



ST. ALBERT AND AREA RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

December 17, 2019

Editor: Peggy Bergmann (pbergmann@shaw.ca)

January 10, 2020: Breakfast Meeting

At Sturgeon Valley Golf and Country Club

8:30 am: Doors Open

9:00 am: Breakfast

Cost: \$22 for STARTA members
\$27 for non-members

Membership - \$10 (available at the door)

Please bring correct change if possible



Picture by Emil Guzik

10:00 am **Don't make me laugh!**
with comedian, Ken Valgardson

Seriously, ex teacher and well travelled comedian, Ken Valgardson will have you asking him to stop because your sides will be hurting from the laughing.

Ken has done comedy from the west coast to Moose Jaw.....He entertained troops in the Middle East. He knows teaching. He taught grades 1 through 12 for 35 years. He is retired and lives a not so quiet life in Alberta. He comes highly recommended. Quote : " I don't like comedians and he made me laugh"

SAVE THESE DATES for Upcoming Breakfasts

February 7, 2020: What we don't know about cancer and what we want to learn.

March 6, 2020 and **April 3, 2020 - Silent Auction**

We are delighted with the positive feedback and evaluations from our first ONE-DAY *Lively Living' Conference* held NOV. 21, 2019 at Star of the North Retreat House. Thank you to all who attended, and a special thanks to the organizing committee members: Ardyth Garrison, Debbie Kelley, Janet Kiriakides, Mary-Pat O'Neill, Marian Oberg, and Peggy Bergmann!

Conference Follow-up Information : At the Lively Living Conference, Neil D'Souza and Dr. Mark Kimmins MD, president of Natural Health Services, gave an informative presentation on Medical Cannabis. Neil, who is the Senior Manager of Operations at the Shoppers Cannabis Care Centre, has offered the following contact information, for anyone interested, for Medical Cannabis by Shoppers:

Email: cannabis@shoppersdrugmart.ca

Website: www.shoppersdrugmart.ca/cannabis

Phone: 1-844-633-2627

Fax: 1-866-220-2627

Visit a Natural Health Service Clinic (NHS) to get a prescription for Medical Cannabis by calling the Mira Health Centre (1-844-262-0942) in Edmonton to set up an appointment. Their address is: #14, 11910-111 Avenue, Edmonton, AB, T5G 0E5.

Submitted by Debbie Kelley

Getting to Know ARTA—Part 3 The Wellness Committee

The aim of Wellness Committee is to encourage, promote and support all dimensions of wellness: social, physical emotional, economic, intellectual and spiritual for ARTA members. This requires the committee to keep informed about a variety of wellness issues, and to provide articles about them for *New & Views* and the website. In addition, this committee provide Wellness grants (for events like our Lively Living Conference) and supports Wellness Clinics. ARTACares is an initiative of this committee as is the yearly Wellness Challenge.

Getting to Know ARTA—Part 4 ACER-CART

ACER-CART is the association of member groups of retired teachers from across Canada, representing every province and the Yukon, totalling 147,321 retired teachers. This group acts as an advocacy group for retired teachers and other seniors who do not have a voice. Recently, ACER-CART provided information on Seniors' issues which had been identified as important in the federal election. Our former ARTA president, Marilyn Bossert, is now the Western Canadian Representative to ACER-Cart, and Lawrence Hrycan is the ARTA representative.

Submitted by Marian Oberg

PENSION NEWS:

The next two years promise to be difficult ones for public education in Alberta. The Choice in Education Survey, which closed on December 6, 2019, favours an American style voucher system which threatens to under-fund and not support our public education system. One cannot stress enough the value of sending letters to the Minister of Education about our valid concerns. Also of concern are the decisions being made about our pensions.

Continue to voice your opinions at <https://www.handsoffmypension.ca/>.

Finally, the Seniors' Health Advocate role has been eliminated from the government. Writing letters to the Minister of Health at the phasing out of the Seniors' Advocate role is important. ARTA has been working tirelessly in voicing their dismay at the changes being made to our pensions, our public education, and our health advocacy. We must also do our part!

Submitted by Debbie Kelley

More About Our Pensions from Co-President Marian Oberg:

In response to one of my emails regarding our pension move, I received this response. I pass it along, as an information item only.

Thank you for writing the office of MLA Sarah Hoffman (Official Opposition Education Critic)

The UCP government and Jason Kenney have unfortunately used their majority to invoke closure and pass Bill 22. They limited legislature debate on this omnibus bill to three short hours, despite the significant and sweeping changes it will make. This omnibus legislation will fire the Elections Commissioner and move public servant pensions into AIMco and under government control.

We fought hard and told them what you thought. We told them that you did not want your pension taken into AIMco. We told them that this was an attack on democracy and a conflict of interest to fire the Elections Commissioner while he investigated them. But they refused to listen to us. They refused to listen to you. And they stood and voted for Bill 22.

I am sorry that our caucus could not stop this. We are disappointed, too. But we will never stop fighting back against this government's attacks on public servants and our province's most vulnerable.

As we move through this UCP government's plans it will be increasingly important to work together to push back against this budget, as working people, seniors, students, and the vulnerable are all in need of support. Please continue to connect with our office and follow us on social media to remain aware of upcoming actions.



STARTA Choir : The STARTA choir has just finished their performances for the Christmas Season. Led by director/pianist Eryl Jones, the choir performed at seven seniors' facilities in St. Albert and area. Each presentation began with a prepared program, followed by a lively sing-a-long with residents. Watch for information about the spring choir program in upcoming News Bulletins.



Merry Christmas!

Thank you to all those who contributed to this News Bulletin!