goals, personal accomplishments and supporting letters of reference are also significant in the overall determination of scholarship recipients.

**Scholarship prizes are awarded as follows:**

1st place recipient—$2,500.00
2nd place recipient—$1,500.00
3rd place recipient—$1,000.00

Application forms and criteria are available by writing to:
ARTA, 409, 11010–142 Street NW, Edmonton AB T5N 2R1

or may be downloaded from ARTA’s website at [www.albertarta.org](http://www.albertarta.org)

**Application deadline:**
July 31, 2013
ARTA changed the way it awards scholarships to deserving young people in the last year. Scholarships are now awarded in two categories, with three scholarships in each category. The categories are the ARTA–Johnson Scholarship Degree Program and the ARTA Scholarship Certificate/Diploma Program. Scholarships of $2,500, $1,500, and $1,000 are awarded in each category. The criteria for receiving one of these scholarships are included in this magazine and will be printed in every subsequent issue. The criteria can also be found on the ARTA website.

This year’s winners were as follows:

**ARTA–Johnson Scholarship Degree Program:**
- Kelsey Lank, Ponoka $2,500 Sponsor: Frederick Lawrence
- Joshua Iverson, Wainwright $1,500 Sponsor: Stuart Iverson
- Katelyn Larson, Calgary $1,000 Sponsor: Carolyn McGonigal

**ARTA Scholarship Certificate/Diploma Program:**
- Danika Watt, Carbon $2,500 Sponsor: Duane Binning

It was a real pleasure to have Kelsey Lank join ARTA members at the AGM luncheon where she was presented with her award and where her sponsors were introduced.

Sincere congratulations to the scholarship winners and best wishes for every success in the years ahead!

I want to thank ARTA for presenting me with such an incredible opportunity to advance my education through the degree program scholarship. As a result of the Association’s generosity I will be one step closer to achieving my future goals. Currently, I am in my third year of post-secondary education in the BSc Environmental Sciences Program at the University of Lethbridge. As a consequence of spending the majority of my childhood outside with my sister, I have always been passionate about the outdoors and nature. I have known the career path that I wanted to pursue from a young age. After completing my degree, my intention is to pursue law school and become an environmental lawyer. In this way I can fulfill my desire to help the world we live in at a professional level and to love my career every day because I will know that I am making a difference.

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I am a second year Bachelor of Music student at the University of Alberta, studying clarinet performance. I enjoy being an active member of the local arts community and am involved in many performance and teaching activities independently and through the university. In the future, I hope to perform with a symphony orchestra, continue teaching and be a part of outreach programs through music.

Thanks to whoever makes this scholarship possible. It is incredibly helpful and I really appreciate it.
I would like to thank ARTA for selecting me for the ARTA–Johnson Scholarship! I am from Calgary, but I am currently completing my second year in Human Kinetics at the University of Guelph. Sport has always been a huge part of my life, and being a member of the women’s varsity volleyball team has increased my desire to pursue sports medicine as a career. After I complete my undergraduate degree, I plan to come back out west to attend medical school and eventually become a doctor of sports medicine. I am looking forward to the next few years of my life and what the future has in store for me down the road!

Katelyn Larson

I am currently in my second year of my Accounting Diploma Program, and will graduate this spring from Lethbridge College. I plan on transferring to Athabasca University, taking Bachelor of Commerce classes part-time, while working full-time in an office environment. I hope to graduate from Athabasca University with a Bachelor of Commerce degree in Accounting in the next three to five years, at which time I will be able to pursue a designation in Accounting over the following two years.

It is always hard to make the decision to go back to school when you could be working full-time and making money instead of going to school full-time and running yourself into debt. Scholarships, such as the ones provided by the Alberta Retired Teachers’ Association, support students who otherwise would be looking at a lifetime of paying back student loans. I would like to thank the Alberta Retired Teachers’ Association for helping me pursue the education and career that I desire.

Danika Watt
Tell Your Story

by Lyle Meeres

One Saturday night four of us were chatting, and I noticed just how often conversation included little stories. The little stories that we tell when we are with others have social benefits, of course. Interest perks up when the conversation includes some incident or yarn.

As well as social benefits, many stories have educational benefits. The big events of history preserve important knowledge; but the ordinary people who live through a major event preserve a different kind of history, one that works through felt insights. If people want to know about the Great Depression, for example, they would need both kinds of history. Sadly, personal history does not often get the respect it deserves.

My father-in-law, Bill, was unable to get a job during the Depression so he and three other young men filled freighter canoes with supplies and headed north from Fort McMurray on the rivers toward Great Bear Lake, intending to sell supplies to prospectors and miners, and do some prospecting on their own. As we see today, gold is particularly valued in tough times. It must be a good story, but Bill is dead, and I know only the bare bones of Bill’s story. Oral history all too often perishes with the teller.

Lori Lansens in Rush Home Road writes: “She wanted to tell this man her tale too, for lately she’d been thinking if she didn’t tell someone, she would die and her story be lost on the worms and on the Lord, who already knew.”

There are good reasons to preserve memories, and telling your story is certainly a way of doing just that. Some memories are essential to
the identity of each of us. Some stories increase the understanding and compassion of those who learn the tale. In the novel When God Was a Rabbit, Sarah Winman writes, “‘Memories,’ she said to me, ‘no matter how small or inconsequential, are the pages that define us.’”

Despite this, personal stories are often casually disregarded. However, authors seem to be aware. In The Golden Spruce, John Vaillant quotes Leslie Marmon Silko who says,

*I will tell you something about stories*
*The said*
*They aren't just entertainment. Don't be fooled. They are all we have, you see, all we have to fight off illness and death.*

There have been some unusual ways of preserving memories, as we learn in Lisa See’s novel, Snow Flower and the Secret Fan. A fan bearing secret writing, used only by women, is exchanged. In this way, the two women tell the stories of their existence.

More common was the use of poetry to preserve memories. In The Witch of Babylon, D. J. McIntosh writes, “Before the advent of writing, information could only be passed down orally, and the raw information that was vital for future generations had to be expressed in the most dramatic way possible—through poetry. The rhymes and tempo of poetry made the stories easier to recall.”

I tried this. I wrote a poem about my mother and her days with Alzheimer’s disease.

My father once tried to preserve a bit of family history by writing names right on photographs. He was right to try. We now have two boxes full of pictures from two families. We rarely know who or what is involved.

There are many ways to preserve memories. I treasure an enlarged photograph from an exchange program that took us to a couple’s home in Corfe Castle, England. Our daughter, Wendy, used art to preserve family history in a mixed media series she called Roots. I made a PowerPoint presentation based on our trip to China. Some people use scrapbooking.

My preferred method of preserving memories is through stories. I worked with “Starting Anew” which was an Alberta Regional Museums network centennial project to build a collection of stories of immigrants to Central Alberta. Some stories were taped and transcribed. Some individuals wrote their own stories, sometimes with coaching.

I also worked with residents of Piper Creek Lodge who created a book of stories to mark the 50th anniversary of the Lodge. The goal for each story was not to produce a biography, but to tell some incident that was meaningful to the resident. Again, some individuals wrote their own stories, sometimes with coaching. Rather than taping others, two of us conducted interviews and wrote the stories from notes. The book is called Golden Hours: Stories from Piper Creek Lodge.

These were worthwhile, satisfying projects. Everyone has at least one favourite personal story: a happy event, a problem faced, an interesting person met, an occurrence that taught something, or a moment that created excitement. It is worthwhile to record these events for the sake of family, for history, or to preserve one’s identity.

*The article above is based on a talk and PowerPoint presentation I gave in Red Deer on August 23, 2011.*

## ARTA Contest 14

Congratulations to Ardith Trudzik of Edmonton, AB, who correctly answered the two questions in Contest No. 14. Ardith’s prize is a two-night stay at the Executive Royal Inn and Conference Centre in Calgary, AB.

### Answers:

**Question No. 1:** ARTA will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary in 2013.

**Question No. 2:** News & View’s editor’s legal first name is Robert. *(Ed. note: It’s actually Harry, but Robert is close enough.)*

ARTA thanks the Executive Royal Inn for the prize. Thanks as well to all who entered our contest.

Watch for Contest No. 15 in the spring edition of News & Views.
“A Marking of Time” on P.31 is a happy blend of talents. The Worthingtons offer a treat for eye and ear both in their books and in their classes.

Keith Worthington

Keith Worthington is a Calgary poet and a University of Calgary graduate (BEd, 1971). He has authored two collections of poetry: Puffs of Breath (2007) and Poet on a Cargo Plane (2010). In both books, lines and images from many of the poems are enhanced by the calligraphy of Keith’s wife Renate. He is currently working on a collection of hockey poems.

Renate Worthington

Renate Worthington is a charter member of the Bow Valley Calligraphy Guild in Calgary and continues to participate in its projects, exhibitions and publications. Since her first course in 1979, she has studied with many instructors and shared this knowledge with her calligraphy classes. Renate enjoys making letters not only on paper, but has also worked on vellum, wood, walls and canvas. Her commissions include work for schools, businesses and individual clients.

Corrigenda

Two items from the fall issue require correction. Sincere apologies to those concerned.

First, Lyle Meeres was the writer of our travel feature, “Rhine River Cruise.” The photographs were also his.

Second, in the article, “A Special Relationship: Grandparents and Grandchildren” written by Marilyn Marks, a word changed during the editing process changed the meaning of one of the statements. In the middle column on Page 24, the statement “… denial of access by grandparents to their grandchildren,” should read, “… denial of access of grandparents to their grandchildren.”

Again, sincere apologies to Lyle Meeres and to Marilyn Marks for these errors.

News & Views Deadlines

50th Anniversary Issue: January 25, 2013
Summer Issue: April 25, 2013
Fall Issue: July 25, 2013
Winter Issue: October 25, 2013

Your letters and ideas are welcome. Please send them to newsandviews@shaw.ca
A MARKING OF TIME
(NEAR SPRINGBANK)

I drive over a hill —
that familiar sweep of the Rockies comes into view.

I don’t even recognize Ian Tyson’s voice,
strained, wispy on a radio interview:
another birthday around the corner
the Calgary Philharmonic his new sidekick
Sylvia and the Great Speckled Bird all those miles back there.

Behind a fence tired from winter
spotted horses stand among dapple-barked trees.

Interview finished
the radio guy plays an Ian song.
My ear fills with his Strong Winds voice
that rises out of the West,
drifts above white mountains, slim ponies,
and aging eyes in my rear view mirror.

KEITH WORTHINGTON
From POST ON A CARGO PLANE ©2010
In My Opinion
by Robin Carson

The Issues of the Issues

Incidentally, that special issue will still have the usual material in it, such as In Memoriam, our columns, and the like. The material from the 50th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee will be in addition to that.

When a submission is made to the magazine and we decide to print it, it gets edited. There are no exceptions, even if you add the little note, “Print this ‘as is,’” which is just not possible, with the exception of classified advertisements. As well, we cannot return material to you after editing so that you can check it, since there is just not enough time to do so.

We editors do two things. The first of these is to ensure that the material will fit in the magazine. Often, we are sent articles that are very long, and these must be cut to fit. About 800 words fit on a page—fewer, if there are photographs. So, if you were to send us, say, 2,500 words, that would be over three full pages of text. As you know, most of our articles are just a page or two.

Second, we work on mechanics and expression. The idea here is to reduce the number of words and to make the writer sound better. Reducing the number of words, simply means weeding out the unnecessary, so that “I’d like to say that the folding of paper is important …” becomes, “Folding paper is important ….” We also quietly correct spelling and punctuation, and apply Canadian standards to both.

Decisions about what to print are often difficult to make. We must abide by legal standards for printed material, but beyond that, N&V is pretty much free to print whatever is in the interests of ARTA’s membership. Are there political considerations, or considerations related to our advertisers? Of course there are, but these are not dealt with ‘under the table.’ Most of you will have seen the back-and-forth that

In My Opinion continues on page 35.
In Memoriam

Olga Margaret Alexandruk (née Topolnisky) of Fort Saskatchewan passed away on June 14, 2012. She graduated from Normal and moved to Mellowdale in 1925. She became an RN at Archer Memorial Hospital in Lamont in 1966, then continued at the University of Alberta to receive a BSc in Nursing in Teaching and Supervision. She taught nursing students at the School of Nursing in Lamont until 1971. After receiving an Education Diploma from the University of Alberta in 1975, she began a teaching career at Rudolph Hennig School in Fort Saskatchewan. In 1996, she earned a BEd degree. When she retired in 2000, she had taught Grades Two to Nine. She had also been active with a variety of curriculum committees and with the ATA as an ARA representative, on committees, and as president of the Strathcona ATA Local from 1990 to 1992. After having served as a cooperating teacher, following her retirement she worked in the practicum program in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta.

Robert Donald “Don” Biamonte passed away in Edmonton on September 27, 2012, at the age of 80. Don graduated from the University of Alberta in 1959 with a BEd, then taught English and was a principal at several high schools. He spent most of his career at Archbishop Macdonald High School. Don was also known as an actor, and loved to study Shakespeare and attend the opera. He gained most joy from his students, his friends and his family.

Tillie Chinneck passed away in Edmonton on July 28, 2012, at the age of 92. Tillie was born in Myrnam and moved to Mellowdale in 1925. She graduated from Normal School and began her teaching career in 1938. Tillie began teaching at Shoal Lake School, but later moved to Edmonton where she taught for Edmonton Public Schools. After her retirement in 1974, she continued to work as a substitute teacher. Tillie was a reliable volunteer and loved painting, needlepoint and travelling.

Ethel May Davies passed away in Calgary on September 1, 2012, at the age of 92. She had a long and rewarding teaching career, beginning in Spirit River and ending in Ponoka. She travelled widely in her retirement and enjoyed many years golfing at the Ponoka Community Golf Club.

Francis Edward Dembicki passed away on May 10, 2012, at the age of 96. Born in Mundare, Francis volunteered for active service during World War II. He was a high school teacher in Fort Saskatchewan until his retirement in 1979. During his retirement, he travelled and was an active volunteer.

Hendrikje “Henny” Dobyanski, formerly of Dapp, passed away on August 30, 2012, in Barrhead at the age of 88. She actively worked for the Resistance in the Netherlands during the Second World War, opposing German occupation. In addition, her family hid a Jewish mother and daughter successfully until the war’s end. After the war, she moved to Flatbush and started a family. She began a thirty-year teaching career in Westlock that culminated with the position of vice-principal at R. F. Staples School. She was an active volunteer with the Legion, Meals on Wheels, the Westlock Library Board, Victim Services and the Westlock Museum.

Mary Nell Biollo Doyle passed away on September 16 at the age of 96, after a life dedicated to family, friends, students, and her Roman Catholic faith. Born on September 26, 1915, Mary grew up in Venice, Alberta, which her father helped found and named for his home province in Italy. She taught school in Venice and Christie Creek, then moved to Edmonton where she taught for Edmonton Separate Schools, Sturgeon County and the County of Leduc. When she retired, Mary enjoyed choral singing, horseback riding, hiking and cross-country skiing with the Edmonton Trekker’s Club, and traveling. She also spent time living in Victoria and Chemainus, British Columbia.

Eleanor Ferguson passed away in Victoria, British Columbia, on September 13, 2012. Eleanor was a high school teacher, and a diocesan minister in the United Church. She was an avid reader and well-known for always being ready to engage in a conversation to explore ideas.

William James “Jim” Ferguson passed away on August 27, 2011, at the age of 63. After three years at the University of Alberta in the Faculty of Education he spent a year teaching in Whitecourt. When he completed his degree, he began a 34-year teaching career with St. Albert Protestant Schools where he worked at the elementary, junior high, and senior high levels. Jim taught with creativity and dedication a wide range of subjects, from math, science, and chemistry, to physical education, outdoor education and work experience. He was instrumental in the development of the outdoor education program in St. Albert and Whitecourt. Jim also spent six years as a high school...
math evaluator for the Alberta Distance Learning Centre. He approached both teaching and learning with passion, and he continued to pursue his love of knowledge after his retirement by focusing on geology. Jim’s love of fish encompassed both the breeding of tropical aquarium fish and the catching and releasing of grayling and trout in Alberta lakes and streams.

Sarah Carolina “Lina” Flaig of Medicine Hat passed away on August 31, 2012, at the age of 102. She was born in Belfast, Ireland, immigrating to Canada when she was two. She attended Normal School in Calgary and began her teaching career in southeastern Alberta, moving to Medicine Hat after teaching in several rural schools. Lina operated the Jack and Jill Kindergarten for fourteen years before returning to the public schools as a teacher and a librarian. She returned to school herself, and earned her BEd in 1968. Lina received the Children’s Service Award in 1992 from the Early Childhood Professional Association of Alberta for her work as a volunteer in her church, with Girl Guides and with many other organizations.

Edna Jacober-Stern passed away on December 23, 2011, at the age of 87. She was born in Saskatchewan, but taught for over thirty-five years in the Schuler area and in Redcliff. Edna volunteered for many organizations and continued to do so after she retired. She enjoyed travelling, especially cruises.

Peter Lawson of Medicine Hat passed away on March 3, 2012, at the age of 90. A long-time member of MHADRTA, Peter was born in Verigin, Saskatchewan. After he retired from the Air Force at the end of WWII, having flown convoy protection duty, he enrolled in education at the University of Alberta. He and his family moved to Medicine Hat where he taught Building Construction at Medicine Hat High School and did volunteer work.

Margaret Joan Leah of Sherwood Park passed away on August 21, 2012, at the age of 81. She had a long and distinguished teaching career with Edmonton Public Schools. Margaret was also an avid golfer who loved to travel.

Please note the Calgary teachers who have passed away are remembered on the CRTA website at calgaryretiredteachers.org

Anna Laura MacGregor of Calgary passed away on October 2, 2012, at the age of 91. Anna took the eight-month teacher preparation program at the Calgary Normal School then began teaching in a one-room school near Kinsella. She later attended the University of Calgary where she attained her degree and subsequently was made principal of Rosemount School. She retired in 1983 after almost thirty-six years of teaching. During her retirement, she was elected councillor for the Municipal District of Big Horn and served four years.

Amelia “Amy” Nash (née Werbisky) passed away in Edmonton on August 10, 2012, at the age of 83. Born in St. Michael, she moved to Edmonton where she completed her BEd with a Home Economics specialization in 1950. She taught for four years in Drumheller before returning to Edmonton. She also worked for Edmonton Public Libraries. Amy loved cooking and sewing as well as world travels. In her later years, she was active in the Caring Ministry at Canterbury Court in Edmonton.

Stanley Alfred Oracheski passed away in Edmonton on August 18, 2012, at the age of 84. He was an educator for thirty-five years, and had a passion for running, swimming, skiing, and biking. He participated in several Iron Man Challenges throughout the years and ran his last marathon when he was 80.

Monsignor Felix (“Father Fee”) Edward Otterson of Edmonton passed away on September 9, 2012. He was 79. He studied at St. Joseph’s Seminary and was ordained a priest in 1948. He received a BA, a Diploma of Education and a BEd from the University of Alberta and an MA in Latin Classics from Fordham University in New York. He also studied at Notre Dame University. In 2011, the University of Alberta awarded him an Alumni Honour Award.

Father Fee spent thirty-four years with Edmonton Catholic Schools teaching and guiding students at St. Joseph’s, St. Mary and Austin O’Brien High Schools in Edmonton. He presided over the Mass and commencement ceremonies at Austin O’Brien School for over thirty years. In 2010, Edmonton Catholic Schools named an elementary/junior high school for him. He loved theatre and travel and attended performances in Stratford, New York and London.

Norman Leslie Penner passed away on July 30, 2012. He was born in 1928 in Herbert, Saskatchewan. After teaching in various Saskatchewan communities, he moved to Medicine Hat in 1966 where he worked as a teacher and teacher-librarian in several schools. He and his wife operated a flower shop and later a bookstore. Norman’s life was characterized by service to others.
Gayle Kathleen Penton (née Zimmel) passed away on May 10, 2012, at the age of 63. Born in Killam and educated in Edmonton, she moved to Calgary after graduation. She was a devoted teacher for the Calgary Catholic School District for twenty-eight years. After her retirement from teaching, Gayle worked as a pastoral care volunteer, and also volunteered in schools.

Lachlan Sinclair Phimester passed away in Peace River on August 2, 2012. He was 86. A veteran of both the RCAF and the Army, he attended the University of Alberta for a year then completed his BEd with summer school in Edmonton, and evening courses in Grande Prairie. He also received an MEd in 1970. Lachlan taught at Nampa School, T. A. Norris Jr./Sr. High School, and was principal at Peace River High School. In 1975, he became Assistant Superintendent then later Superintendent for North Peace Catholic School Division. After his retirement, he worked as Superintendent for North Peace Catholic School Division and Spirit River School Division. Active in both the Anglican Church and Air Cadets, Lachlan enjoyed reading, gardening, travelling and woodworking.

Jean Larine (Schmidt) Taylor (née Selt hun) passed away on August 29, 2012, at the age of 79. She was born in Avonlea, Saskatchewan, and was a civil servant in Edmonton during the war. Jean studied the violin, was a member of the Edmonton Pops Orchestra, and took music at the Banff School of Fine Arts. She also studied Home Economics at the Vermilion Agricultural School. In 1973, Jean obtained a BEd from the University of Alberta, and began a successful career as a kindergarten and remedial reading teacher. She moved to Victoria in 2003.

Victoria Vera Wachowich passed away in Edmonton on September 14, 2012. She was 80. Vicki spent her early years in the hamlet of Opal, studied Education at the University of Alberta, and graduated in 1943. She began teaching in rural Alberta, then taught at Grandin School in Edmonton. Vicki also spent many years in Montreal working for Price Waterhouse before returning to Edmonton in 2007. Vicki loved creative writing, and has published some of her poems and stories.

Joyce Wiedeman passed away in Edmonton on December 27, 2011, at the age of 89. Born in Vandura, Saskatchewan, she spent her school years in Moosomin, Saskatchewan, and then moved to Ottawa where she joined the army during WWII. After marrying in 1945, she and her husband settled in Schuler, Alberta, where she taught for many years. A volunteer for many organizations, she continued this work after retiring to Medicine Hat. Later, she moved to St. Albert to be near her family.

M. Joan Zimmerman, long-time resident of Grande Prairie, passed away on July 30, 2012, at the age of 76. She was educated in Beaverlodge near where she grew up on a farm. Her initial teacher training was taken at the University of Alberta where she received her BEd in 1978. Over a thirty-year teaching career, she taught in Edmonton and in the County of Grande Prairie, but mostly in the City of Grande Prairie. Joan was very talented in music, artwork, needlework and cooking.

In My Opinion
continues from page 32

is possible on the letters page, for example.

We have been trying to run a little of our members’ creative work. Magazines used to do that, and I believe that they still should. Since N&V is not a literary magazine, there is not a lot of room for poems and stories, but what little there is will be filled with what you send us.

A word about In Memoriam, the section in which we honour retired teachers who have passed away. First of all, as I mentioned in a previous issue, Alberta’s privacy laws prevent us from gaining direct access to sources that might inform us of deaths. It is important that branches and individual members send us the names of and relevant information about those whom we should include in the section. Please be aware, though, that this is not an obituary section. The N&V focus is on education and the contribution a deceased member has made to it. We will include age, and date and place of death, but we do not include a list of family members, nor do we include details of the death itself.

Last, I would invite you to be in touch with me. Little would please me more than to assist you with a piece of writing. You are also welcome to send a letter to the N&V letters page or to send me a note about concerns you might have about the magazine. The N&V email address is newsandviews@shaw.ca. Email to that address comes directly to me; but you can also contact N&V at the address on the table of contents page in the magazine.
Delegates representing the eighteen ARTA branches (including the newest branch—the Heartland Alberta Retired Teachers’ Association), nine standing and three ad hoc committee chairs, trustees and liaison appointees, ARTA officers and staff, along with a handful of observers met at Barnett House on October 3 and 4 for the 2012 ARTA Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Gordon Cumming, Juanita Knight and Paul Demers were re-elected to their respective positions of president, vice-president and treasurer.

The Alberta Teachers’ Retirement Fund (ATRF) CEO reported that the number of new pensions (1,234) that commenced in the year ending August 31, 2012, increased substantially from the previous year. A total of 23,892 pensions were paid for an annual payroll of approximately $670 million. The assets of the Teachers’ Pension Plan for the post-August 1992 benefit period presently amount to $7.2 billion. The pension fund had a very positive return of 7.8% in the last fiscal year, exceeding the benchmark (recently lowered from 6.75% to 6.25% due to continued volatility in the investment market) by 1.5%. As a result of negative market extremes over the past dozen years and the fact that retired teachers are drawing a pension for a greater number of years, an increase in the contribution rate is required to ensure that current benefits are being funded. Contribution rates will increase over the next three years before beginning to decrease in 2015 as earlier deficiencies are recouped.

ARTA officers, committee chairs, branch presidents together with the Executive Director reported on Association and branch activities for the past year.

The Communications/Technology Committee reported that the redesigned website, which is compatible with the new membership database, has been launched. ARTA will use Fluid Surveys rather than Survey Monkey to conduct surveys in the future because it meets all of the required privacy regulations. Instead of supplying laptops to all members of the Board of Directors, ARTA is now providing an $800 grant, amortized at a rate of 50% per year over a four-year term, to cover the purchase of hardware, software and Internet virus protection.
The workload of the Health and Wellness Benefits Committee increased dramatically as the year unfolded. Committee members were very busy dealing with issues related to consulting services, marketing and data reporting. ARTA enlisted the services of Perry Dorgan, formerly with Johnson Inc. but now with Aon Hewitt, as an independent consultant. With the separation of consulting services from Johnson Inc., it was necessary to negotiate a new contract, effective January 1, 2013, for administration and claims services. Elder care has been added to the extended health care option and registered social workers and those with a Masters of Social Work degree are now included under paramedical coverage, all for no additional cost to the policyholder. The ARTA Benefit Plan grew by 16.2% last year. Enrollment in the education sector is projected to accelerate in the coming year as a result of the increased focus of marketing efforts on that particular sector.

Trustees of the ARTA Health and Wellness Benefit Plan reported that the Trust Fund has reserve funds in excess of four million dollars.

Wordsmithing changes were made to several bylaws. A bylaw was added authorizing the ARTA Board of Directors to enter into an agreement with the Alberta Teachers’ Association (ATA) to formally recognize ARTA as a Special Retired
Teachers’ Local of the ATA. A second new bylaw enables the Board of Directors as well as committees to conduct meetings using electronic media.

A branch pension representatives workshop, to be held at a future date, will include presentations from the ATA, ATRF, and, hopefully, the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS).

The Human Resources Committee conducted a six-month evaluation of the new Executive Director and will follow up with a comprehensive review later in the year. The office renovation and expansion resulted in a greatly improved visual image and working environment. Additional staff were hired to provide financial, word processing, and administrative support services. A two-day off-site retreat for office staff has been approved in an effort to encourage ongoing professional development. The Recognition Banquet, held the first evening of the AGM to honour retiring board members, will now become an annual event. ARTA’s 50th anniversary celebrations were launched at the event as well.

In an effort to develop a greater understanding of how ARTA can effectively advocate on behalf of its members, the Strategic Planning Committee arranged for an advocacy/lobbying presentation last November. At the retreat in February involving board and committee members, it soon became apparent that there is a lack of understanding of the role
of various committees and their contribution to the organization. Based on the retreat report, a strategic plan will be developed and presented to board members for their consideration. The first Joint Strategic Planning Committee and Committee Chair Meeting, implemented to help improve communication and facilitate the sharing of committee activities, was held early in May with a second one scheduled for mid-October. As a result committee meetings were clustered, which allowed for more effective use of time and resources, and the duplication of activities was rectified.

The thrust of the work of the Membership/Marketing Committee was to determine ways to make ARTA more visible and irresistible to both active teachers and new retirees. Committee initiatives for the upcoming year include developing a marketing plan, promoting ARTA at ARA conferences, and liaising with other seniors advocacy groups.

Recently acquired, state-of-the-art accounting software will provide better tracking of expenses, timely reporting and detailed information that will allow for greater accuracy in budget projections. ARTA revenue amounted to $1,078,890 while disbursements totalled $1,164,017, resulting in a deficit of $85,127 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012. Current association unrestricted net assets equal $262,028. The operational budget for next year is expected to reach $1.5 million.

Members of the Wellness Ad Hoc Committee attended conferences relating to seniors issues for the purpose of gathering resources and compiling a list of presenters. A sponsorship grant was made available to branches that wished to organize a wellness event.

The Charitable Foundation Ad Hoc Committee has registered the Alberta Retired Teachers Foundation as a non-profit society. The Foundation needs to achieve charitable status before it can become a reality.

The 50th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee was formed to initiate activities to commemorate this significant milestone in ARTA's history. An anniversary quilt, curling bonspiel, photography contest, book fair, volunteer recognition award program and a kick-off banquet have been planned.

The ARTA liaison to the Canadian Association of Retired Teachers outlined concerns regarding retirement income security, shortcomings of the Canadian health care system and the negative impact of Canadian-European trade agreements. An ARTA representative associated with Public Interest Alberta (PIA) made AGM participants aware of the various PIA initiatives and actions undertaken on behalf of Alberta seniors in the past year. The ARTA liaison to the ATA Educational Trust Board of Trustees reported that a total of $100,000 in bursaries and project and conference grants were awarded to Alberta teachers last year. ARTA makes a $2,000 donation to the Trust annually.

Over sixty retired teachers contributed countless hours to the work of the Association provincially while many more provided services to fellow retirees at the branch level. Retired teachers in Alberta are being well served indeed!
**CUBA**—‘Spanish Studies in Cuba’ (Havana), $2,500.00 Can. for 4 wks. Hotel with breakfast and dinner, tuition fee. (Air fare not included). 250-478-0494 ssic@telus.net

**SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA.** For your next trip to the land of the sun, consider renting one of our condos. Pictures and prices available at www.29desertsunescape.com; or email kbrobins29@hotmail.com for information or call Kathy 519-720-0267 (Ontario).

**KELOWNA B.C.** 2 weeks time share per year in March in Kelowna or trade these weeks for anywhere in the world. Good till 2023. Phone 780-929-7269. $1,400.00

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**London Drugs is pleased to offer to ARTA members a discount on computers, monitors, printers and scanners. London Drugs carries a wide variety of brands such as Apple, ASUS, Certified Data, Hewlett Packard, Panasonic, Toshiba and Sony.**

When a quote is created it shall be calculated at our vendor preferred pricing on the hardware listed above (or in the event that a sale price is offered lower, the lower of the two will always be charged).

Please see the Computer Department Manager or Assistant Manager to obtain this special pricing. This offer is available at any of the London Drug stores in Alberta.

This discount offer will end June 30, 2013 – at which time it will be evaluated and possibly extended.

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**ARTA 50th Anniversary Photography Contest**

As part of the celebrations commemorating ARTA’s 50th anniversary, ARTA is holding a photography contest open to all regular and associate members.

For more details, contest rules and an official entry form, visit our website at www.albertarta.org
Seniors Menu & Weekly Promotions

www.albertsfamilyrestaurants.com
TW is proud to partner with ARTA to offer its members preferred rates for auto and home insurance. With over 90 years’ experience in Alberta, our competent and friendly staff ensure the coverage you have is also the coverage you need. We are real people, offering real value, with the goal to exceed all of your expectations.

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