



ST. ALBERT AND AREA RETIRED TEACHERS ' ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

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Editors: Peggy Bergmann (pbergmann@shaw.ca)
Ardyth Garrison (garrisonardyth@gmail.com)

WELCOME BACK to S.T.A.R.T.A. CELEBRATION !

On April 21, 2022, STARTA hosted its first in-person, indoor gathering since March 2020, the outbreak of the COVID Pandemic. The event was advertised in the monthly STARTA News Bulletin, and the Contact Committee phoned the people on the membership list as of March 2020 to invite them to the event.

The buzz of joyous conversation could be heard from the main entrance. Even if you were unfamiliar with the venue (located in St Albert United Church) there was no difficulty making your way to the right place for STARTA's Welcome Back event the morning of April 21, 2022.

A bright, spacious room made it possible for attendees (approximately 35 to 40 people) to move about and visit with the degree of "social distancing" that felt comfortable for them. It was such a pleasure to greet and reconnect with friends we had not seen in over 2 years!

Table centerpieces, provided by Debbie Kelley, added to the festive atmosphere. Fresh fruits, juices and coffee were available. A fabulous school themed cake was created for us by Laurie Symbaluk, Office Administrator at the Church and (obviously) a food artist!

This event was supported by a grant from ARTA—our "parent" organization—made in recognition that branches, including S.T.A.R.T.A., have been unable to hold fundraising initiatives these past two years. Thank you to ARTA for covering the cost (\$330) the hall rental, cake and food.

Special thanks to **Emilie Keane, Debbie Kelley and Wendy Poirier** for booking the building and ordering food and beverages for this special event, Thank you to **Joyce Keltie** for documenting our event with photographs, included on separate pages. Thanks also **to Bob Poirier** and to the Executive in attendance for the set up and clean-up of the Friendship Hall after the event.

This is your opportunity to ***'HAVE YOUR SAY'***:

We are excited to begin meeting in person and to reconnect with friends and colleagues after a lengthy separation caused by the pandemic. As we look to the future, we also want to take this opportunity to begin the development of a thoughtful plan for the future of our STARTA organization. To that end, a short questionnaire was circulated to those gathered at the Welcome Back Celebration to give the executive feedback and guidance. Many members were unable to attend the event, but we would like to hear from you. the, **Here is your opportunity to voice your opinion and give your input.**

The following is the survey handed out at the Celebration. Please share your ideas with the STARTA Executive:

Question #1

We have, in the past, held our AGM in the spring of the year, often in conjunction with a BBQ meal at the Sturgeon Golf Course. The Executive voted to delay the AGM until September 2022 because of the uncertainty of the pandemic. The Executive remains hopeful that we can begin STARTA programming in the fall with the AGM.

a) The rising costs of food will undoubtedly result in increased costs for a catered meal (BBQ or other). Would you support attending the AGM if a meal was not served? Please comment/explain.

b) We have had some feedback about the suitability of the Sturgeon Golf Course as a venue for our gatherings (breakfasts, AGM). The distance out of town and the stairs to enter the building have been two issues brought forward to STARTA executive members. Would you please share your own personal thoughts on the suitability of the Golf Course as a venue for STARTA gatherings?

c) Could you recommend other venues STARTA should explore for our gatherings?

Question #2

In recent years, we have met once a month for a breakfast meeting at the Sturgeon Golf Course. The cost of each breakfast was approximately \$22. With the rising costs of food and services, we anticipate that there would be an increase in the cost of the breakfast.

a) Would you attend the monthly meetings if there was a full breakfast served at an increase in price? Yes / No

b) Would you attend the monthly meetings if there was an alternative to a full breakfast (eg. coffee/tea/juice, muffins and fruit)? Yes /No

c) We welcome your comments.

Question #3

As we begin the planning for our next AGM, we will need a slate of nominees for the STARTA Executive positions. The following executive positions will be open for the coming two years. Can you recommend possible nominees for the following positions that will be vacant going forward?

a. Vice President

b. Membership Coordinator

c. Program Convenors (2)

d. Webmaster

b) Would you let your name stand as a nominee for one of these positions? If so, which position?

Question #4

a) Should we continue with the ZOOM Coffee and Chat meetings? Yes / No

b) Would you attend the STARTA Picnic if held this summer? Yes / No

Comments?

Please feel free to add other comments that might provide some guidance for our executive as we move forward with STARTA.

***Please send your comments to Wendy Poirier: rwpoirier19@gmail.com
Your replies will be presented at the next Executive meeting.***

STARTA EVENTS: old and new...

- **PLEASE NOTE:** At this point we have not planned any more Coffee and Chat Zoom Meetings
- **The STARTA AGM usually held in May** will be postponed until **fall of 2022.**
- We **NEED members** to fill open **Executive positions**

“April showers bring May flowers!”

As the weather warms, many of us will be pulling out and cleaning our gardening tools in preparation of a spring and summer full of gardening.

FIRST Things FIRST: Begin with preparing the SOIL!

Choosing the correct soil will play a large part in your growing success of a vegetable garden, annual containers or flower beds,

Here are some guidelines to help explain the different types of soil and how to use them in your gardening projects.

Compost

- Adds nutrients & organic matter
- Holds moisture
- Use to topdress flowerbeds & vegetable gardens

Garden Mix

- Excellent for vegetables, garden beds, trees & shrubs

Nutriloam

- Soilless mix
- Good for use in containers
- Add to existing soil for planting

Potting Mix

- Use in containers
- Lightweight soil that holds moisture while allowing drainage

Topsoil

- Good for leveling
- Use under sod
- Mix with compost for planting trees & shrubs

Bulk Products – Most of these products (mulch, soils, rock, etc.) are available in bulk to be picked up or ordered for delivery from various vendors in St. Albert.

In Memoriam – Honouring members who have passed away

Roy Gouchey: A few more comments from friends and colleagues:

Roy was a very, very special person—bright, always calm and open, a true warmth and natural humility beneath which lay a strong and dramatic self. Great presence

Elegant, pleasantly self-effacing and oh so friendly

Roy recommended the book "Instant Spelling Dictionary" which I use frequently including today.

Reminder: If you would like to honour a member who has passed, please write a short article, and send it to pbergmann@shaw.ca. To get it published in the subsequent News Bulletin, be sure to submit the item(s) to Peggy Bergmann before the 14th of the month.

ARTA NEWS:

- Current CO-President Mary O’Neill will attend the ARTA Board of Directors meeting in Canmore on Monday, May 23, 2022. Both Co-presidents, Mary and Wendy Poirier, will attend the “Welcome Back” ARTA Retreat from in Canmore from May 24-26.

➤ **KEY WORD ARTA REMINDERS:**

- **ARTA Rx** (artabenefits.net)
- **ARTAFacts** is requesting stories from members
- **Golf Tournament: June 16, 2022**, at Ponoka Golf and Country Club. (NOTE: modifications for COVID concerns)
- **Mental Health Wellness and Walking Challenge** (April 1 - June 30, 2022)

REGISTER NOW: Second Wind Conference: Sept. 22, 2022

Connect with friends, make new ones as well as, gain new knowledge, learn new skills, pursue new interests, and experience a rewarding day.

View sessions offered and the registration form on our website:

www.secondwindconference.ca

If you register prior to **Sunday, July 31, 2022**, you pay only **\$95.00/person**. After July 31, you pay the full Conference Fee of **\$110.00** per person.

Believe Your Eyes... by Emil Guzik

I was travelling through Montana when at dusk I saw this huge bird eating an ungulate, hooved mammal. I thought this is not possible that I saw such a huge raptor. I know that juvenile bald-headed eagles do not obtain their full plumage until later, but this was too big for a bald-headed eagle. I thought that I was seeing things. Apparently, I did see a huge raptor. It was a golden eagle. They are much bigger than a bald-headed eagle. They have a wingspan up to 7ft(2.1m), 3in(7.6) long talons, and can dive up to a speed of 200mph(322km/h). Their horizontal flight is 80mph(129km/h). Their diet includes rabbits, squirrels, fish, birds, young wolves, fawns, mountain lambs, and some have learned how to kill a full-grown deer. Unfortunately they are an endangered species because of illegal shooting, illegal trapping, poison (they are at the top of the food chain), and destruction of habitat.

Just a Reminder:

Please consider a STARTA executive position for the coming 2-year term!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this News Bulletin!