

SOUTHWEST ALBERTA RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Box 2322 Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 4K8

March 2024 Newsletter

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SWARTA's VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Valeria Lazzaretto



Valeria was recognized as the SWARTA Volunteer of the Year 2023 at the Christmas Dinner in November.

During a forty year teaching career with the Holy Spirit School District, while raising three children, Val has been a volunteer musician with the Lethbridge Symphony for the past 52 years. Playing in the Symphony has allowed her to maintain a level of expertise on the violin and making personal connections with other musicians and like-minded individuals has been a great benefit. She considers the decades as a volunteer musician to be a major highlight in her life.

This involvement also led to other music endeavours and over the years, Val has served on the executive of the Carl Orff Society, played in the pit orchestras for numerous Lethbridge Musical Theatre and other productions, assisted with several high school musicals and volunteered with the Lethbridge String Youth Program. Currently she is on the Board of Directors for the Lethbridge and District Music and Speech Arts Festival Society.

Outside the realm of music, Val completed several terms as president for the Hungarian Cultural Society and is a member of the Hungarian Old-timers' Society. Presently she is on the executive for the Catholic Women's League (St. Basil) and serves in several church ministries. When time allows, she helps out with casinos, bingos, ceremonies and special events for other local societies as well as helping with maintenance for the L'Arche Home in her neighbourhood.

From the desk of the President



Hello Everyone

Hi everyone! I hope you are all doing well and enjoying what is left of our interesting winter season. Thank you to our ARTA reps who helped at the Teacher's Convention working at the booth, doing a presentation, and answering questions at the ARTA Café. We appreciate you!

We will meet at the college on April 4th for lunch to feast on the culinary creations of the aspiring college chefs. I like showing our support to them, especially since many of us may have taught them during our careers as teachers. We have a "Heart and Sole" Wellness Walk planned for April 25th at 1:00 at Henderson Lake. We will register on the ARTA site and ARTA members will receive a "Heart and Sole" tee-shirt sponsored by Hearing Life. It is not a competition, but an opportunity to go for a walk and get to know each other. May 9th will be our Annual General Meeting at the Nord-Bridge Seniors Centre with our meeting, elections, presentation on Resilience by counselor Shane Faganello, and a delicious lunch. We will provide more information on each event later.

Please check the ARTA events calendar. The Pension Committee offers very valuable webinars. The latest one was from ATRF discussing the status of our pensions. We have excellent administrators who are ensuring our money is invested properly. We are now 100% funded and receiving an average of 8%/year. We have 56 retired teachers over the age of 100 receiving pensions! The next webinar is scheduled for March 21st on Cyber Insurance so be sure to register.

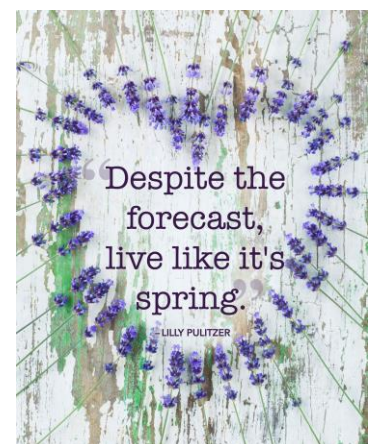
Please encourage all active teachers to join ARTA 101. It is free and they will receive ARTAcles featuring different articles plus news about scholarships they or their close relatives can apply for as well as ARTA Perks. The latest article was from the Pension Committee explaining what they need to consider when withdrawing their pensions before they are 55 years old. They should read it before making such an important decision.

The annual ARTA Golf Tournament will be hosted by the ARTA Charitable Foundation on July 8th at the Quarry Golf Course near Edmonton. Craig and I will be registering so please join us!

The annual ARTA photo contest deadline is May 31st, 2024. Details can be found on the ARTA website. arta.net/photo-contest.

Thank you to all of you for supporting SWARTA and I look forward to seeing you in April!

Terry Whitehead
President of SWARTA



FOR YOUR INFORMATION



SPRING LUNCHEON

April 4, 2024

12:00 noon

Lethbridge College

Garden Restaurant

\$ 19.43 payable in cash to the college at the door

To register, contact Linda Virostek by March 29, 2024

E-mail at swartacontact@gmail.com

Parking passes available. Park in Lot K or Lot V.

SWARTA Annual General Meeting

May 9, 2024

Nord-Bridge Seniors' Centre

10:00 a.m. Business meeting

11:15 a.m. Guest Speaker Shane Faganello

12:00 Lunch

FOR YOUR REFERENCE

To contact any executive member/ARTA reps/
Provincial committee members/district reps use:

swartacontact@gmail.com

SWARTA Executive: Table Officers

President: Terry Whitehead
Vice-President: Linda Virostek
Past-President: Doreen Pawlowski
Secretary: Ann McCallum
Treasurer: Linda Virostek

Executive Committee Chairs:

Membership: Wendy Brown
Social Committee: Laurie Mitchell
Communications: Terry Whitehead,
Wendy Brown
Linda Virostek (newsletter)
Member Outreach: vacant
SWATCA Convention: Linda Virostek

ARTA reps: ARTA Specialists: Blair Lowry, Craig Whitehead
Branch Area Reps: Rod Lowry, Sharon Hatch

AGM delegates: Terry Whitehead, Blair Lowry, Craig Whitehead, Linda Virostek, Doreen Pawlowski

Provincial Committee Members

ARTA Pension and Financial Wellness Committee: Blair Lowry, Craig Whitehead
ARTA Wellness Committee: Terry Whitehead
ARTA Benefit Plan Trust Fund Board of Directors: Arlene Purcell

District Representatives:

Holy Spirit: Vaughan Coupland
Horizon: Doreen Pawlowski
Lethbridge #51: vacant
Livingstone Range: Dianne Yarmoloy
Palliser: Marie Wickham
Westwind: Sharon Hatch

Membership Report

JOIN

OR

RENEW

Has your membership in SWARTA expired?

Our membership year runs from July 1 to June 30. Please check your newsletter e-mail or mailing label for the year in which your membership expires.

Membership fees are \$12 for individuals per year and \$17 for couples who are both retired teachers.

At age 85, members are eligible for Life Memberships and are exempt from dues. Please contact Wendy if you are eligible. New retirees get the first year of membership free.

Cheques made payable to SWARTA can be sent to the postal address on the top of the front page. Remember that your SWARTA dues are separate from the dues for ARTA, the provincial organization.

Also, if you have not been receiving newsletters and reminders by email, please send your email address to swartacontact@gmail.com This results in a great cost-saving for SWARTA.

MEMBERSHIP Renewals: Membership fees can be paid by cheque and sent by mail to
SWARTA Box 2322, Lethbridge AB T1J 4K8

Or contact Wendy regarding an e-transfer

ARTA Pension & Financial Wellness Committee Presents

Webinar: Cyber Crime and Insurance Challenges
March 21, 2024 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Link available on ARTA website

ARTA/SWARTA Wellness Walk 2024

1:00 p.m.

April 25, 2024

Henderson Lake, Lethbridge

Starting point near the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden



If you are an ARTA member, sign up on their website.

If you register by March 15, you get a free t-shirt.

landing.arta.net/wellness-walk-2024

If you are a SWARTA member, but not an ARTA member, register by email to

swartacontact@gmail.com

Bring a friend/s to join the walk.

Bring a food donation to go to the Lethbridge Food Bank.

Walk length can be adjusted to your preference.

ARTA Photo Contest

Deadline for Entries: May 31, 2024

Two entry levels: Novice (if you haven't been a past winner)

and Masters (if you have won before)

Four categories: Travel, Nature, Colour, Detail

See the ARTA website for complete contest details.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- April 4 Spring Luncheon 12 noon Garden Restaurant Lethbridge College
April 4 SWARTA executive meeting 10:30 a.m. Lethbridge College in the cafeteria
- April 25 ARTA/SWARTA Wellness Walk 1:00 p.m. Henderson Lake (Nikka Yuko Gardens area)
- May 9 Annual General Meeting 10:00 a.m. Nord-Bridge Seniors Centre

The “B A R Facts”. Submitted by Rod Lowry

For the first time ever, the Alberta Retired Teachers Association (ARTA) invited local groups to send Branch Area Representatives (BAR reps), for training in ARTA's Edmonton facilities. Sharon Hatch & Rod Lowry were elected BAR reps at SWARTA's AGM held in May 2023. Their day-long training focused on the structure and function of ARTA insurance, ARTARx and other services offered. A facility tour, as well as various advocacy methods and general information, were provided. Watch for tips and other retiree benefits to be detailed in future SWARTA newsletter.

ARTA Annual Charitable Foundation Golf Tournament

July 8, 2024

The Quarry Golf Course, Edmonton

Contact ARTA to register or for more information.

SWARTA Travel Opportunity

The fall trip to NYC and WDC is still hoping to have a few more people sign up to make the group. For more information, please contact Laurie Mitchell at 403-894-9898 or laurieolee.mitchell@gmail.com.

Thirteen people have committed but we need 16 meet the required group size. This is a wonderful opportunity to see New York and Washington.

Life is what you make it to be
Life is everything to see
To change the way you look at things
To do things that make you smile
To relax and have a good time
Every time and all the while
Do what you love to do!

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