



Volume 1 Issue 2

Spring News

May 2022

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Seniors Week June 6 – 12

The week honouring seniors will begin with an **Information Fair** on **Monday, June 6** at **Bonnett's Energy Centre** from 10:00am to noon.

NWARTA will be there -- come by and say hello.

There will be opportunities to learn about community programs and services available to seniors. Many displayers have give-aways and/or door-prize draws.

At noon the Grande Prairie Rotary will have a **free barbecue for seniors**.

The Phillip J Currie Museum Hosts NWARTA Monday, June 13

The Phillip J Currie Museum will be hosting NWARTA on June 13 starting at 10:00am.

The morning's events will include

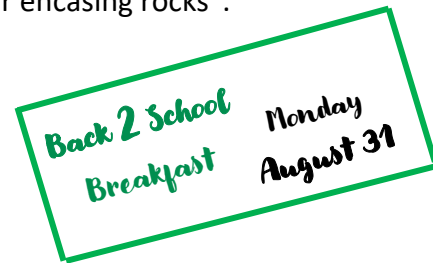
- morning coffee/tea at 9:45
 - NWARTA's 45-minute Annual General Meeting at 10:00 (Yes, Joan is hoping for 45 minutes but promising no more than 60 minutes.)
 - a presentation by Dr Emily Bamforth will follow – ***The Natural History of the Unicorn.***
- Dr Bamforth, a palaeontologist, has been the Museum's Curator since the beginning of the year.

Only 12 minutes from
Costco corner



- **lunch will be provided** – please confirm your **attendance** by email (because numbers are needed for the caterer) to nwarta.president@gmail.com

- after lunch will be a tour of the fossil lab "explaining the removal of dinosaur fossils from their encasing rocks".



Come and celebrate the first day of school with colleagues and friends -- Wednesday, August 31.

Mark your calendar and look for more details in your August email or check EVENTS on the NWARTA website <https://artabranches.net/nwarta/>

NWARTA's 7th New Frontiers Conference

From this day forward this may be known as "*The Conference That Wasn't*" (apologies to the *Edmonton Fringe* for copying their caption).

Was it because ...

- ... members are hesitant to "venture out"?
- ... the registration cost is too high?
- ... of the program?
- ... of the date (or time of year)?
- ... there was too little communication or promotion?

Any combination of these reasons may account for *The Conference That Wasn't*, but the NWARTA executive is hopeful for next year.

Please email your suggestions for the **7th New Frontiers Revisited** in 2023.

nwarta.president@gmail.com

Learn, Grow ... Connect



Jeanette Borstad, NWARA's secretary, and her husband have taken the opportunity to relocate closer to family. We will miss the energy she brought the group, her insightful contributions, and the hours spent lending a helping hand.



Jeannette is the second secretary NWARA has "lost" to moves; previously Linda Patten relocated to be closer to family. We remain hopeful a member will be available to work and serve fellow retirees in our area.

Serving Fellow Retirees

As educators, we've spent our career lives in service of others. We've assisted our students, worked with parents, and networked with colleagues. And **the attitude of service remains strong among retirees.**

Because some executives' life circumstances have changed, **the Branch desperately needs helping hands.** If you are interested, please contact Maxine or Joan by email

nwarta.president@gmail.com or
nwarta.treasurer@gmail.com

Executive Meetings

While Zoom has been great during Pandemic times, the NWARA Executive was certainly happy

to be together once again. **After all, we are social creatures who enjoy being and working together.**

From March 2020 through to March 2022 NWARA Executive met strictly via Zoom. In April the group finally had a face-to-face meeting and celebrated by having lunch together.

No doubt hybrid meetings may well be part of NWARA's future, and that was the case in April when the group met at Centre 2000 and connected with Cliff via Zoom.



A special thank you to executive members who took up the slack when two members were away for extended periods this winter.

St Nicholas Luncheon, A Success

By Yvonne Mury

December 6, 2021, found **45 happy people** heading into the Pomeroy Hotel for NWARA's annual St. Nicholas Luncheon. For many, this was the first "in person" event for over a year and was well worth the wait, the vaccinations, and the masks!

The event began with a warm welcome by our President, Joan Godbout and included an explanation of who **St. Nicholas** was and that he is still **remembered for his generosity and caring ways.** A great attitude to take into the Christmas season.

The turkey meal with all the trimmings was delicious and elicited many positive responses and the empty plates indicated we were all well fed! While enjoying dessert and coffee we were

entertained by the **Charles Spencer High School String Orchestra**, conducted by Mrs. Krista McLauchlan. They played a great selection of Christmas music with a bonus piece, "Scottish Mist" -- dessert for the ears. Thank you once again to the orchestra for making our time together that much more pleasant.

More entertainment was provided by the **Grande Prairie Senior Readers** led by Cliff Mitchell. They relayed interesting stories of early Grande Prairie and the people who lived here 'way back when'. We appreciated learning about the exploits of these early citizens.

NWARTA's executive was introduced, and attendees were encouraged to consider joining and helping to make retirement a great space to be in. Later, Lorna McIlroy, ARTA's president, gave a much-appreciated greeting from our parent organization.

We want to **thank door-prize contributors** including: the Grande Prairie Live Theatre, the Pomeroy, ARTA. Also, the now-late Jennifer Wrzosek enthusiastically spoke about the creation and publication of her children's books; she donated a set as a prize.

Each guest, and our young orchestra members, received a **miniature Christmas stocking filled with goodies** to enjoy. Thank you again to Gail Schau for sewing these very much appreciated Christmas stockings.

All the participants went away full of good food, good fun and **good wishes for a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year.**

I thought growing older
would take longer.

St Nicholas Door prize recipients included:

Betty Grunau - New Frontiers Conference
Registration for May 2022 (which will be deferred to 2023)

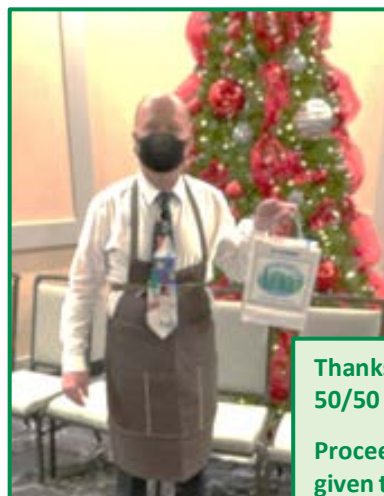
Russ Snoble - set of Jennifer Wrzosek's books

Sue Mills - \$25.00 Pomeroy Breakfast gift card

Mary Ellen Hopkins - ARTA Journal

Cliff Mitchell Sherida Rossol Carol Davidson Jeannette Borstad	}	Sets of 2 tickets to a GPLT performance of their choice
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Cathy Given Linda Schofield	}	Tim's gift cards
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Thanks, Russ for helping with the 50/50 sales.

Proceeds were part to the gift given to the CS music program and the GP Senior Readers.

Staying positive and
being thankful.



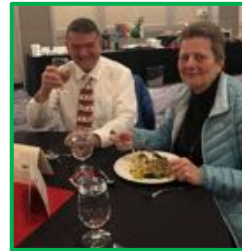
5 Slowly take five deep breaths.

4 List four things you can see or notice around you.

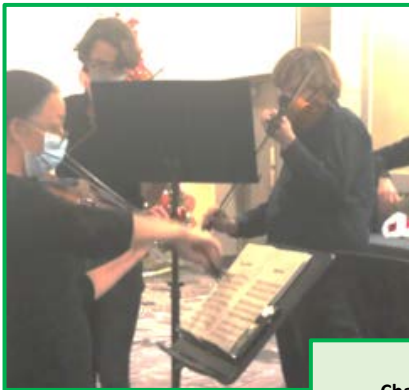
3 List three things you are grateful for.

2 Say two positive self-talk statements to yourself.

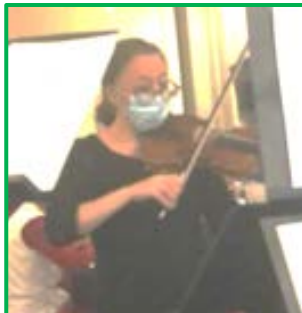
1 Name one thing you are looking forward to today.



The biggest killer in
this world is
STRESS.
And the best stress reliever is
and *always* will be
MUSIC.



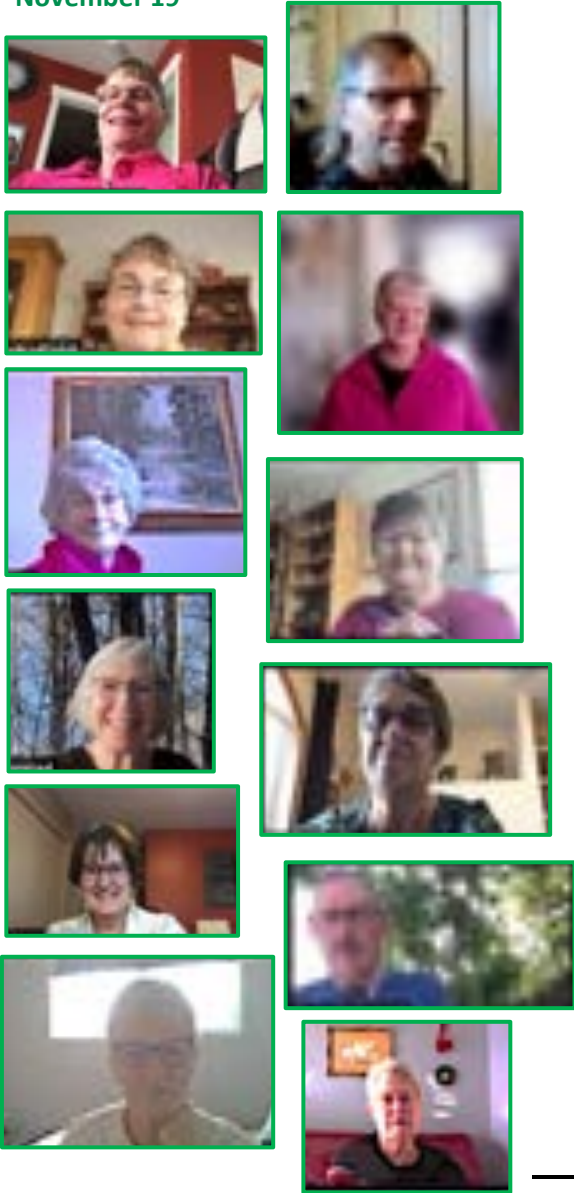
Thanks to the
Charles Spencer High School
String Orchestra,
conducted by Mrs. Krista McLaughlan



So thankful for this celebration and the
Grande Prairie Senior Readers' performance.
The group is appreciated by several
community groups including NWARTA.

NWARTA's First Coffee Chat

November 19



Gary Sawatsky, ARTA's Chief Operating Officer, joined NWARTA in its first coffee chat.

Gary explained ARTA's voluntary Retiree Benefits Plan, the changes, and the premiums reduction as of November 1. The chat ended with participants' questions and answers.

Meeting Agenda November 18, 2021

1. EHC and Dental Care Plan design updates effective November 1, 2021
2. COVID-19 effects on emergency travel - update
3. New ARTA benefit plans
4. Competitor retiree plan information
5. Questions and open discussion



HumanaCare Coffee Chats in March

HumanaCare is a service provided through **ARTA's Extended Health Plan**. ARTA's website describes **HumanaCare** as:

... an integrated mental and physical wellness service provider ... delivering Employee Assistance Programs, Disability Support Services, and Medical Second Opinion ... Health Services (such as healthcare navigation, Chronic Disease support and specialized case management services.)

<https://www.arta.net/organizational-excellence/partners/humanacare/>

HumanaCare representative, **Lisa Butcher**, a Registered Clinical Counsellor, joined NWARTA members from her home in Vancouver for two Coffee Chat presentations.

Lisa's first presentation (March 18) was **Adapting to the Changes the Pandemic has Brought**



There was interesting information and several suggestions for adapting to the changes brought during the last two years.

Here are few statements from this presentation

- Our **society is divided** because of opposing views/opinions causing not only societal discord but also broken friendships and relationships.
- Lisa suggests we need to **"embrace these changes"**. Approaching change with the attitude of "I hate this", "I'm never going to adapt" makes it even more difficult to adjust.
- She continues, recommending we **make small changes at our own pace** ... socializing with friends and family while setting our own boundaries.
- We were encouraged to assess our own mental health by taking the *Hamilton Anxiety Index* www.psychology-tools.com
- **Stress and anxiety** cause many to experience a significant decrease in motivation, low concentration, perhaps obsessive behaviors and even fatigue. **Compassion fatigue** (not having

enough energy to care about other people) is also evident.

- Establishing a **SELF-CARE BUCKET LIST** was suggested ... including things/activities that feel like self-care ... quiet time with a morning coffee, going fishing, calming bath with a glass of wine, listening to relaxing, enjoyable music. Then everyday scheduling time for an activity from that Bucket List.

March 25 Lisa again joined for a coffee chat --

Sleep, Precious Sleep



Attending these Coffee Chats may not have fit into your schedule. You may wish to **view recordings of Lisa's presentations. They are available in the NEWS Section of the NWARA website.**

<https://artabranches.net/nwarta/news/>

Note that you will need to **use the passcodes that are provided.**

You May Want to Read ...



Coincidentally, Lorna McIlroy and Joan Godbout have been reading the same book, *Welcome Back! How to Reboot Your Physical and Mental Well-Being for Post-Pandemic World* by Dr Elaine Chin.

Dr. Chin writes the worst of the pandemic may be over (we are all hopeful). She not only writes of the obvious/visible mental and physical changes we've experienced in the last two years, but also the less obvious/invisible changes. The residual continues to affect us. Written from a medical doctor's perspective, she **suggests strategies to reclaim our life energy and health.**

This book is not yet at the GP Library, but it is available through Amazon, Kindle, and iBooks (possibly other sources too).

Educational Scholarships for Direct Relatives of ARTA Member s

For your information, the following images have been clipped from ARTA's website. You will find the details and application forms under **ARTA Member Advantages.**

<https://www.arta.net/member-services/arta-member-advantages/scholarships/>

Note that applications must be received by **July 31.**

Each scholarship has up to two recipients for –

\$5,000 \$3,000 \$2,000

ARTA
CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA
SCHOLARSHIP

- Provides scholarships for students who are in a certificate/diploma program of two or more years at an accredited post secondary institution
- Must be directly related to an active ARTA member
- Has completed one or more years of the program

ARTA W INSURANCE
BROKERS
DEGREE
SCHOLARSHIP

- Provides scholarships for students who are in their first undergraduate program at an accredited post secondary institution
- Must be directly related to an active ARTA member
- Has completed one or more years of the undergraduate degree program.

A Sense of Community

You may want to read Erika's article about puzzles for wellness found on the ARTA site --

<https://www.arta.net/news-events/wellness-tips/making-puzzles-for-wellness/>



Have you checked the
NWARTA website
lately?

We have two sections that may be of special interest to members. The first is **OUR BUSY MEMBEERS**

<https://artabranches.net/nwarta/our-members/our-busy-members/>

Three articles on fellow members have been added. **Take a look -- we would also love to have your input.**

Would you like us to tell your retirement story?
Or perhaps you would love to share one of
your retirement experiences?
Maybe you'd like to see one of your NWARTA
buddies featured?

Email suggestions to nwarta.president@gmail.com

The 2nd section, **REMEMBERING COLLEAGUES** was added thanks to the efforts of Maxine Maxwell and Gail Schau. As we learn of the passing of one of our colleagues, sadly we have been adding them to this page.

<https://artabranches.net/nwarta/remembering-colleagues/>

If you see we've missed honouring the memory of a northwestern area colleague, please email Maxine nwarta.treasurer@gmail.com

The 2021-2022 Executive included:

Jeannette Borstad	Secretary
Joan Godbout	President
Maxine Maxwell	Treasurer
Lorna McIlroy	Past President
Cliff Mitchell	Director
Yvonne Mury	Director
Gail Schau	Director

NWARTA Bylaws allow for up to 10 members on the executive ... **your help is needed in serving retired teachers and community retirees in Alberta's northwest.**

And finally, a message from NWARTA's Treasurer, Maxine Maxwell

NWARTA's fiscal year coincides with the school year. Membership fees are due July 1. Fees remain **\$10/year**. Many members choose to pay for multiple years, up to 5 years in advance. Email treasurer Maxine for information about your membership. nwarta.treasurer@gmail.com



The last two years have brought changes ... some positive, others not so much.

Yet the NWARTA Executive maintain hope for a bright future.

Wishing all of us health, faith, and compassion for one another.