



Northwestern Branch of the Alberta Retired Teachers' Association 2019 – 2020 Branch Report to the Annual General Meeting June 16, 2020

2019 – 2020 Executive



Back Row (L to R):

Maxine Maxwell
Sue Mills
Yvonne Mury
Linda Schofield
Russ Snoble

Treasurer
Communications
Director
Wellness
Director & ARTA Rep

Front Row (L to R):

Gail Schau
Joan Godbout
Karen Patten

Director
President
Secretary

Missing from this photo:

Lorna McIlroy

NWARTA Past President &
ARTA President

NWARTA Executive Are Busy

- The team began **monthly meetings** in September planning for the year's social and wellness activities/events.
- Together the exec members form **a great team** and each pitch in to facilitate Branch events. With the use of Google Drive, exec members are also able to cover for one another.
- A few spring exec meetings were held via Zoom looking towards **AGM** and a **Spring Walk** and tail-gate lunch at Kleskun Hill Park.

The Executive have taken on several behind-the-scenes projects/activities including:

- **phoning members** about upcoming events.
- applying for event **grants from ARTA** in order to maintain reasonable prices for members.
- applying for an Alberta Gaming License for events and submitting the required report afterwards.
- working steadfastly to submit information and review the format of the **NWARTA website**.
- continuing to create community awareness of NWARTA events/activities
- **promoting community inclusivity** and working with like-minded groups (Alberta Council on Aging, Studio 50, Seniors Outreach, Chamber of Commerce)
- submitting names of deceased members to ARTA. The **In Memoriam** initiative recognizes these members in *News&Views* and \$50 is donated to the Foundation in their honor.
- attending Trumpeter and Northern Spirit ATA Local's Retirement-Induction to give retirees a small congratulatory gift.

Membership

- As of June 5, 2020, NWARTA had **130 members**. There are: 93 Regular; 10 Associate; 22 Lifetime members.
- Sixty-two members have prepaid for their 2020 membership.
- The membership fee remains at \$10. To keep membership low, NWARTA operates at cost recover for each event.



Events and Activities

- Area retired teachers are **grateful to Barry Edgar** and his team for organizing the Back-to-School Breakfast, September 3. **Another great success!**
- Some members walked after the Breakfast and later in the month members went on Fall Ramble at Saskatoon Mountain – such beautiful fall colours.
- Yvonne and Maxine laid a wreath on behalf of NWARTA at the Legion's Remembrance Day Ceremonies.
- NWARTA members and guests enjoyed a **St Nicholas Luncheon** (December 6) with entertainment provided both the **GPPSD School Orchestra** and **Seniors' Reading Theatre Grande Prairie** (we're proud to say several performers are also NWARTA members).
- **A note of thanks to member Angus Sutherland** who once again helped by selling tickets for a 50-50 draw at the St Nicholas Luncheon. The proceeds went to St Lawrence Centre and thanks also to **Myrna Lemay** who donated her winning portion.
- Wellness Director Linda organized and hosted the **Summer Wellness Day** (July 11) which included the Biometric Testing Clinic, a morning bird-sighting walk in Muskoseepi Park led by Russ, a picnic lunch, and afternoon lawn games.
- In February, Linda also organized NWARTA's **2nd Winter Wellness Day** with a theme appropriate for the month – *Maintaining a Heart-Healthy Lifestyle*. The Biometric Testing Clinic ran concurrently with sessions: Heart-Healthy Exercising, Heart-Healthy Eating, AED (Automated External Defibrillator) presentation, and an introduction to Tai Chi.
- **Another note of thanks** – both these Wellness Days were *free* to attend thanks to ARTA's support. ARTA arranged for the Biometric Clinic and provided Wellness Grants.
- Unfortunately, circumstances required NWARTA to forego plans for its spring **6th New Frontiers Conference**. There is hope that the organizing and planning were all for naught as the 6th Conference is postponed to **Monday, May 10, 2021**.



More Initiatives

- **Thanks to Gail** for making gift stockings for the music students who came to entertain at the St Nicholas Luncheon and **thanks to Yvonne** for making cookies as well as muffins for the Winter Wellness Day.
- Most exec members attend meetings and volunteer with other community groups, including: Seniors Outreach Interagency, Studio 50, Probus, Chamber of Commerce, Alberta Council on Aging ...
- Russ, as one of the Branch's ARTA Reps, continues to deliver presentations to prospective retirees at Convention and retiree seminars. He also maintains contact with the ATA District Rep and the ATA Locals in the northwest region in order to bring awareness of the benefits of ARTA and NWARTA memberships.
- Joan attended Mighty Peace Teachers' Convention Board planning meetings; members helped in setting up for Convention and hosted the ARTA/NWARTA booth. Lorna and Russ provided a presentation to prospective retirees.



**Accessing your Retiree Benefits
Plan is about to get easier**

Announcement coming September 2020



ARTA Events Throughout the Year

- At the end of May 2019, Russ, Linda and Joan represented NWARTA at the **ARTA Spring Retreat** in Canmore. Helen Neufeld represented the Retired Teachers' Foundation and Lorna came as the Association's vice president. The theme was *organizational excellence*; attendees were recognized for their years of service to ARTA. Then Vice President Lorna was honoured for 10 years of volunteer service to ARTA.
- There are four **ARTA Board of Directors meetings** each year; Joan represented the Branch at each of these (September, November, February, and the last one in May occurred via Zoom).
- ARTA's Annual General Meeting** was held at the beginning of October 2019. NWARTA was eligible to send two Branch delegates. Russ and Sue along with Joan as president represented the Branch. Also, **Lorna was elected as president of the Association.**
- At the September 2019 Board of Directors meeting the **Donor Recognition Wall** of ART Foundation was unveiled. Subsequently, at the November meeting, Joan presented a cheque on behalf of the Branch for \$200 to Gordon Cummings, Chair of the Foundation. Now with a donation totaling \$500, NWARTA is eligible to have its name on the Donor Recognition Wall
- The **May 2020 Retreat** was postponed to 2021 and the Board of Directors meeting that usually occurs after Retreat was held via Zoom.
- At the most recent Zoom meeting, Board members were directed to pass on a message to the membership to **watch for a big announcement in September.** There are exciting changes in the works.



