



# ST. ALBERT AND AREA RETIRED TEACHERS ' ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

February 15, 2023

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February: "the border between winter and spring" is also known as American Heart Month, Black History Month, National Bird-Feeding Month, National Children's Dental Health Month, and the Turner Syndrome Awareness Month. It is a short month full of very popular days such as Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day, World Cancer Day, Family Day (AB,NB,ON,SK), Heritage Day (NS), Islander Day (PE) and often Chinese New Year. Each of the 28 days this month is labelled with a variety of 'special day' titles such as World Wetlands Day, International Crêpe Day, Love Your Pet Day, World Day of Social Justice, the Day the Music Died, and many more.

## ***STARTA Breakfast Friday, February 24, 2023***

**at Sturgeon Golf and Country Club**

**Doors Open 8:30 am & Breakfast starts at 9:00 am**

**Cost: Members \$25 Non-members \$28**

**Membership cost: \$10 (paid at registration desk)**

**Program:** Friendship Force Members Sharon Schnell, Brenda Kane and Wendy Poirier. **"A World of Friends is a World of Peace."**

Friendship Force of Edmonton and Area is part of an international organization whose goal is to promote global understanding by connecting the world, one friend at a time.

***Another opportunity*** to make a difference in our world: Donate to the Food Bank. With no breakfast meeting in December, we missed the opportunity for our members to donate to the Food Bank. As prices of food go up, the need for funding support at the Food Bank has increased considerably. To help support this valuable program, we will have a donation bin for cash or cheques on the registration desk at our Feb. breakfast meeting. We encourage you to consider making a donation at the February breakfast meeting.

Looking Back : **January 27, 2023 Breakfast meeting with** Guest speaker **Susan Carter** – Comedian Extraordinaire

A Review by Ardyth Garrison: Listening to the laughter in the room and watching the people wiping “laughter tears” from their eyes were two very strong indicators that Susan Carter was connecting with her audience.

Susan was introduced as ‘like us’ in being a retired teacher. She has been doing stand-up comedy since the ‘90’s and states on her website that her favourite audience is seniors. Her stated motto is “clean comedy – because you never know when her Mom will show up.” All of the above made Susan a good fit for our group. But she also appeals to other groups. Her website lists a session for teachers described as “an interactive session discussing the place of humour in the classroom”. I wish I had had the benefit of such a session early in my teaching career.

By the way, what is the answer to the ubiquitous question: “Does spelling count?”

## **ATRF TAX SLIPS:**

You can now view your tax slip through *MyPension*. If you would like to receive an email notification advising you when an electronic copy of your document is ready, select this option in the Join Our Email List (JOEL) menu of *MyPension*.

If you don't receive your paper tax slip by early March, please contact us at [retiredmember@atrf.com](mailto:retiredmember@atrf.com) and we will mail a duplicate to you. Please ensure that we have your up-to-date contact information including your address, to minimize any disruption to your service.

### **LEGAL Information for our members:**

Before the pandemic, an excellent presentation was made at a STARTA breakfast by Stacy Maurier, of Estate Connection. STARTA Executive has learned that she is no longer operating her business. If any of you doing business with her have left documents in her care, you may wish to contact Glen M. Hickerson Q.C. who has been appointed as custodian of her law practice, Estate Connection. Any questions relating to the practice of Stacy Maurier should be directed to Glen M. Hickerson, Q.C. :

Wilson Laycraft Suite      650 211 - 11th Avenue SW      Calgary, AB      T2R 0C6  
Phone: 403-290-1601      Fax: 403-290-0828

## **Tribute to David Flower:**



## **Dr. David John Flower: Sept. 1939 – Feb. 2023**

On Friday, February 3, 2023 beloved husband and father David John Flower passed away in St. Albert after a short illness. Left to mourn his passing and cherish their family memories are his daughters Jane (Jim Burden) and Sarah (Ryan Hierlmeier) as well as many lifelong friends, colleagues, and neighbours. David was predeceased by his wife Sue (nee Amatt), his parents, and his beloved cousins Ann Marik and Peter Flower.

David was born in Guisborough, England to Eva (nee Bashforth) and John (Jack) Flower in 1939. An only child, he was especially close to his two cousins Ann and Peter with whom he spent many happy years growing up in Yorkshire. Following in his mother's footsteps, he decided to become a teacher and attended Durham University for both his undergraduate and graduate work. While pursuing his Masters degree in Geography, he embarked on a research road trip across the Middle East with some college mates: adventures he loved to share with his daughters years later. Also, while at the University of Durham, he met a fiery red head during a game of badminton. They disliked one another instantly. Understandably, he had mixed emotions when they later ended up teaching at the same school. He often said that he would "know that red hair anywhere." They were married in 1966 on the day England won the World Cup. Shortly after they wed, they decided to set out on a grand adventure and moved to Schuler, Alberta in 1967 to teach school. Later moving to Medicine Hat, he taught Social Studies at McCoy High School and one year bravely shepherded a group of teenage students on a field trip to Greece. Following a passion for politics and communications, Daddy supported several of Ted Grimm's mayoral campaigns as campaign manager. In 1976, they moved north to St. Albert so he could bring all those skills to bear as Coordinator of Communications for the Alberta Teachers' Association where he remained for over 25 years.

Daddy was a lifelong learner who believed fundamentally that learning was something to be done every day: he owned at least three sets of encyclopedias and our basement housed shelves and shelves of National Geographic magazines. He believed that learning was equally valuable tied to your passions as to your vocation. To that end, he went back to school in his late 50s and completed his PhD in Geography, graduating in 1997 from the University of Alberta. He hated being called Dr. Flower so we loved to call him that. He'd earned it and we were proud of him.

Dad was kind and gentle, thoughtful, and calm. He collected stamps, was an avid gardener, and insisted on using 1,000 nails to build a simple deck. He loved to camp and was an absolute master at bacon and fried bread over an open flame. He had a beautiful tenor voice and sang in the Anglican church choir. A man of strong belief, his wise counsel to his daughters in times of struggle was always “just have faith.” He was compassionate and fair and believed in justice and equality for all. He came from very little and often remarked that had England not had publicly funded post-secondary access, his future might have been much different. His gratefulness for that wove through all his professional endeavours as he passionately advocated for both students and teachers alike. It was not uncommon for him to be stopped in the street or at an event by a student, colleague or teacher telling him what an impact he had had on their life.

Although there was an “event” at which his retirement was celebrated, Dad never really retired. Having been Editor of the ATA News for many years, he quickly began volunteering as editor of the STARTA (St. Albert Retired Teachers’ Association) newsletter. He always loved a good philosophical or academic debate and flew in the face of the mantra that said, “never discuss politics, money or religion.” He sensibly stayed away from discussions about money, but God forbid a door-to-door salesman ring the bell of our retired Dad. He’d never buy a thing, but he’d have them there for 45 minutes engaged in banter and discussion about goings on in the world. Funnily enough, many of them came back time and time again to continue the conversation. He spent countless hours playing trivia with neighbours and walking his precious fur babies. He loved to travel and with his wife and girls visited countless countries around the world. His daughters would often tire by the time they got to abbey or museum #20, asking if they could just ‘sit this one out in the car’. His response, as he closed the car door, was always “yes, but you may never see it again.” We always got out of the car. Daddy wanted us to see the world.

Dad’s impish smile could heal any broken heart. We just wish he was here to mend ours today. David passed away at the Sturgeon Community Hospital in St. Albert, 59 days after his wife. He was cared for by a wonderful medical team during his last days including Drs. Rajoo, Bennett and Hitchen, Nurse Practitioner Steve, Nurses Elmer and Lee, Respiratory Therapist Sandy and two Healthcare Aides Kathy and Shelley. In keeping with his wishes, there will be no service but donations in his memory can be made to the Edmonton Humane Society or the Sturgeon Community Hospital Foundation.

### ***Do you have any FREE TIME? Would you like to Volunteer?***

Here are some opportunities for our members:

1. Join the Groovy Gang – a senior group of singers who is in NEED of both a director and a piano player. If you are interested, please call Eva Berg at 780-973-3107.
2. Dogs with Wings, a local non-profit organization, is looking for volunteers in various capacities to assist in training Assistance Dogs. Anyone interested can visit the website (<https://dogswithwings.ca>), call 780-944-8011, or email ([transformlives@dogswithwings.ca](mailto:transformlives@dogswithwings.ca)).

**Contributions from our members:** A new **CHALLENGE** for you:

We would like to feature one or two stories from the early teaching years of our members in our monthly News Bulletins. Those first few years were often so exciting and so challenging! What was your assignment and classroom like? How did you manage? Do you recall any unusual events or interesting ‘happenings’?

**Reminiscing!**

In the early ‘70’s with two small children at home, I was not looking for a full-time job. But I was very interested when the principal of one school in which I had been subbing called me in late September to talk about a part time job.

There were several students in each of his 2 Grade One classes with very low readiness levels. Remember, this was back when there were no Kindergarten classes in schools, and no Daycares in every strip mall (there weren’t any strip malls in St. Albert yet anyways!) So, some children lacked the kind of socialization that prepared them for a structured classroom experience.

I met with the principal, and then the person from the district office who supported language arts instruction. The idea was that I would work with these 5 or 6 little folks each morning to help them “towards success”. It sounded exciting!

There were no special materials, no classroom – only a small meeting room next to the office with two tables and a few chairs.

I thought I was up for the challenge. I quickly became fond of these little ones and worked to do the best I could to meet their needs.

The district office person would show up frequently. I never knew when I would turn around and see her at the back of our little room. She would always have suggestions of what I could try. At first this felt fine, but over the weeks, I began to feel tense, wondering why she was always “breathing down my neck”.

This went on for several months. Then one day in the spring, the principal came into the room before class started and said, “The Board has decided to extend the funding for this for the remainder of the year.” It turned out that the District Office person had been around so much was because the funding had always only been “conditional”. She had to provide regular reports to the Board as to how “things were going”, to persuade them to continue funding the program.

If only someone had TOLD me! I would not have spent so many agonizing hours trying to figure out what I was doing wrong!

Thanks Ardyth! Members, we would love to share your story. Please send any contributions to our News Bulletin on or before the 12<sup>th</sup> of each month.  
Send to [pbergmann@shaw.ca](mailto:pbergmann@shaw.ca)

**SECOND WIND REMINDER**... Second Wind's **tenth** conference is scheduled for Sept. 07, 2023. Mark your calendar and plan to attend!

### *MESSAGE from your Executive:*

Our next Annual General Meeting is 'just around the corner' in May. Your executive members are looking ahead and realize that, to continue going forward, we need to fill the following open executive positions. If you are willing or know of someone who may be willing to step up, please inform one of our current Co-presidents. Thanks.

Vice - Presidents: VACANT

Program Convenor: VACANT (*Leo Bruseker has agreed to organize programs for this year only so we can continue to enjoy speakers at our breakfast meetings. We NEED another person to help with, and then take over planning programs for our breakfast meetings.*)

Webmaster: VACANT

Please consider volunteering. For more information, you can contact

**Mary Pat O'Neill** [mary.oneill@telus.net](mailto:mary.oneill@telus.net) or

**Wendy Poirier** [rwpoirier19@gmail.com](mailto:rwpoirier19@gmail.com)

*Thank You to those who have contributed to this News Bulletin.*

*If you would like to make a suggestion or comment, or send in a poem, story, or anything special to you that you are willing to share, please send by email, on or before the 12<sup>th</sup> of each month, to [pbergmann@shaw.ca](mailto:pbergmann@shaw.ca)*

CONTACT INFORMATION FORM:

If you have had a change of contact information, please fill out and email or bring the attached form to a breakfast meeting. Thank you!



**ST. ALBERT RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION**  
**MEMBERSHIP Information**  
**2022-2023**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ POSTAL CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

*PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:*

NEW MEMBERSHIP: \_\_\_\_\_ RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP \_\_\_\_\_

RETIRED TEACHER: \_\_\_\_\_ ASSOCIATE MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

***Membership Fee for 2022-2023 is \$10  
for both a member and an associate member.  
An associate member is anyone who has purchased a  
membership in STARTA, but does not receive a pension from  
ATRF.***

**NOTE:** Photos may be taken at STARTA events and may be published in STARTA media. If this is an issue for you, please discuss your concern with the photographer at the event.