



Heartland  
Alberta  
Retired  
Teachers'  
Association

The Heartland Herald  
HARTA's Newsletter  
of Branch Events  
**The New Year's  
2026 Edition**

**Publisher: Ron Thompson**

**Volume No. 14**

**Issue No. 5 January 2026**

## **A Branch of ARTA**



## **HARTA's Program Schedule 2026**

- **HARTA February Luncheon**, Thursday, February 19, 2026. St. David's United Church, Leduc, Program: My Retirement Living Journey, Presenter: Steven Krahn
- **March Luncheon, Thursday**, March 19 First United Church in Wetaskiwin: Program TBA.
- **HARTA's Mini - Conference** in Leduc, Thursday, May 14, 2026. at St. David's United Church.
- **The HARTA AGM** is tentatively scheduled for Friday, September 18, 2026, unless the date needs to be changed by unforeseen events.
- **ARTA's Heart & Sole Walks** – June 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Dates and locations to be decided later.



## **From the President**

HARTA held its first branch executive meeting after the HARTA AGM. Results of the meeting will be given in the article on the executive Meeting. This newsletter is being published in the first few days of the New Year. The branches have each received their subsidy cheques, as well as the number of ARTA retired teachers in each branch. More details are available in the articles which follow.

## **The ATRF Pension Fund Update**

On Thursday, February 5, 2026, from 2:00 to 3:00 PM ARTA's Pension & Financial Wellness well host the annual ATRF Retired Teachers' Pension Fund Report online. If you wish to view the report please go to the ARTA website at [www.arta.net](http://www.arta.net) and register for the session.

## **My Retirement Living Journey**

On Thursday, February 19th, 2026, join Steven Krahn, Business Development Manager at Chartwell Retirement Residences, at St. David's United Church, for an informative and engaging seminar titled "My Retirement Living Journey."

Steven, a former educator with GSACRD #29, (Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools) brings both professional expertise and a compassionate approach to helping individuals and families navigate retirement living options. In this session, he will walk you through the different levels of living and care available in retirement residences in Alberta—helping you understand what's available, what to expect, and how to make informed decisions. Additionally, Steven will introduce **FitMinds**, a complimentary 8-week course designed to help combat memory loss and dementia. This program is ideal for anyone looking to maintain cognitive health and stay mentally active. Don't miss this opportunity to learn more about retirement living and proactive brain health

## **HARTA's Executive Meeting Review**

HARTA held its November executive meeting just before the November luncheon. The main topics dealt with were the Mini-Conference in May and membership concerns.

The executive approved the conference budget. Ron told the meeting that all the presenters have been confirmed. Details for this event will start being released in January.

Ron expressed his concern that the number of HARTA members who are retired Alberta teachers could fall below 25. A branch needs to keep its number of ARTA retired teacher members above 25 members in order to keep its charter.

The executive decided to hold a special meeting to explore ways to boost the branch's

membership. Robin Stuart has agreed to facilitate a brain storming event to help in exploring ways to improve HARTA's membership.

At the ARTA Board of Directors' Meeting the following week the branches were given their cheques and their number of ARTA members. HARTA received a subsidy cheque for \$680.00. Our ARTA retired teachers' membership is 34 members. Our Alberta retired teachers' memberships numbers have not changed since 2024.

## **Is Your HARTA Membership Up To Date**

In late November of each year, HARTA receives a subsidy cheque from ARTA, based on the number of paid-up ARTA members that are also Alberta retired teachers with 5 years or more of teaching experience for a board in Alberta as well as being a HARTA member as of September 1st of that year. Each branch president is required to send their list of current members to the ARTA office. HARTA's yearly subsidy is based on the number of paid-up ARTA members who are retired Alberta teachers who are eligible for an Alberta teachers' pension and who are members of ARTA.

If your membership is due for renewal, you can renew it at a regular HARTA meeting, by sending an e-transfer to: [rnthompson@shaw.ca](mailto:rnthompson@shaw.ca), or by a cheque, or money order payable to HARTA, care of Ron Thompson, 4020 - 37th Avenue, Leduc, Alberta T9E 6C9. Please make out the cheque, money order, or e-transfer for \$10.00 for each year you would like to renew for, or, for \$25.00 you can renew your membership for three years.

If you are 80 years of age paid up, you are considered a lifetime member. You no longer need to pay membership fees. Please let us know when you celebrate your 80th birthday so we can change your membership status to lifetime. If you are a retired teacher, please also confirm your ARTA status with ARTA. (if you have an ARTA Benefit Plan, you do not need to verify your membership. Your yearly membership fee is included in your ARTA Plan.)

## Confusing Abbreviations

After you retired from teaching you probably noticed a number of abbreviations re: retirement. **ASEBP** (Alberta School Employee Benefits Plan) refers to the health benefits provided by various school districts. The **ARTA** (Alberta Retired Teachers' Association) Plans, are plans available to all ARTA members and Associate Members. The **ATRF** (Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund) is the fund that pays teachers' pensions to retired Alberta teachers. Retired teachers with concerns re: their pensions, should contact the ATRF re: these issues. **CPP** (Canada Pension Plan) refers to the Pension Plan provided by the Canadian Government. The **OAS** (Old Age Security) is a supplementary payment to every person over 65 years also created by the Canadian Government. As a review of these abbreviations, I have listed all these abbreviations with their websites where you can get more information on a given topic. The **ARTCF** (Alberta Retired Teachers' Charitable Foundation) is ARTA's foundation to support various partners with their various projects to achieve their goals. **AIMCo** (Alberta Investment Management Corporation) is the Alberta Government's umbrella Investment Organization which also manages various Government Pensions)

## Abbreviations

**ASEBP:** A provider of Health Care Benefits:

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

**ARTA:** Alberta Retired Teachers' Association Provider of many services and Benefits to Alberta Retired Teachers and other Professional Retirees: [www.arta.net](http://www.arta.net)

**ARTA Branches:** [www.artabranche.net](http://www.artabranche.net)

**ATRF:** Provider and Funder of Alberta Teachers' Pensions: [www.atrf.com](http://www.atrf.com)

**CPP and OAS:** Pensions provided by the Canadian Government Contact Service Canada at: [www.Canada.ca](http://www.Canada.ca)

**ARTCF:** Alberta Retired Teachers' Charitable Foundation at: <https://www.arta.net/advocacy/artcf>

**AIMCo:** Alberta Investment Management Corporation at: <https://www.aimco.ca>

I hope the previous information makes the retirement information world easier to navigate. I hope the previous information makes the retirement information world easier to navigate.

## Member Welfare

If you know of anyone needing our support, please let the editor know. With so much sickness around us, this might be a good time to reach out to someone you haven't heard from or seen in a while. Please keep well and keep safe. HARTA's editor can be reached at:

[r\\_n\\_thompson102@shaw.ca](mailto:r_n_thompson102@shaw.ca)

## Public Interest Alberta

If you would like to keep abreast of the various emerging issues in Alberta such as Health Care, Education, and Long Term Care, please go to <https://www.pialberta.org> up to the election and beyond for more information on these and other topics. This website will also tell you more about other organizations that are part of Public Interest Alberta. Maj-Britt Bigotti has been appointed ARTA's representative on this organization.

## HARTA's Mini-Conference

HARTA's Mini-Conference will take place on Thursday, May 14th at St. David's United Church. There will be a Keynote speaker and three sessions on various topics. Please watch for more articles on the presenters in the February 2026 Newsletter.

## Humour Corner

The following jokes are from the Coffee News and the [goodhousekeeping.com](http://goodhousekeeping.com) website

1. Q: What do llamas eat? A: They eat Llama beans.
2. Sign on a pottery shop, "Feats of clay."
3. I asked my friend, Nick, if he had 5 cents but he was Nicholas.
4. Mother: "Son wake up. It's 20 to 8." Son: "In whose favour?"

5. Q: Why should you just stand on your left foot during the New Year's countdown?  
A: So you start the new year on your right foot.
6. Knock! Knock! Who's there? Razor. Razor who? Razor glass and toast a Happy New Year.
7. Q: Where can you find comedians on New Year's Eve? A: Waiting for the punch line.
8. Q: What was the caterpillar's New Year's resolution? A: To turn over a new leaf.
9. Q: Why do birds fly south for the New Year? A: Because, It's too far to walk.
10. Q: What does every new year have in store for you? A: 365 days.

If you have jokes, you'd like to share in the HARTA newsletter, please send them to the editor at [r\\_n\\_thompson102@shaw.ca](mailto:r_n_thompson102@shaw.ca).

## Volunteers Needed

At various times during the program year, HARTA needs members to help with various tasks. For the various luncheons, we can always use extra help in preparing the room for our programs. Contact Ron T. or any other member of HARTA's Executive to let us know that you'd like to help.

If you'd like to provide stories and other news for our newsletter, you could submit to your contribution to: The Editor at: [r\\_n\\_thompson102@shaw.ca](mailto:r_n_thompson102@shaw.ca). It would be great to get more submissions from our readers.

- Ron Thompson, HARTA President

## Other Branch Activities

ARTA has a website which provides information on events in other Branches throughout Alberta and the Okanagan Branch in BC. The ARTA branches in Calgary and Edmonton host conferences once a year. At the end of April, the Calgary Retired Teachers hold the Steppin' Out Conference. You can go to the Calgary Retired Teachers' Association website to view the Steppin' Out Conference details for this year. At the

beginning of September the Edmonton Retired Teachers host the Second Wind Conference. Look for these announcements as the next year progresses. If you would like to find other Branch events, this website can help you. [www.artabranes.net](http://www.artabranes.net).

- Ron Thompson, HARTA President

## ARTCF Updates

### Partnership Updates

There are 2 new grant recipients: NorQuest College was awarded \$8,000. The Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens' Association was awarded \$13,000.

Bethany Care Foundation was awarded \$25,000. Karen Wilson will serve as the ARTCF representative for Operation Friendship Seniors Society and NorQuest College. Donna Crawford will serve as the ARTCF representative for the Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens' Association.

## Alberta Retired Teachers

### Charitable Foundation

#### Charitable Foundation Details

##### Our Mission:

*"From classrooms and beyond, the Alberta Retired Teachers Charitable Foundation and its members are linked by one common purpose: to support Alberta Seniors in pursuit of Appropriate Housing, Health Services and English as a Second Language, to improve their lives!"*

ARTCF supports the following Charities:

**Parkinson's Association of Alberta** - three ARTCF Tele-Support Groups

**Alzheimer Society of Calgary** - Funding for their Learning and Support Services

**Operation Friendship Seniors' Society** – Grant to support equipment for the facility

**Bethany Care Centre** - Grant to support a Music Therapy Program.

**Jewish Family Services of Calgary** - Grant to support their programs

**NorQuest College** - Grant in 2025

**The Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens' Assn** - Grant in 2025

**ARTCF, with your support, will make a difference. We have provincial status as an Alberta Society, as well Charitable Status (ability to give Tax Receipts) from Canada Revenue Agency. Join us in expanding our impact. Honor or Memorial gifts will be recognized, and all gifts will be Income Tax receipted. Online donations, may be made at [www.arta.net/cf-give](http://www.arta.net/cf-give) Cheques may be made out to **ARTCF** and mailed to:**

**ARTCF Office**  
**15505 - 137 Avenue NW**  
**Edmonton AB**  
**T5V 1R9**

## **Executive Contacts for the 2024-25 Program Year**

**Ron Thompson:** President & ARTA Branch Rep  
 (780) 986-8349 [rnthompson@shaw.ca](mailto:rnthompson@shaw.ca)  
 (r n thompson) [r\\_n\\_thompson102@shaw.ca](mailto:r_n_thompson102@shaw.ca)  
 (HARTA correspondence)

**Bob Silverthorne:** Vice President & ATA  
 Liaison—Wetaskiwin and Timberline Locals  
 (780) 387-6676  
[rsilverthorne.peachills@gmail.com](mailto:rsilverthorne.peachills@gmail.com)

**Drayton Valley Contacts.** Ron Thompson is the temporary contact.

**Janice Storch:** Secretary & ARTA  
 Branch Rep. (780) 986-0056 [jes90@telus.net](mailto:jes90@telus.net)

**Connie Dublenko:** Treasurer (587) 783-8588  
[ccdublenko@gmail.com](mailto:ccdublenko@gmail.com)

**Lawrence Dublenko:** Membership Co-ordinator  
 (587) 783-8588 [mayoprospector@gmail.com](mailto:mayoprospector@gmail.com)

## **HARTA's Goals**

- To carry on social activities, enabling our members to maintain contact with their colleagues.
- To provide information to our members about the resources available through the Alberta Retired Teachers' Association. (ARTA) and other sources.

## **HARTA's Website**

[www.artabranches.net/harta](http://www.artabranches.net/harta)

For Drayton Valley, please go to

the Facebook page:

**Drayton Valley Retired School Staff**



***ARTA supports an engaged lifestyle after retirement through member-centered services, advocacy, communication, wellness, and leadership.***



## A Branch of ARTA



**You're Invited to  
HARTA's February  
Luncheon, Thursday,  
Feb. 19, 2026  
St. David's United  
Church in Leduc  
An Information  
Session on  
Seniors' Living  
Presenter:  
Steven Krahn  
from Chartwell**



email:  
[rnthompson@shaw.ca](mailto:rnthompson@shaw.ca)  
phone:  
(780) 986-8349  
Ron Thompson

**Thursday, February 19th, 2026  
Membership \$10.00 Per Year,  
New members free,  
Doors open: 11:00 AM, Lunch at 11:30 AM  
Lunch is \$15.00 per person, free for guests.**



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## **HARTA Mini-Conference Confirmed Sessions**

- **Ray Hoger (ARTA President) - Keynote**
- **Susan Carter- Comedienne**
- **Ross D MacGregor - All About Locks**
- **Carolynne Melnyk - Qigong**

**Thursday, May 14, 2026**

**9:30 AM to 2:45 PM**

**More info available early January 2026**

## **Save the Date**

**For more info as available phone [\(780\) 986-8349](tel:7809868349)**

**or email: [rnthompson@shaw.ca](mailto:rnthompson@shaw.ca) (r n thompson)**