**President’s Report to the OKARTA AGM June 27, 2019**

Welcome all and thank you for coming, your support is appreciated!

ARTA is made up of 17 Alberta branches, and OKARTA - the only branch outside the province, making a total of 18. What does the president do? I attend ARTA board meetings in Edmonton, in September, November and February, attend the annual Retreat in May and the AGM in October. When I can’t make it my stand-ins are Marilyn, Bob Heyworth or Bev Mallett.

Our last ARTA board meeting was after the ARTA annual Retreat in Canmore May 24-26. The Retreat held at the Malcolm Resort, included comfortable accommodations, great meals & snacks. A variety of speakers entertained us on a variety of topics including “How I Acquired Wealth”, the Canadian economy, taking care of the caregiver, managing stress and the latest research on how the brain really functions – its no longer just left/right brain thinking. The fun ended, delegates checked out and the May board meeting began.

Here are some highlights from that meeting.

The ARTA Executive presided:

President Marilyn Bossert, Vermillion

Vice President: Lorna McIlroy – Grande Prairie

Treasurer: Dolaine Koch, Edmonton

CEO and Executive Director: Daniel Mulloy

Present were 18 Branch Presidents and the Chairs of 8 Committees. OKARTA presently has two members on committees: Bev Mallett, Chair of the Wellness Committee and Carl McColl member of Strategic Planning. Past members included Bob Heyworth on Communications and Carol Frances on Governance. We also have had two other representatives from OKARTA – Sherry Skaalid and Ernie Drvaric.

The board meeting agenda included many reports including those from the Executive listed above and the committee chairs for Benefit Plan Trust Fund, Communications, Governance, Health Benefits, Pension & Financial Wellness, Strategic Planning, and Wellness. Here is a summary of the most pertinent information.

**Benefit Trust Fund** (Chair Dorothy Ungstad) manages the income from the Benefit plan used to cover our health care claims.

ARTA is made up of 3 sectors: **Educational** (15 000 Retired AB Teachers) contributing $11.5M annually.

5000 **Public** (Gov’t) & **Private** (non-Gov’t agencies) $4.0M annually

These funds are all carefully managed and the invested returns are over 8%.

ARTA’s Revenue (membership fees & benefit premiums) amounted to $2.9M.

Expenses (salaries, operations, board and committee meetings) were $2.3M allowing ARTA to function as a not-for-profit organization.

**Health Benefits Committee** (Chair Doug Gill) has announced increases in the plan coverage effective Nov 2019.

They are:

* flash blood glucose monitors included in all diabetes supplies up to $1750/yr
* increased accidental dental coverage from $1000 to $3500/yr
* increased private duty nursing from $1000 to $3000/yr
* hearing aid accessories - microphones, TV accessories, remotes
* flapless periodontal surgery codes have been added
* low dose Cialis as a treatment for enlarged prostate
* $200/yr for knee walkers and crutches
* coverage for CPAP machine cleaners & sanitizers under the current maximum

ARTA is investigating the development of its own drug plan to be called ARTA Rx. More to follow.

**Governance** (Chair Leo Bruseker) reviews, amends, & recommends changes to the Bylaws, Policies and Procedures of ARTA. It also reviews Scholarship applications and awards a total of $20 000 to successful Degree applicants and $10 000 to Certificate Diploma applicants.

**Pension & Financial Wellness** (Chair Carol Lowen) communicates to the Alberta gov’t and to ATRF (Alberta Teachers Retirement Fund) the most pressing pension matters, that being the continuation of our defined benefit plan. The federal gov’t is trying to change the way this is done.

**Communications** (Laurie Semler) has established an initiative to assist each branch with the development of its own website. They market ARTA at teacher’s conventions in Alberta, oversee *News&Views* magazine and adjudicate writing & photography contests.

**Other reports:**

**ACER-CART** (Canadian Assn for Retired Teachers) (Chair Gordon Cumming) lobbies to protect the pensions for all retired teachers and is lobbying for national pharmacare. Canada is the only country with universal health care but no universal drug coverage. One in four households in Canada can’t afford to fill their prescriptions so this is important to all. Go to [www.acer-cart.org](http://www.acer-cart.org) to support seniors and join by paying a $25 membership fee.

**OKARTA Charitable Foundation** (Gordon Cumming) supports senior housing and health services and have made donations to CNIB, Parkinson’s Alberta and Alzheimers Calgary. They have $91 000 and are always seeking sponsors and other donors.

**Items of General Interest**

The **Annual ARTA Golf Tournament** on June 6 at the Ranch Golf Course in Edmonton is fully booked. The 2020 event will again be in Edmonton.

*News&Views* is always an interesting read including articles on mental health & fitness, raising grandkids, fly fishing, music, travel, with writing and photo contests.

OKARTA continues to be an active participant in ARTA. Thank you all for your support and interest in the great communication and connection we have with our organization.