



ST. ALBERT AND AREA RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

November 6, 2020

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Greetings from your STARTA Executive!

Your STARTA executive members continue to experiment with how STARTA can proceed during this challenging time. Unfortunately, our 'Covid' situation has not improved recently, so we continue to be cautious, careful, and caring! As you are probably aware, we are now holding all monthly Executive meetings using Zoom, and we even managed the AGM by Zoom. For those of you who were unable to attend, the following is a brief summary of the AGM from our past Co- Presidents, Debbie and Marian.

STARTA held its Annual General Meeting on October 23 by Zoom. There were 20 attendees, and the meeting met the quorum requirement of 10 voting members. Some of the highlights were:

- Leo Bruseker, Treasurer, reported cash assets of \$2,908.73 and investments in the form of GICs \$7,025.20 as of year-end (March 31, 2020)

Since year-end, the Executive has approved the following expenditures:

- Zoom License \$200+GST
- Legion Donation for Remembrance Day \$50.00
- Food Bank Donation for Christmas \$200.

As there is no income stream this year, the Executive will be cautious in expenditures.

- The Program Committee reported on their plans to offer limited virtual programming during the coming year.
- The position of Member-At-Large was described. This position allows a member to join the Executive with the purpose of learning more about the work of STARTA and ARTA. We are pleased to announce that Betty Mackey will be taking up this position.
- The following members were elected to positions with STARTA unanimously:
 - Co-Presidents: Mary O'Neill and Janet Kiriakides
 - Secretary: Emilie Keane
 - Treasurer: Leo Bruseker
 - Vice-Presidents: Vacant
- Other Executive members appointed by the Executive have agreed to remain:
 - Program Conveners: Laura Heatherington and Mike Dickinson
 - Communications: Peggy Bergmann
 - Membership and Contact Coordinator: Wendy Poirier
 - Webmaster: Emil Guzik
 - Post Co-Presidents: Debbie Kelley and Marian Oberg

Wine Draw: Andrew Raczynski generously offered two bottles of wine as virtual door prizes for the AGM. The winners were Brenda Kane and Debbie Kelley. Thanks to Andrew, and congratulations to Brenda and Debbie.



STARTA has purchased a Zoom license which allows us unlimited time for one year for up to 100 people. Our program co-ordinators, Laura Heatherington and Mike Dickenson, have been quite creative in preparing some exciting 'Zoom' opportunities for members over the next few months. The following is your invitation to the first of these:

"Coffee with STARTA" Zoom event on November 10 at 10:30 a.m.



Grab your coffee or other favorite beverage, and a snack and join us to visit with other STARTA members. No formal program has been planned for this meeting. It is just a chance for us to stay in touch and socialize. . Say "hello" to people you have not seen in months, because of Covid. Tell us about you have been doing during the pandemic and the ideas you have for Christmas this year. There is no need to pre-register. Click on the [https address](#) in the invitation below to gain entry.

We are open to suggestions as to how this might serve our members, and we will continue these events if there is interest shown. Feel free to contact me (mroberg@telusplanet.net) with your suggestions and feedback.

YOUR INVITATION:

mroberg@telusplanet.net is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: mroberg@telusplanet.net's Zoom Meeting

Time: Nov 10, 2020 10:30 AM Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/8377020878?pwd=MHVEamxuQmRpRnJJbmF4Uk1RZ1VmQT09>

Meeting ID: 837 702 0878

Passcode: 2Jt0Z3

to Join us by TELEPHONE

+1 587 328 1099 Canada

Meeting ID: 837 702 0878

Passcode: 470813

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/ac0uXQNRza>

Remembrance Day in the Time of Covid-19

Contributed by Laura Heatherington

Remembrance Day 2020 will look different this year. While the ceremony at the St. Albert Cenotaph is not open to the public, live streaming will be available online at <https://stalbert.ca/events/calendar/community/remembrance-day/>. As well, check out the Royal Canadian Legion site for ways to donate and wear a poppy, or make a donation for veterans' supports. You can become a member even if you are not a veteran. Information is provided at <https://legion.ca/remembrance/remembrance-day>. Also, moving stories of our veterans and the wars can be found at <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance>



This year marks the 75th anniversary of the end of the Battle of the Atlantic, 1939-1945. Anything Navy resonates for me as a past Naval Reserve member, and the mother of a currently serving RCN daughter. Usually there is a moving remembrance ceremony in early May at naval units across Canada where a ship's bell is rung for each ship lost during the several years of transporting troops and supplies, guarding the Merchant vessel convoys, and patrolling. Hopefully, next May will see the return of this gathering, along with the other important events where we reflect on the sacrifice of past generations and our hopes for the future.

As well, it has been 60 years since the Korean War started, 1950-1953. Long seen as a forgotten war, it is now considered an important chapter in military history. This is a memorial in Busan, South Korea commemorating Canadian efforts and losses.



Another good page on the veterans.ca site is

<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/get-involved/veterans-week>

The usual television programming on CBC starts at 10 am on the 11th, though the actual service at the Cenotaph in Ottawa will be quite different this year. Other historical programming will be televised during Veterans' Week; check the networks schedules. As well, from Veterans' Affairs, there is a new podcast series available called "Faces of Freedom", highlighting veterans' experiences and stories. The podcast can be found on streaming platforms, such as Apple Podcast, Google Play, and Spotify. Take some time to remember the hardships and sacrifices of the past and be thankful for our freedom and peace in present times.

St, Albert Food Bank Donation

At December Breakfast meetings in the past, we made a collection to be forwarded to a Christmas hamper/gift fund. Recently we have supported the St. Albert Food Bank. Last year, members generously donated \$420 at the STARTA Breakfast. With an addition of \$180 from the STARTA treasury, we were able to send \$600 to be used to supply food and gifts for St. Albert residents in need. As we cannot carry out the collection this year, we encourage everyone to consider making a donation directly to the Food Bank. It is easy to do online. Go to <https://stalbertfoodbankandcommunityvillage.com/support-us/funds/> A charitable donation receipt will come from "CanadaHelps".

If you prefer to mail a donation cheque, mail to:
St. Albert Food Bank and Community Village
#30, 50 Bellerose Drive
St. Albert, AB T8N 3L5

Teaching in these Covid times

ZOOM PRESENTATION on November 20, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Enjoy watching a video of several current Alberta educators recounting some of their recent experiences, followed by time for some discussion. If you would like to join this Zoom meeting, please

**"RSVP" to Wendy Poirier at rwpoirier19@gmail.com
or call Wendy at 780-460-1260.**

The Zoom invite will then be sent out to you by email. A recording will be made as well.

ARTA UPDATE from Daniel Mulloy, Chief Executive Officer

Health Benefit Changes: Each year the Health Benefits Committee reviews and suggests updates to the Retiree Benefits Plan. These updates are made based on new legislation and feedback from covered members. As always, ARTA aims to provide members with the best retiree benefits available. Visit our news blog to review the full list of changes that are taking place, effective November 1, 2020.

ARTA Self Administration: Effective January 1, 2021, ARTA will be self-administering its Retiree Benefits Plan. What does that mean, exactly? Essentially, we have the opportunity to administer our Retiree Benefits Plan directly, rather than through a third-party provider, as has been the case in the past. This means ARTA is growing. We have moved to a larger office where we're welcoming new staff to help us with the transition. This change is going to be a big one, so be sure to stay informed by looking for updates in news&views magazine, ARTAfacts and through direct messages like this one. You can read more about these changes on ARTA's news blog.

Emergency Travel: Global Affairs Canada has not yet changed their advisory for Canadians to avoid all non-essential travel outside of Canada. Naturally, there have been a lot of questions about how this affects things like the travel plans and insurance premiums of members. We have gathered some of the most common questions in an easy-to-navigate list of FAQs. Find them on ARTA's news blog.

The ARTA Representatives Program: About a year ago we sent out a survey to get a sense of how effective the current roles of the ARTA Representative Program are for our members. The review of this survey data had to be put on hold as we shifted our attention to ARTA's COVID-19 response, but we have not forgotten about it. Expect to see the results of this review process in the coming year.

ARTA's COVID-19 Response: As you might expect, COVID-19 has changed the way we've been doing business. We have temporarily closed our offices to members and all our staff have been equipped to work remotely. Even working from home, our dedicated staff continues to manage the day-to-day operations of ARTA, meeting and collaborating through remote means. Likewise, we have rescheduled all in-person meetings and have moved all committee, board, and executive member meetings online. Our lines of communication with our members remain open, so our Member Services team are still able to meet virtually or over the phone to help our members, just as before.

As you can see, there has been a lot happening at ARTA, and we are excited to see what 2021 brings. Hopefully, we will be treated to a vaccine before long so we can get soon back to business as usual.

Comments from our members:

In the last News Bulletin, members were asked, "What have you done, or what are you doing to fill your 'Covid' time and keep busy, active and happy! Here are the comments received, as well as a few seniors' quips.

- watching more DVD's than ever in my life
- trying to learn to knit a pair of socks
- *I've had my patience tested. I'm negative.*
- sorting out my sock drawer and throwing away old socks (*Did you know... if you lose a sock in the dryer, it comes back as a Tupperware lid that does not fit any of your containers.*)
- reading, reading, reading... old books, new books, even e-books
- finally, after about 30 years of saying "some day", I have put pen to paper and am busy compiling a Family History! It is taking shape very nicely and has been a great hobby to pursue these past few months. Although it is far from being finished, it is well under way and I do feel motivated.
- Downsizing! The other day, I actually threw out a deck of cards that was only missing the Ace of hearts. (*When I say, "The other day," I could be referring to any time between yesterday and 15 years ago.*)
- Reading and then recycling magazines that I have been saving for quite some time (maybe 15 years or so!)
- Organizing and sorting through printed pictures from the past
- *I finally got eight hours of sleep. It took me three days, but whatever!*
- Reconnecting with friends using the telephone

HOMEWORK for the next News Bulletin... *How will you and your family celebrate Christmas this year? Send your ideas, plans or special recipes to pbergmann@shaw.ca on or before Nov. 16, 2020*

Just a REMINDER: Mark your calendar

- Nov. 10 at 10:30 a.m. for the 'Coffee and Chat' with STARTA members *and*
- Nov. 20 at 10:00 a.m. for an interesting Zoom presentation on "Teaching in These Covid Times"

A huge 'Thank you' to all who contributed to this News Bulletin!