



Heartland
Alberta
Retired
Teachers'
Association

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

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A Branch of ARTA



HARTA's Program Schedule 2026

- **HARTA's Mini - Conference** in Leduc, Thursday, May 14, 2026. at St. David's United Church.
- **ARTA's Heart & Sole Walks** – June 1st in Leduc, June 3rd in Drayton Valley. More information will be available later.
- **HARTA's 2026 AGM** - September 18, 2026. Gary Sawatzky to present the ARTA Benefits Update after the AGM.

From the President

HARTA will hold its May Mini-Conference on Thursday, May 14th. More information about the conference is available later in this newsletter. More information is available about each presenter. Please review this newsletter for the coming luncheons, presentations, and other coming activities.

HARTA's March 19th Program

On Thursday, March 19th Kim Silverthorn, a counsellor from Beaumont presented a session on Happiness and Meaning at First United Church in Wetaskiwin. The essence of the session was, "Happiness is a choice not a result." Nothing will make you happy. No person will make you happy unless you decide to be happy. Your happiness will not come to you. It can only come from you. Happiness requires positive emotions and life satisfaction. Kim gave examples of positive emotions which promote happiness. These positive emotions include: contentment, carefreeness. Purposefulness, merriment, fulfilment, wellbeing, pleasure, joy, peace, and delight. As stated at the start of this article, happiness does not depend on circumstances. Happiness comes from our behaviours. Are we living a life that helps us to be happy? The following play a part in promoting happiness.

1. Social Connections/Relationships (with oneself—with strangers—or with people we know)
2. Gratitude's (noticing and connecting to positives more than negatives.)

My Retirement Living Journey Review

On Thursday, February 19th, 2026, Steven Krahn, Business Development Manager for Chartwell Retirement Residences, presented at St. David's United Church. He gave an informative and

engaging seminar titled "My Retirement Living Journey." Steven also invited participants to attend **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. This program will be held on Wednesdays starting Wednesday, April 22. Please see the information poster at the end of this newsletter for more information. This program will run from 1:00 to 2:30 PM each Wednesday from April 22 to June 3. Join us starting Wednesday, April 22 and tell your friends.

HARTA's Executive Meeting February 2026

On Thursday, February 19, 2026, HARTA's Executive met at St. David's United Church. The branch's finance position was presented by Connie Dublenko. (approximately \$2800.00) Ron Thompson reported on the review held in January. The Mini-Conference speakers have been confirmed. HARTA's total membership as of January 1st, 2026, stands at 49 members. The executive approved paying a presenters fee and mileage for Kim Silverthorn, HARTA's presenter for the March program in Wetaskiwin. After reviewing the branch's operations since 2020, the executive decided to build the branch's membership. We decided to encourage each member to invite their friends to upcoming HARTA events. Later in February, HARTA received a cheque from ARTA for \$600.00, money from a grant HARTA applied for toward funding the mini-conference in May.

ABOUT ARTA

In the last few months I have seen some misunderstandings re: the relationship among ARTA, the ATA, and ATRF. I hope the points below and the article which follows will clarify

the relationship of these three organizations to each other.

- 1.** ARTA does not receive funding from the Alberta Government.
- 2.** The Alberta Teachers' Association and the Alberta Retired Teachers' Association are separate organizations.
- 3.** ARTA does not have any connection with the ATRF.
- 4.** Only the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund is responsible for Teachers' Pensions in Alberta.

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, 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 and your HARTA membership is 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 are part of 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

ARTA: Alberta Retired Teachers' Association Provider of many services and Benefits to Alberta Retired Teachers and other Professional Retirees:

www.arta.net

ARTA Branches: www.artabranches.net

ATRF: Provider and Funder of Alberta Teachers' Pensions: www.atrf.com

CPP and OAS: Pensions provided by the Canadian Government Contact Service Canada at:

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

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.

HARTA's Keynote Speaker: Ray Hoger



Ray Hoger, ARTA's current president, will be HARTA's keynote speaker at HARTA's Mini-Conference in May. Ray Hoger was hired by the Medicine Hat

Catholic School board in 1978 as a high school Business Education teacher, newly graduated from the University of Alberta. He retired from full-time teaching from that same school board thirty-nine years later, as a grade three specialist. During that time, he spent thirty years volunteering with the ATA in various capacities—ARA and school rep, Business Education Specialist Council, Career and Technology Studies Council and Pension and Retirement Consultant. He also spent twenty-three years in the Canadian Forces Reserve, retiring with the rank of captain.

He has also volunteered with the community-based Medicine Hat Musical Theatre for over forty years, working on stage, backstage, as lighting director and has been a member of the board of directors for over 16 years.

Ray retired in 2017 and immediately enrolled in ARTA, joining the Pension and Financial

Wellness committee in 2020. He served one year as ARTA vice president and is currently in his first year as ARTA president.

Susan Carter: A Serious Look at Why We Need Humour in Our Lives



In this talk, Susan will discuss how humour affected her life – in the classroom and on stage. We need humour now more than ever. We will discuss:

- Different styles of humour,
- What role humour can play

in your life,

- How to create humorous stories from everyday frustration. After all you never know when you have to give another speech!

Susan spent thirty years teaching in a junior high classroom; she started doing stand-up to relieve the stress of... teaching in a junior high classroom.



Carolynne Melnyk: Qigong

Carolynne Melnyk, B.Ed., MA, is a Certified Spring Forest Qigong Trainer and practitioner, published author, and world traveller. She facilitates Qigong sessions at Wellspring Alberta, with the Fibromyalgia Association Canada, and she also has a private online following.

She draws on her intuition and insight, intensive qigong training, years of educational experience, and life experience to deliver a unique blend of skills that help others transform their lives on all levels, so they can reclaim their natural health and well-being from the inside out. Let her help YOU Refresh,

Recharge and Reclaim your health and well-being from the inside-out.

Ross MacGregor



Ross MacGregor began his career in the Locksmith Division of Chubb Mosler Taylor in 1974. In 1977, he took a brief sabbatical and spent 3 years in the Canadian Armed Forces. Starting with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, 1st Battalion based in Calgary and completed his service in 1980 with the Canadian Airborne Regiment 2nd Commando based in Petawawa, Ontario.

After completing his military service, Ross returned to Chub Mosler Taylor, working with their Safe Division based in Regina, Saskatchewan. Accepting an invitation to join the staff at Action Security Locksmiths, Ross returned to the Edmonton area and followed up also working for Western Lock and Key. In July of 2004, Ross started his own company, RU Secure Consulting. After 50 years, Ross continues to enjoy his chosen trade.

Ross will present a session on the various types of locks to keep your home and other property secure. Plan to attend this session to find out more about the various forms of locks to provide better security for your personal property

Humour Corner

The following jokes were shared by Harold Skidmore. Thank you Harold.

1. 9 out of 10 times when I lose something ... it's because I put it in a safe place.
2. There is an ancient legend that says if you can't sleep at night it's because you are

awake.

3. This morning, I accidentally changed the GPS voice to "male." Now it just says, "It's around here somewhere. Keep driving."
4. One day. I'm going to judge a spelling bee. I'll ask one of the kids to spell the word, "there." When he/she asks for it in a sentence, I'll say ... "Their car is parked over there and they're late."
5. At a couple counselling meeting the speaker mentioned that couples are so disconnected that 85% of husbands don't even know their wives favourite flower. Mick turned to his wife and whispered, "It's self-rising, isn't it?"
6. Don't bother with paying a therapist. I'll tell you what's wrong with you for free.
7. So I was in a shoe shop this morning trying on a shoe. I said to the assistant, "It's too tight." She said, "Try it with the tongue out." I said, "It'th no good. It'th thtill thoo thight."
8. I'm proud to announce that I have completed the 1st item on my bucket list. I have the bucket.
9. Procrastination is totally a good thing. You always have something to do tomorrow, plus you have nothing to do today.
10. **PAYDAY** Payday chocolate bar is changing it's name because it's offensive to those who don't work.

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.

Wellness Walks in June

The first week of June ARTA is sponsoring Heart & Sole Walks along with ARTA Branches. HARTA will hold Wellness Walks in Leduc, and Drayton Valley, In Leduc, we will be holding a walk starting at Telford House Parking Lot and ending at the boat launch, just before the Stone Barn. In Drayton Valley the walk will be held on the circular track near the River Rock Restaurant. In inclement weather the walk will be held in the Omniplex.

The start time for each event will be 10:30 in Leduc and Drayton Valley. Registrants are asked to bring a donation for your foodbank to the walk. The foodbank contacts for each community are as follows: Leduc, Ron Thompson; and Drayton Valley, Sandy Hamilton. These contacts will make sure your donation goes to the foodbank in your area.

Please register by sending the following information to Ron Thompson at rnthompson@shaw.ca. Name, Email, phone number. In which community will you walk, Leduc or Drayton Valley. In order to receive ARTA swag on the day of the walk, (June 1st - Leduc and June 3rd - Drayton Valley.) please register before or on **May 1st, 2026**. Please stay tuned for more information re: the walks. Please see the registration form at the end of this newsletter.

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. 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 usually host the Second Wind Conference. This year the other branch announcements as the this year progresses. If you would like to find other Branch events, this website can help you. www.artabranches.net.

- Ron Thompson, HARTA President

HARTA's new Facebook Page

HARTA has a new Facebook page "**HARTA's Coming Events**." Please have a look at this new Facebook page and click follow to keep up with the latest in HARTA's events. The next event is the Wetaskiwin Luncheon. Kim Silverthorn, a counsellor with offices in Beaumont and Sherwood Park will discuss the topic "Happiness and Meaning". Please go to HARTA's Coming Events page on Facebook and review the stories to keep up with the latest in HARTA events.

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 Cheques may be made out to **ARTCF** and mailed to:

ARTCF Office

15505 - 137 Avenue NW

Edmonton AB

T5V 1R9

Executive Contacts for the 2025-26 Program Year

Ron Thompson: President & ARTA Branch Rep

(780) 986-8349 rnthompson@shaw.ca

(r n thompson) r_n_thompson102@shaw.ca

(HARTA correspondence)

Bob Silverthorne: Vice President & ATA

Liaison—Wetaskiwin and Timberline Locals

(780) 387-6676

rsilverthorne.peachills@gmail.com

Drayton Valley Contacts. Ron Thompson is the temporary contact.

Janice Streshaw: Secretary & ARTA

Branch Rep. (780) 986-0056 jes90@telus.net

Connie Dublenko: Treasurer (587) 783-8588

ccdublenko@gmail.com

Lawrence Dublenko: Membership Co-ordinator

(587) 783-8588 mavoprospector@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

Also view HARTA's event page at:

HARTA's Coming Events On Facebook



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



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HARTA Mini-Conference Featured Topics

- Keynote -
Ray Hoger
- Susan Carter -
Humour & Life
- All About Locks -
Ross MacGregor
- Qigong -
Carolynne Melnyk

Conference Funded
in part by ARTA



Thursday, May 14, 2026
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

**Cost - \$25.00 for the Conference,
St. David's United Church
4614 - 48 St. in Leduc,
For more info phone (780) 986-8349
or email: rnthompson@shaw.ca (r n thompson)**

**Registration is not complete without registration
form and payment of conference fees.**

HARTA Mini-Conference 2026 Form
Presenters and Schedule for Thursday, May 14th, 2026
St. David's United Church
4614 – 48 Street, Leduc T9E 5X7

Surname _____ First Name _____ Street Address _____

City _____ Postal Code _____ Email Address _____ Phone No. _____

Membership: Check one or more:

If you are a branch member other than HARTA, indicate the branch. _____

ARTA HARTA Non-member.

Workshop fee: ___\$25.00 full day with meals. Afternoon or Morning Sessions only: ___\$15.00
 no meals. Payment details: Cheque, Money order or cash for ___ registrations:

Total fees \$_____ (We also accept e-transfers.)

Forward registrations to Ron Thompson: rnthompson@shaw.ca or by mail to:

HARTA C/O 4020 - 37 Avenue, Leduc, Alberta. T9E 6C9

Registration is not complete until payment has been received.

No refunds after May 7th, 2026.

Space is limited so register early.

9:00-9:25 AM	Registration
9:25-9:30 AM	Indigenous Welcome – Bob Silverthorne
9:30-10:10 AM	Keynote – Ray Hoger – (ARTA President)
10:10-10:20 AM	Break
10:20-11:20 AM	Humour & Life – Susan Carter
11:20 AM -12:20 PM	Lunch Break
12:20 -1:20 PM	All About Locks – Ross MacGregor
1:20—1:30 PM	Break
1:30—2:30 PM	Qigong – Carolynne Melnyk
2:30—3:00 PM	Evaluation & Wrap-up

As a follow-up to Chartwell's Session on Seniors' Living Options, presented at a HARTA program on February 19th, Chartwell is offering this presentation free of charge. Please read the poster along side this explanation for more info.



**Heartland
Alberta
Retired
Teachers'
Association**

JOIN US APRIL 22- JUNE 3 1:00-2:30



FitMinds at St. Davids

FitMinds is an seven-week **COMPLIMENTARY** course designed to stimulate your mind in fun and meaningful ways. Each 90-minute session includes:

- 30 minutes of engaging lecture-style learning
- 60 minutes of interactive activities like puzzles, memory recall, storytelling, problem solving, and computation

Join us at St. David's United Church 4614-48 St Leduc

Please join us every Wednesday from
1:00-2:30
RSVP to Cheryl at 780-722-4153 or
cmccarron@chartwell.com





Heartland
Alberta
Retired
Teachers'
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A Branch of ARTA



ALBERTA RETIRED
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

**Register for
Heart and Sole
Wellness Walks in
your region:
Drayton Valley &
Leduc**

**Please sign up
before
May 1st.**



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

**More information will be available
through ARTA and HARTA's monthly
newsletter. See the following page to
register in one of HARTA's walks.**

ARTA Heart & Sole Registration for HARTA

Please circle your choice.

Community where I will walk: **Leduc:** 10:30 to 11:30 AM (Monday, June 1st

Drayton Valley 10: 30 to 11:30 AM (Wed., June 3rd)

Where I will walk: **Leduc:** the walking trail from the Telford House Parking Lot
To the Boat Launch on Telford Lake.

Drayton Valley: the circular track near the River Rock
Restaurant. In inclement weather in the Omniplex.

Registrants are asked to please bring a donation for your foodbank to the starting destination of the walk. Participants have the option between a blue, orange, or red hat or a crossbody bag. Foodbank contacts are:

Leduc, Ron Thompson;

Drayton Valley Sandy Hamilton.

The contacts will make sure your donation goes to the foodbank in your area.

Please register by sending this registration form to Ron Thompson at rnthompson@shaw.ca.

Name _____ Email _____

Phone number. _____

In order to receive ARTA swag on the day of the walk, (June 1st or 3rd) please register before or on **May 1st**. You may register at a later date but you are not guaranteed getting ARTA swag.

You may also register on line by going to the link [ARTA 2026 Wellness Walks | ARTA](#)