
ELK ISLAND RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



President's Report

When you look at the list of newly elected executive members, you realize we are in good hands. As your new President, I am happy to be surrounded by such wonderful people who make things happen for our Branch members.

Life has been a whirlwind of 'to do lists' for me. Since stepping into the rather large shoes of Inge and Denis, I am afraid I haven't gotten far in the interests of our Branch. I feel like I'm in that little vignette 'Squirrel' and it has me running in a circle.

The Branch summer plans included a July afternoon walk when we realized it was going to be too hot. I'm hoping it will be nicer to be meeting up at 10:30am on the revised date July 31st. This time we'll meet in the morning. Bring someone new to EIRTA!

Planning is already underway for the To Hell With The Bell breakfast happening on August 29th at the Broadmoor Golf Club. We are always happy to see Branch members and make new friends. Mark your calendar!

As our new ATA Liaison representative, Denis Schell is more officially reaching out to our active teachers. He met with our Local #28 regularly during the last year...and we are working to make inroads to liaise with the Catholic Local. I'm sure we are all worried about the way the provincial government is handling the whole education portfolio. We hope to be of help to teachers on the front lines in whatever way we can by consulting with them ahead of stepping on toes.

We do need to keep our eye on the ball for us seniors to advocate for what matters to us as a group and as individuals. With the help of our parent, ARTA, we have made inroads into so much. Member benefits abound and can be reviewed on their website. A Calgary office is now open, and ARTA Rx is expanding into the Calgary area, hopefully this fall. We can have our medications delivered to our door, given we live in a certain geographic designation. There's a political story behind why we can't just do the whole province.

On another note: I get emails, phone calls, and letters in the mail from all kinds of organizations asking for my support by donation, by filling out surveys, by signing my name to a petition, and so much more. Even our cousins to the south have my attention for obvious reasons. I'm feeling overwhelmed by it all because the causes are valid, the need is great, but I can't do it all.

Continued page 2

Summer Edition

July 2024

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Presidents Message | 1 |
| EIRTA News | 2 |
| ARTA News | 3 |
| Upcoming EIRTA Events | 4 |
| Political Engagement | 5 |
| How I Design My Garden | 6 |
| Puzzle Page | 7 |
| Answer to Puzzle | 8 |

Elk Island RTA website:

http://artabranches.net/elkisland_rta

ARTA
ALBERTA RETIRED
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Like ARTA, Elk Island RTA supports an engaged lifestyle after retirement through member-centered services, advocacy, communication, wellness and leadership.

Elk Island RTA Executive

New Executive Elected June 2024

President

Dolaine Koch

Vice President

Kaye Schindeler

Treasurer

Dolaine Koch

Secretary

Elaine Whitford

ATA Liaison

Denis Schell

Compassion & Congratulations

Lorna Johnson

Communication

(email, newsletter & website)
Julie Ginther

Membership

Cathy Allen

Social Committee

Ruby Okamura
Members: Sheila Busch
Sylvia Roes

Cont from page 1

We are all worrying about our pensions, the cost of living, what is the best place to live, and can we age in place. We worry for our spouses, our partners, our children, and many of us have grandchildren and even great-grandchildren. If you're anything like me, you have been trying to do it all, but feel like you're standing in place.

I can name so many of my worries, but I want know more about what our members are worried about. How can our Branch advocate for our members if we don't know what's important to them? With that in mind, I invite you to send me an email with your thoughts when you have a moment and have the incentive to shout out. I'm looking forward to meeting with you every chance we get. "A person who feels appreciated will always do more than is expected." (anonymous)

Cheers,

Dolaine Koch



Changes in EIRTA

At the June, Annual General meeting there were some changes our members should be aware of:

- The most significant are the changes to our executive. Some members stepped down and others were elected. The changes are noted on page 2 of this newsletter.
- The other important change was the number of members who required phoning has dropped significantly. It was decided at the AGM to disband the phoning committee. Those members who require phone notification of events are being called individually by members.

Please 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.

To register changes please contact Cathy Allen.



ARTA Scholarship Program

Application Deadline – July 31, 2024

In keeping with its continuing support for education, the ARTA scholarship program is made possible by the generosity of ARTA Members and Orbit Insurance Services, a service partner for home and auto insurance. Orbit Insurance Services provides, through ARTA, scholarships to students who are related to an ARTA member. These scholarships recognize academic achievement, community involvement, and volunteer work. Future goals, personal accomplishment and supporting letters of reference are also significant in the overall determination of the scholarship recipients. NEW – there are no longer two separate categories for scholarships (Degree and Diploma). A high number of applicants were disqualified for entering the wrong category, so the Governance Committee has removed this barrier. Up to eight scholarships of \$5,000 will be awarded in 2024.

ARTA also awards two scholarships for ARTA 101 (active teachers) and their relatives. The future of education is in the hands of active teachers, and ARTA wants to give them the tools to shape it. ARTA awards one \$2,500 scholarship annually to an active teacher pursuing additional education to support them in their career. ARTA also awards one \$2,500 scholarship annually to the directive relative of an active teacher who is getting their first undergraduate degree of diploma and are in their second, third, or fourth year of study.

Eleventh Annual
SECOND WIND CONFERENCE
(A fabulous health & wellness conference for retirees)
being held in Edmonton on
September 12, 2024
at the lovely Chateau Louis Conference Centre

Organized by retired teacher volunteers from around Edmonton, this year's conference features comedian and retired teacher **Ken Valgardson** as the opening keynote. Attendees will also enjoy morning refreshments, a wide variety of speaker sessions, a delicious buffet lunch, coffee breaks, displays by artisans and senior-oriented businesses, and an end-of-conference 'Wine Down' with refreshments and door prizes.

Watch for a list of speakers and topics to be posted mid-April on the Second Wind website secondwindconference.ca

Plan to enjoy this informative and uplifting event with friends and former colleagues.

Mark the date, invite a friend and spread the word!

ARTA Writing Contest



Do you have a gift for the written word? The ARTA Communications Committee is proud to sponsor another edition of its annual writing contest. All ARTA members — regular or affiliate — are eligible to enter. The deadline to enter is November 15, 2024.

Contest categories are:

Upcoming Events for EIRTA

Mark your calendars and register as soon as possible



Summer Walk at Broadmoor Lake

Due to the extreme heat the walk earlier in July was postponed.

Everyone enjoys EIRTA's walks around Broadmoor Lake, and July 31, 2024, will be our next walk. We will be meeting at the pavilion beside the Sports Arena at 10:30 am to enjoy coffee or tea and a treat.

Please RSVP to Ruby Okamura by Monday, July 29th.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

EIRTA Executive

To Hell with the Bells Breakfast



for our annual "To Hell with the Bells" breakfast. It will be held at the clubhouse of the Broadmoor Golf course, on August 27, 2024.

Planning has just begun, so look for more details coming soon!

Political Engagement

At our recent AGM, a motion was passed to formalize the position of ATA Liaison. I am excited to take on this role this coming year. I feel our efforts to connect and support ATA Local 28 were successful and afforded us an opportunity to reach out to newly retired teachers, something that FOIP prevented in the past. This was one of my objectives as co-president last year.

Therefore, during the last school year, Inge and I attended all Elk Island Public School Local #28 ATA meetings at Bev Facey High School. Next year, as our ATA Liaison Officer, I hope to continue our presence at Local ATA meetings for both Elk Island Public and Separate School systems. Teachers in Elk Island need to know EIRTA members support them in these trying times for education in our province.

Lack of funding, large class sizes, diminishing support, curriculum delivery, testing, as well as salaries, are dire issues facing our colleagues. The consensus is “public education in Alberta is in trouble.”

How can we, as retired teachers, lend a hand? Last school year, many of us attended rallies at the Legislature. A few of us volunteered to help man the Elk Island Public School’s ATA booth at the Strathcona Trade Fair. We display our support for education with signs on our homes and cars. We write letters and express our concerns to our MLAs, the Minister of Education and the Premier. We all share news and chat with our friends, family, and neighbours about the alarming condition of education in our province. Many of us even see firsthand what teachers are facing in their classrooms by volunteering in our grandchildren’s schools. Let’s continue our current practices and perhaps share new ways we can stay informed and contribute our support for teachers in Elk Island.

Last year, several of us replied to an EIRTA email message offering to keep us informed about educational issues and local events where we, as retired teachers of EIRTA, can be more active in supporting education. I’m prepared to continue this next school year with your help. In the fall newsletter, I’ll again ask for your email and form an updated group to share and post information, updates and events that may catch your interest. I’m looking forward to getting involved and corresponding with members of this group so we can make a difference for our Public and Separate School colleagues!

For the golfers in our membership, remember if you’re out on the courses this summer; take an extra pair of pants in case you get a hole in one!!

Have a great summer,

Denis



Carol Gilbertson contributes to our newsletter her passion for gardening. Carol has an amazing green thumb, and she enjoys spending time in her gorgeous garden

How I Design My Garden

There are a couple of questions I am most often asked about my garden:

"How do you plan your garden?" and "What is the name of that flower?"

I must confess that I do NOT plan my garden....it just sort of evolves. If we must remove large shrubs or junipers (as we needed to both last year and this year), I often replace them with perennials and annuals. If it is an area next to the house, I put the taller plants at the back, I put the taller plants in the middle of the plot if it is an open area. I then step down in size to the outer edges. I sometimes decide that I will have a colour scheme in a particular area, but I prefer a mix of random colours (including greenery) and types of plants.

As for the names of the plants, I admit that I do not know the names of some. My stock answer when asked is "Isn't it pretty"! That's how I garden. If it is pretty, I want it, I buy it, and I plant it. It's very random. If the plants don't work where they are put, I just move them.

It is like a scientific experiment (Yup, the science

teacher had to say that 😊).

The point I am trying to make is that I love gardening and am proud of my achievements and if it gives others pleasure, then I have achieved my goal. So -- plant and have fun!



Puzzle Page

The answer is included at the end of the newsletter. *Hope you enjoy!*

HARD

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| 2 | | | | 7 | 1 | 6 | | |
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***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.***

Answer key for Puzzle.

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