

THE GOOD LIFE

The Newsletter of the Nanaimo-Ladysmith Retired Teachers' Association

Nov. 2012

Your NLRTA 2011-2012 Executive

President Carol Baird-Krul

Past Pres. Linda Willis

1st Vice-Pres. Lynn Paterson

2nd Vice-Pres. Marianne Clarkson

Secretary Colleen Dempsey

Treasurer Linda Willis

Director-At-Large: Vi Brzovic

Director-At-Large: Tricia Barnes

Committee Chairs:

Health & Housing - Leah Bradford

Heritage - Vicki Harrison

Media - Deryck Cowling

Membership - Jim Young

Social - Pat Hogue

Sunshine - Cheryle Sosnowski

President's Message

Hello One and All.....

I hope you enjoyed our somewhat belated but wonderful summer that appeared in September and early October and are now looking forward to our regular activities in the coming year. Our AGM in June saw all of the previous Executive remaining at the ready. At the May Executive meeting it was decided that a second Director-at-Large position

should be created for the express purpose of the person filling it to take on some of the Social Chairperson's duties. As always your Executive will continue to work on your behalf both at the local and provincial level.

As you may already know our former catering company 'The Good Cooking Guys' have, due to ill health, gone out of business. Because of this change we could, over the coming year, end up using a variety of caterers in order to find the one that is willing to work closely with our Social Chairperson and, excuse the pun, cater to our membership's needs.

Also on the Social front another decision was taken by the Executive during the summer. Because of the increased workload for the Social Chairperson it was decided that a committee made up of the two Directors-at-Large, Vi Brzovic and Trisha Barnes and our Second VP, Marianne Clarkson, be formed to look after the programs for our luncheons. This very capable and creative trio have great plans and I am sure that we're going to enjoy a wide variety of good entertainment and informative talks over the coming year.

In late September and early October our delegates, First VP Lynn Paterson, Treasurer Linda Willis and Newsletter Editor Les Ellis attended our Provincial AGM. Lynn also attended the follow up COSCO conference coming away with good information for our Health and Housing Chair Leah Bradford who was unable to attend. These conferences, while at times tedious, are important places to meet and network with like-minded individuals.

Items from the Skipsey Heritage Collection will be on display at the Nanaimo Museum during March. This co-operative venture was spearheaded by our media man, Deryck Cowling. Beside the display there will be a meet and greet for our membership on the opening day. This type of event will, we hope, along with an ongoing display at the Nanaimo-Ladysmith Teachers' Association offices, bring awareness of our unique collection to the public and district educators.

Finally, we are hopeful that our website is one step closer to completion with discussions underway with a local web designer. This will allow new and potential members to find us more easily and for us to post pertinent updates as necessary. Due to John Godfreyson's plans to move some time in the near future to the lower mainland, we will be requiring someone to be in charge of our List Serve, so if you have an interest please contact either John or myself.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me.

Carol Baird-Krul - President

A Message from the Social Chair

This report is to keep everyone “in the loop” in regard to the future of our lunches.

As reported earlier in the summer, The Good Cooking Guys who have been our caterers for the past few years, are no longer in business. We are, however, able to continue holding our lunches at the Cavallotti Lodge, at least until the end of 2012. After that, we will need to renegotiate the rental arrangement with them or find a new place.

The Executive made a decision to try a number of caterers until we find one that works best for us. The plan is to hold the events as lunches, as opposed to brunch or coffee and snack as suggested by a member.

With rising fuel prices, and thus rising food costs, the Executive also made a decision to increase the cost in October to \$25.00, all-inclusive.

There are a number of costs in having a catered, private lunch in a venue that might not be obvious to everyone. At the Cavallotti, and many other venues, there is an additional cost beyond the rental of the hall. We have to pay to have the tables and chairs set up, put away and to have the hall swept after our event. We were able to negotiate with the October caterer to have the rental of tablecloths included in his charge. In addition there is a cost for the use of the kitchen, which the caterer also agreed to include in his fee. This was in lieu of renting dishes and cutlery from him directly.

At the present time, mid-October, a committee is searching for a caterer for December who will provide a lunch within our “budget”. The cost charged to members will be one that will include the facility rental, set up, clean up, take down, rental of table cloths, supply of dishes, glasses and cutlery, serving staff, HST and gratuity and LUNCH !

Although we have a list of venues and caterers we still welcome suggestions from members.

We'll continue to explore options for lunches for 2013.

We'd like your input on this:

Would you attend a lunch in the coming months that was potluck, with everyone bringing a dish to share?

We would still need to charge a nominal fee for coffee, tea, cream, sugar, milk, disposable dishes, cutlery and glasses, plastic table cloths, paper napkins as well as the room rental.

Please respond with comments (optional) before November 12, 2012 to phogue@shaw.ca or phone 250 753 5971

We look forward to your responses.

Treasurer's Report

Local fee increase postponed!

Because of the policies of the BCRTA, we are unable to collect the \$10.00 fee that was approved at our last AGM. This year's fee will continue at \$5.00. The \$10.00 will be deducted or owed in the fall of 2013.

Linda Willis
Treasurer

Seniors and Computers

As we Silver Surfers know, sometimes we have trouble with our computers. I had a problem yesterday, so I called Eric, the 11 year old next door, whose bedroom looks like Mission Control and asked him to come over. Eric clicked a couple of buttons and solved the problem. As he was walking away, I called after him, "So, what was wrong?" He replied, "It was an ID ten T error." I didn't want to appear stupid, but nonetheless inquired, "An, ID ten T error? What's that? In case I need to fix it again." Eric grinned ... "Haven't you ever heard of an ID ten T error before?" "No," I replied. "Write it down," he said, "and I think you'll figure it out." So I wrote down: ID10T

I used to like Eric!!

BC Retired Teachers' Association 2012 Annual General Meeting

Registration and Meet and Greet were on the Friday evening.

Saturday the morning speaker was Sharon MacKenzie talking about Intergenerational Immersion. She has written and developed units where seniors and classes work together. The students have three to eight weeks where they have all their classes and activities at the seniors' residences.

Branch delegates then shared activity ideas. Some fund-raising ideas were to get a percentage off till tapes from members shopping at a certain store. (Thrifty's has a limited plan with their Smile Cards.) One group had a vintage bridal show and another arranged mystery bus tours. Ideas for meetings were "pot -luck" luncheons and having a speaker on gardens; especially balcony gardens. One local has stopped giving scholarships and is doing Cinderella, Cinderella.

This was followed by a very good and very informative Pensions and Benefits Update. The median teachers' pension is \$28,431. The plan is sustainable and we will get a Cost of Living increase this year but the amount is TBA as it is based on the September numbers. Our CP will have a different raise as they base it on the yearly average. Our CPI account will be reviewed and then, if viable, renewed for three more years. This will be announced soon and it is thought that it will continue. When we started paying for our own benefits, the saved money went into the CPI account. There is always a risk that we may not receive the full cost-of-living indexing.

ACER-CART (Canadian Organization of Retired Teachers) was represented by Vaughn Wadelius. This group allows provinces to meet and share problems and solutions.

Carolyn Prellwitz talked about the winning schools in the Golden Star Awards for classrooms that work with seniors. The Legion donated \$1,000 so there will be six awards next year. We are encouraged to get our SD involved.

Annette O'Conner presented what's new in benefits for retired teachers.

Affinity plans are the BCRTA insurance through www.johnson.ca/bcrta which includes Life, Legacy Planning, Long Term care and MEDOC. There is an improvement to the Medoc plan under baggage and personal effects. The coordination of benefits increased from \$100,000 to \$200,000. This is for within Canada but not in BC. There is a limit of \$1500.00 per member and \$3,000.00 per family.

Perkopolis which offers members with discounts on tickets, hotels, car rentals, spas, and much more. Please note the responsibility for the product and the final cost remains solely between the member and the provider.

Blue Advantage is a program through Pacific Blue Cross offering savings on medical and vision care products and services.

CPEAC Canadian Public Employee Acquisition Club means you will be able to receive extraordinary incentives on goods and services. See the great specials through the Key Link on the provincial RTA website..

Colette Vacations offers discounts on their tours, explorations and family vacations. See the special opportunities for our members on the RTA website

Globus Travel has access to special travel "deals" that can be arranged through your local travel agent. These are with Avalon, Globus, Cosmos and Monograms.

BCRTA has worldwide Hotel Discounts.

Johnson Inc. has 100 scholarships for \$1500 for students beginning post-secondary studies.

Workshops are available for Pre-Retirement and COSCO Health and Wellness Program.

This was followed by Judy deVries giving out the membership awards. We did not win anything although we did welcome 24 new members. We were given a grant of \$120.00 which will cover some of our deficit at the To Hell With The Bell breakfast.

Sunday we started the meeting with the AGM of the RR Smith Memorial Fund Foundation.

At 9:30 the official AGM of the BCRTA started and elections began. An amended motion to return on a pro-rated basis membership fees upon request was carried. A Notice of Motion for the next AGM stated that there are no refunds for membership fees.

A motion from South Island that the Life Membership be changed from 85 to 90 for next year was carried.

Provincial Elected Executive

President- Cliff Boldt (Comox Valley) President
Bob Taverner (Parksville/Qualicum) 1st Vice-President
Patricia Clough (Shuswap & District) 2nd Vice-President
Gerry Tiede (Surrey) ACER-CART Representative
Beverly Anderson (Langley), Dave Carter (Burnaby), Andy Hatrick (Vancouver), Sheila Pither (Vancouver and Judy deVries are Directors for a 1 year term.
Charan Gill (Richmond) and Barbara Mikulec (Vancouver) were elected Director for a 2 year term (inside the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley Regions).
Joennell Clark (Powel River) and Marg Sutton (South Peace River) have 2 year term (outside the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley Regions).

A motion was made and carried to accept the Committee Chair Reports.

Lynn Paterson and Les Ellis were also delegates. Lynn stayed on to go to the COSCO AGM.

Linda Willis
AGM Delegate

2012 COSCO AGM Richmond BC

This year's AGM was centered over five main topics which were:

- Seniors rights to comprehensive healthcare;
- Home support and home care for seniors;
- Social connectedness for seniors;
- Health literacy;
- Seniors' rights to participate in the policy planning process.

Various workshops further elaborated on these topics, including:

- Senior abuse;
- Seniors helping seniors;
- The correct use of drugs and their costs;
- What do drugs do and are they effective;
- Rehabilitation at home;
- The need for home support services;
- Providing services which would allow the elderly to remain in their homes as long as possible.

There was also a fair amount of talk about seniors being a burden on the economy as the number of retiring baby boomers grows every year. At present 14.4% of our population is comprised of seniors over 65. This number is expected to double in the next few decades as more people retire and the elderly live longer

A number of speakers pointed out that the elderly were not the burden that governments state. The newly retired continue to spend and purchase goods in their community which provide jobs thereby stimulating the local economy. In addition, the elderly do have greater medical costs, but they do continue to contribute to the local economy by creating a need for medical facilities, creating a need for trained medical staff and creating a need for trained support techniques

Some speakers noted that many retired people provide hours of volunteerism which if a financial value was applied would amount to millions of dollars.

The retired are an integral of economy, they are not a burden.

Lynn Paterson
1st Vice-President

Skipsey Collection Focus for Education Week at Museum

The NLRTA is currently working with the *Nanaimo District Museum* to develop a focus on our District's rich educational history for Education Week in March. Using the resources of the RTA's *Skipsey Heritage Collection* and the Museum's resources, we are working to develop an interesting and unique display of artifacts that will highlight Nanaimo's educational life from a historical perspective. The display will be featured for the month of March.

A special public reception and tea will be held at the Museum on the afternoon of Tuesday, March 12th, at which time we hope both retired and active teachers will come out to review their heritage. We are also working with the NDTA to that end and to develop a special photographic exhibit that will eventually be on display permanently at the NDTA office. We hope that many local teachers will also take advantage of the Museum's educational programs and make field trips to inform students about school life in the past. In addition, we will be inviting members of the wider educational community and the general public to join us at the reception and to take in the displays.

The whole purpose of the exercise is to raise public awareness of the important role that public education has played in our community as well as to put a spotlight on the extensive *Skipsey Collection* and its resources.

We will update you periodically on details as the project comes together over the next few months but mark **March 12th** on your calendar as you will not want to miss this special occasion. And, as always, we would welcome your input and involvement on this event.

Deryck Cowling
dcowling@shaw.ca

How Real Governments Work

Once upon a time the Canadian Government had a vast scrap yard in the middle of nowhere. The Government said, "Someone may steal from the scrap yard at night." So they created a night watchman position and hired a person (bilingual, naturally) for the job.

Then the Government said, "How can the watchman do his job without instruction?" So they created a Planning Department and hired two people, one person to write the job description and one person to do time studies.

Then the Government said, "How will we know the night watchman is performing the tasks correctly?" So they created a Quality Control department and hired two people, one to do the studies and one to write the reports.

Then the Government said, "How are these people going to get paid?" So they created the following positions: a Time Keeper and a Payroll Officer and two more people to assist.

Then the Government said, "Who will be accountable for all of these people?" So they created an Administrative Section and hired three people: an Administrative Officer, an Assistant Administrative Officer and a Legal Secretary.

Then the Government said, "We have had this organization in operation for only one year and we are \$18,000 over budget; we must cutback our overall costs."

They laid off the night watchman!

Private Art Show and Sale

WHEN: Sunday, Nov. 18 - 11am---2pm

WHERE: 228 Sixth Street (between Bruce and Park)

WHO: Invitation only - if you're getting this you're invited!

WHY: Downsizing from 3,000 to 1,200 sq. ft.

WHAT: Over 60 works collected over 25 years and collectables from \$10-\$1,500
finished art and art supplies

Trisha Romance and Peter Robson Collector Plates etc.

COME , BROWSE AND START YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EARLY!

All prices will be up to 60% off the original! Personal checks cheerfully accepted!