



ST. ALBERT AND AREA RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

Sept. 17, 2020

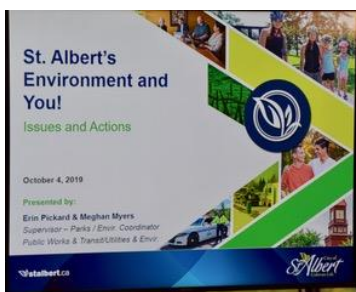
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Hello, and Happy fall!

Look at these beautiful Dahlias – the flowers of fall. Go check them out for yourself – the pictures are taken at our own St. Albert Botanical Park. Thanks to Joyce for the fantastic pictures.



Look what we were doing last fall (actually from our October breakfast!) We had a fabulous presentation by Erin Gluck and Meghan Myers on St. Albert's Environment and You!



Our centerpieces were spectacular, reflecting the splendour of the colours of fall! Thanks, Susan, for all the beautiful centerpieces in past years, and hopefully in years to come.

STARTA BUSINESS:

Greetings from your STARTA Executive:

Your STARTA executive hopes you are well and able to enjoy the last of our summer/fall weather. We have been doing some serious thinking about how STARTA can proceed during this challenging time. As you might recall, in April your executive asked for a vote via text or email regarding a motion made by two members to postpone the scheduled May 7, 2020 AGM until the fall. The vote was highly in favor, and the motion passed. So now we are at fall, and our 'Covid' situation has not improved. The executive met informally over Zoom on September 8 and after a good deal of discussion, decided to proceed with both executive meetings and possibly an AGM by Zoom. To this end, we purchased a \$200 Zoom license which allows us unlimited time for one year for up to 100 people. At a more formal Executive meeting on September 15, we passed a motion to hold a virtual AGM rather than an in-person meeting. We felt that it was necessary to close off last year's business and elect a new executive. There were several reasons for selecting the virtual meeting:

1. The probability of an increased number of Covid-19 cases this fall is great. None of us can see the future. There is a good chance that even if we set a date, we might have to cancel.
2. Our age group is the most vulnerable. We would hate to be responsible for any spread of Covid-19.
3. There are liability concerns regarding possible Covid-19 spread due to a meeting we have initiated. ARTA is exploring the legal side of holding in-person meetings, but it is likely that the insurance ARTA holds on our behalf would not cover a possible lawsuit due to a Covid-19 issue.

Everyone will receive a package, by email (or regular mail if email is not available) by the end of September. That package will include reports and instructions for the STARTA Annual General Meeting which is scheduled for October 23, 2020 at 10 am. You will be contacted by your STARTA "phoner", to determine if you wish to be part of this meeting.

There is an ongoing discussion as to whether or not virtual meetings are a "legal" way to do business. Our constitution is not clear on this subject; nonetheless, the executive agreed that they are the safest way to proceed at this time.

We have no way of knowing who is a voting member of STARTA. Our constitution tells us the following:

Article II - Membership

A. Voting Membership

STARTA will accept into membership, with full voting power, any person in receipt of a pension from The Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund.

STARTA membership shall be principally persons resident in or previously employed within the geographic area encompassed by the City of St. Albert, the County of Barrhead, the County of Sturgeon and the Municipal District of Westlock.

B. Associate Membership

The following persons may be accepted as Associate Members **without the right to vote** or hold the office of President, Vice President, or Branch Benefits Representative ARTA Representative:

1. The spouse of a member.
2. Retired teachers from other educational institutions in Alberta.
3. Retired teachers in receipt of a pension from other provinces.
4. Honorary Members of the Alberta Teachers' Association.
5. Other persons as approved by the Executive. *

5.*We have accepted members of ARTA who are not from the Education Sector as associates.

Please let voting members have the first shot at joining us as there is a limit to the number of participants. If you'd like to be an observer, let your phoner know so you can be sent an invitation if space is available.

We are considering holding a practice Zoom session before the meeting if asked. Meanwhile, here is a video, passed along by VP Mary which I found to be excellent.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isp3qPeQ0E&pbjreload=101

Be patient with the ads; you can skip them if you wait a minute. Additionally, zoom.us has many videos on how to use their product. Stay safe!

EDITOR'S COMMENTS: "Welcome Back to STARTA" for the 2020/ 2021 Fall, Winter and Spring program! These are challenging times to operate in, as we really want to be mindful of our membership and the ever-present concerns around 'Covid'. Besides trying to make wise decisions around our missed AGM in spring, through Zoom meetings your executive has discussed what to do about membership and membership fees, and how to best serve our membership through some sort of program, at least for the fall and early winter.

You have already read, under STARTA BUSINESS, what is happening regarding the AGM.

Regarding membership: 'Covid' has created many challenges for us. It is hard to find something positive in this mess, so the executive has decided to do something nice for current STARTA members. We have voted to give our current members an extension of one extra year of membership, at no cost, for the 2020-2021 year.

We would still like to offer some sort of program for this year. We are considering something through Zoom, and would love some input from our membership.

Do you have any ideas on topics or speakers your executive could arrange for you? Have you found something on YouTube that you would be willing to recommend to others?

One more question for you...

What have you done, or are doing during this time of staying at home, social distancing? In the next News Bulletin, I would like to create an anonymous list of how members have kept busy, active and happy! It is your turn to send me a quick and short text or email.

ARTACares

Remember that ARTA has partnered with Humanacare to provide a number of services to ARTA members. Even if you aren't an ARTA member yet, there are a number of articles which you can access on health issues.

To find the site, go to arta.net. Enter Humanacare Portal in the Search bar. This should take you to a connection into the site itself with no need for a password. (You can also access through Organizational Excellence/Partners.) If you are a member, you can request personal contact by phone or email.

Phone [1-888-327-1500](tel:1-888-327-1500).

One last suggestion: If you have not already done so, read pages 42 and 43 in the latest Edition of 'news & views'. Congratulations to Leo Bruseker, our treasurer, for an excellent article on 'Visioning Freedom: Then and Now.

Another celebration of the season:

Wild Geese by Mary Oliver

You do not have to be good.
You do not have to walk on your knees
for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.

Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
are heading home again.

Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting --
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.



Finally, this was sent to me by a friend. Hopefully it will give you a chuckle!

Author and lecturer Leo Buscaglia once talked about a contest he was asked to judge. The purpose of the contest was to find the most caring child.

The winner was:

1. A four-year-old child, whose next door neighbor was an elderly gentleman, who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed onto his lap, and just **sat** there. When his mother asked him what he had said to the neighbor, the little boy just said, 'Nothing, I just helped him cry.'

2. Teacher Debbie Moon's first graders were discussing a picture of a family. One little boy in the picture had a different hair color than the other members. One of her students suggested that he was adopted. A little girl said, 'I know all about adoption, I was adopted..'

'What does it mean to be adopted?', asked another child.

'It means', said the girl, 'that you grew in your mommy's heart instead of her tummy!'

3. On my way home one day, I stopped to watch a Little League baseball game that was being played in a park near my home. As I **sat** down behind the bench on the first-base line, I asked one of the boys what the score was.

'We're behind 14 to nothing,' he answered with a smile.

'Really,' I said. 'I have to say you don't look very discouraged.'

'Discouraged?', the boy asked with a puzzled look on his face...

'Why should we be discouraged? We haven't been up to bat yet.'

4. Whenever I'm disappointed with my spot in life, I stop and think about little Jamie Scott.

Jamie was trying out for a part in the school play. His mother told me that he'd set his heart on being in it, though she feared he would not be chosen.

On the day the parts were awarded, I went with her to collect him after school. Jamie rushed up to her, eyes shining with pride and excitement. 'Guess what, Mom,' he shouted, and then said those words that will remain a lesson to me....'I've been chosen to clap and cheer.'
