ELK ISLAND RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

President's Report **is easy**

I certainly hope your living is easy these days. Summer sun, warm rains, birdsong and flowers. We tend to hunker down during hard times and forget to enjoy the good things that are still with us.

The long days of summer are already beginning to shorten, but the winter snows are a long way off. Take a look around. Smell fresh-cut grass. Take a walk. Connect with friends and family (safely) and enjoy.

I do ask that you steal some time away from summer fun. The fight continues to protect our pensions. If you feel strongly about the proposed changes to the management of ATRF or the prospect of changes to our involvement with CPP, please take time to let your thoughts be known. If you have already participated by sending an email or letter regarding bill 203, thank you. Unfortunately, our work is not done. We still need to apply pressure. You received communication which provided addresses and email contacts. Please consider using them.

The Elk Island RTA executive have continued to meet (virtually) and have had to make some challenging decisions. The To Hell With The Bells breakfast has been canceled. I definitely will miss the opportunity to visit with you in September. With the loss of our AGM, it has been decided that our current executive and committees remain as they are. This will allow all members to participate in elections when we can get together again as a group. You will be pleased to know that fees for the 2020-2021 year have been suspended. All members who have prepaid will have membership extended by one year as well. As we are not able to offer events for the foreseeable future, it was deemed best to follow this course. ARTA has decided to proceed with their AGM in a virtual form in October. Four executive members will participate – myself, Sheila Busch, Deb Gerow, and Ruby Okamura.

In case you need a little extra 'something' for your summer, I offer you a virtual visit to a lovely lagoon in Manitoba.

(cont…)

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July, 2020

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Elk Island RTA website:
https://artabranches.net/elkislandrta/

Elk Island RTA email:
elkislandrta@gmail.com

ALBERTA RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Elk Island RTA is a branch of ARTA

A single band of cloud,
deeply pink and haloed gold,
obscured the rising sun,
but still let all the brightness through.
Reflected in the mirrored surface of the water,
the rays danced and sparkled on the ripples
from the water bugs flitting here and there.
The quick splash of a leaping trout sent larger
circles spreading outward,
quickly dissipating,
leaving the stillness once again mainly
undisturbed.
In the reeds along the close shore, a heron stood,
one leg raised, head cocked bright eyes curious.
With one stilted step,
the bird disappeared into the grasses.
Farther off drifted a larger, pale ghost
- a pelican -
white in the shadows, silent, serene.
From just past a clump of willow bushes
swam a single duck,
followed closely by an armada
of five tiny ducklings.
This haunting scene was accompanied
by its own sweet music -
the trills of bird song,
buzzing insects,
subtle splashing,
lapping wavelets,
rustling of hidden life.

Karen Atkinson

Please visit the ARTA website at http://www.arta.net for general information.

News from ARTA

Information from ARTA Board of Directors meetings can be found at http://www.arta.net/about/resources/briefing-notes/

Links to the *news&views* magazine and Artafacts

News of Upcoming Events

To Hell with the Bells

The continuing effect of Covid 18 has impacted our annual To Hell with the Bells (Sept. 1) event. At the June Executive meeting, it was decided that hosting the event was impossible in 2020. Social distancing, serving breakfast buffet style and concern about the vulnerability of our age group pose significant problems meeting government regulations. We are optimistic that 2021 we will again enjoy celebrating To Hell with the Bells.

The executive has not cancelled the Christmas Luncheon (Dec. 2) at this time. We will keep our members informed about our Christmas event through the newsletter, emails and the website.

Webinar

We have been offered an opportunity to share in a webinar presented by HearingLife Canada. They are one of the health partners with ARTA and are willing to set up a session for our members. If you are interested in such an event, please send an email to elkislandrta@gmail.com. It is anticipated that the webinar will be scheduled for September. More information will be forthcoming.

Elk Island RTA Executive

To contact any of the executive members listed below, please email us:
elkislandrta@gmail.com

President:
Karen Atkinson

Vice President
Deb Gerow

Treasurer:
Dolaine Koch

Secretary
Compassion & Congratulations:
Carol Gilbertson

Past President and Communications:
Webpage and Email blasts
Inge Coates

Membership:
Thelma Baumgartner

Phoning Committee Chair:
Donna Millard

Social Committee:
Sylvia Roes
Sheila Busch
Ruby Okamura
Lorna Johnston
Karen Carlson

Newsletter:
Julie Ginther

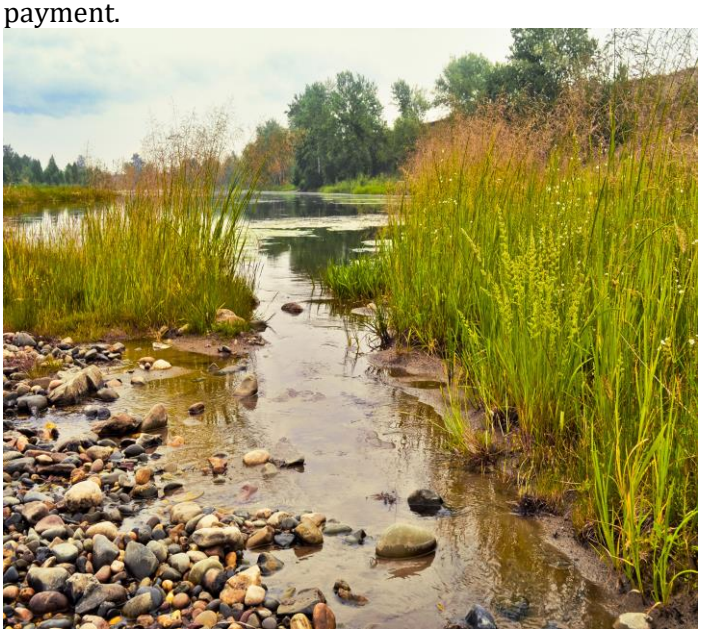
ARTA Reps:
Dolaine Koch

Keep Us Updated

Please register changes in your membership information if…

- You have turned 80 years of age. (Membership is free after this age if you have been a member for the previous 10 years.)
- You have moved. (We need your new contact information.)
- You are not certain if your membership has expired.

Important: Please do not send cash through the mail to pay for membership fees, or for any other reason. It is much safer to send a cheque, and the cancelled cheque can also act as a reminder as to the details of your payment.



Have the Rules for Driving Changed?

It has been over fifty years since I passed a written driving test. Roads were different then. Our two-lane Highway 14 and Calgary Trail at 70 mph were about as busy as it got around here; now we have a multiple-lane Anthony Hendy that can be formidable to merge onto or escape from at 100 km/h. Also, cars back then didn't have the driving technologies today's vehicle have. Did you know that the 10 and 2 hand positions on the steering wheel have given way to 9 and 3 due to the way power assist in steering works? Finally, laws have changed. Back then we just expected that when we saw flashing lights at the side of the road, we needed to slow down no matter what lane we were in. Although current road signs on the multiple-lane QEII warn me that I need to reduce my speed to 60 km/h when passing emergency vehicles, I didn't realize that this law applied only to the lane next to the stopped vehicles:

> *Motorists must reduce speed to 60 km/h or the posted speed, whichever is lower, when passing emergency vehicles or tow trucks that are stopped with their lights flashing. This law applies to the lane(s) immediately next to the stopped vehicles. The fine for speeding in these areas is doubled.*
> *If you are not in the lane next to the stopped vehicles, you still need to be watchful and cautious. Reduce your speed and leave lots of space between yourself and emergency personnel and equipment at the scene. Also, watch for the movement of personnel around the scene*

If you, too, would like to see what is on today's written driving test, below is a link to the Alberta Motor Vehicles website that allows you to take a practice test online. I found several levels of difficulty to choose from, and if I got a question wrong, I was shown an explanation relating to that question. I was pleased to see that it is also anonymous, so I was free to make mistakes and learn from them.

Here is a link to the website where you can find current driving handbooks for cars and motorcycles as well as a variety of driving tests: https://tests.ca/alberta/

Inge Coates

An Introduction

In the Spring newsletter, Inge Coates wrote that after 5 years of editing the newsletter, she was looking for someone to assume the duties of editor. I expressed an interest and I am lucky enough to have Inge and the Elk Island RTA Executive assisting me in learning this new role. My name is Julie Ginther. I retired from teaching high school English and Social Studies in 2017.

The last months have brought an amaz
of our usual activities and has created numerous challenges to our what was considered common place. We watch and listen to the news, read, and research; and end up with more questions. Today's new reality in this pandemic is often puzzling for all of us. We often have questions or want to get some information. The next two articles are some of the challenges I have encountered and information I used to find answers.

It doesn't appear that our current situation is ending for awhile. If you have some questions, challenges or websites providing assistance to you, please let us know at elkislandrta@gmail.com.

Food for Thought

During the past months of self isolation and staying home; I have found it very difficult to find variety in my meals. Prior to Covid 19, my husband and I often enjoyed dining out; with that luxury taken away, meal prep became a chore. There have been moments where I feel like I have cooked the same meals over and over.

Now that we are in Phase 2, and the cases of Covid 19 are rising again; I am finding we are not returning to dining out. We are still staying home and staying safe. Grocery shopping is no longer a venture into an unknown world with limited selection. The summer weather does mean grilling is an option, but the rainy times lately have not been so conducive to grilling. I have still been using the internet for some new ideas.

With this new reality I began searching for inspiration and found some excellent websites. If you are struggling like me; here are some sites I have used for ideas. I hope these websites provide you with some adventures in creative cooking.

https://www.bonappetit.com/gallery/cooking-at-home-coronavir

https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canada-food-guide/tips-healthy-eating/meal-planning-cooking-healthy-choices/recipes.html

https://www.makegood.ca/recipes?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIl5WyjJ-66gIVXhitBh0Bqgm7EAAYByAAEgLwevD_BwE#scrolltop

https://norecipes.com/

https://canadabeef.ca/recipes/

#CanadaTogether is a national initiative to inspire, educate & engage Canadians as we band together during these times. Whether it's news, financial assistance, health or tips on variety of subjects; this site is rich with resources. Please take some time to explore this excellent and informative website https://canadatogether.com/en/

Health Matters

"Health Matters" is a feature written by Carol Gilbertson that offers health reminders. These reminders are meant to be helpful, and are not to be taken as medical advice. At all times, readers are advised to consult their own physician to ensure that what they are doing health-wise is in their best interests.

WAYS TO IMPROVE A SENIOR'S QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of life includes every aspect of a senior's life. Having a good quality of life improves health and quality of care.

Aging at home rather than moving into a facility presents more challenges to a senior's quality of life. This is because all the safety measures which exist in a care centre are not necessarily built into the home that seniors are often resistant to change.

The following are suggestions which can help to improve quality of life:

- Spend some time outside every day, which is calming and promotes exercise.
- Create order inside your home to reduce anxiety.
- Maintain a calendar with all appointments, activities, caregiver schedules and family visits.
- Develop a care plan with your adult children, other family members or friends so that they understand your wants and needs.
- Stay in frequent communication with family and friends so they know that you are well.
- Never hesitate to call a doctor or health link for advice.
- Set up a weekly budget. This takes the stress out of dealing with money.
- Make sure your health care directives are in order.
- Create as much beauty and fun as you can from fresh flowers to music. Take pictures. Mix it up.

Notes of Congratulations

We would like to include good-news notices in our newsletter, and encourage you to please send your happy announcements in an email to elkislandrta@gmail.com. Your good news also puts smiles on our faces!

Congratulations to Gordon Rancier on his 92nd birthday.

Notes of Compassion

It is with heavy hearts that we send our condolences:

To the family of our colleague,
James Story
Who passed away on June 2, 2020

To Dianna and Gordon Millard and their family at the passing of their son-in-law
Steven Harmatys
on June 12, 2020

To the family of our colleague,
Loretta Baker
Who passed away on June 13, 2020

To the family of our colleague,
Ron Guglich
Who passed away on June 16, 2020

**NOTE; Please contact us at elkislandtra@gmail.com if you know of news that should be included in our Compassion and Congratulation section. We depend on our membership to keep us posted.*

Kindness

Are you aware of a member who is struggling?
Please let us know, and we will reach out with a call or a card.
Sometimes, just a little touch of kindness makes all the difference in the world.