**OKARTA PRESIDENT’S REPORT to the ARTA AGM**

 **OCTOBER 2, 3, 2018**

**President: Fred Resler**

**Secretary: Marilyn Resler**

**Treasurer: Lynne Glata**

The Alberta retired teachers of the Okanagan have enjoyed another year in the valley. We are pleased with the interest in the activities we have had. There are over 30 paid members in our group and over 100 names on our active email list. The people who make up our branch cover a large area extending from Vernon in the north through to Winfield, Kelowna, Peachland, Summerland, Penticton and Oliver ending at Osoyoos by the US border. We get together 4 or 5 times a year in and around Kelowna because of its central location.

The outings and events we had this year were well received. Our branch instituted a **“Here’s to Our Health”** initiative last year and **with the help of grant money from ARTA** were able to organize a variety of activities around the theme. The spring grant allowed us to complete Part II of the **Central Okanagan Assn for Cardiac Health** (COACH) session with an Exercise Therapist & Social Worker. A second grant in September allowed 16 members to receive their CPR/AED (Automated External Defibrillator) certification and was considered a very valuable and appreciated exercise. We had outdoor activities starting off with a walk along the Mission Creek Greenway (ending at Creekside Pub) and a major bike trip along the Myra Canyon Trestles with some brave peddlers going all the way to Penticton (75kms!). In May we had a clinic on riding and operating an electric bike and in June a clinic on Learning to Play Pickle Ball. The summer was welcomed with a Strawberry Fest at the Resler home and the fall was kicked off with a Chili Bowl/Bocce Tournament at the home of the McColl’s.

When a member supports a cause related to education, we pass on their interests to the group. This year we supported Raise a Reader and an organization called Project Literacy. We also encourage our group to take part in two great showcases of local talent: The Meadowlark Festival (80 environmental tours & events) and the Lake Country Artwalk (displays of 100's of pieces of art and live performances). We have a great relationship with the local retired BC teachers (CORTA) and often exchange invitations to our respective activities.

At our OKARTA Annual General Meeting held every June, we go over the business of our branch but also spend time hearing reports from our reps to ARTA. This provides a place to discuss new and pertinent business from ARTA’s board and AGM meetings. It keeps our members aware of the latest information and contributes to a sense of belonging to the greater organization in Alberta.

We are committed to our connection to ARTA and have acted as a resource to our members. In addition to attending ARTA meetings, and ARTA representative meetings, members of OKARTA have been elected to the ARTA Communications, Governance, Strategic Planning and Wellness Committees. Our members are active participants in the ARTA family.

We have been very fortunate to be to access Grant money from ARTA to support our activities. Without it we would not have been able to provide the enriching experiences for our members.

As our group grows we will continue to keep OKARTA abreast of the news from ARTA. And as ARTA grows we will continue to be proud of the organization it has become!