



Edmonton Retired Teachers' Association Spring Newsletter

March 2022

www.myerta.org

SPRING

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SPRING LUNCHEON

The
spring luncheon
scheduled for
March 22, 2022, at the
Chateau Louis Conference Centre
has been **cancelled**.

The ERTA Board of Directors
will hold a luncheon and
an in-person
Annual General Meeting
on
Wednesday, June 8, 2022.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Things are getting better!

The challenging times we have been through for the last two years can be viewed from the positive philosophical perspective of Scott Peck, author of the book *The Road Less Travelled*. The first line in his book reads, “Life is difficult,” which does not sound like a promising start to a book. The author explains that dealing with challenges, both large and small, is ultimately to our advantage though it may not seem like it at the time. He submits that by confronting issues, rather than avoiding them, we gain knowledge, develop strength of character, become more confident, acquire wisdom and are much better equipped for the future.

A great deal was learned from dealing with the pandemic. The importance of relationships was made abundantly clear as was the need to help and support each other. When physical distancing restrictions had to be implemented, innovative ways were found to stay in touch with loved ones.

Much kindness was shown by the many people who reached out to family, friends, neighbours and even strangers when they saw an opportunity.

The value of cooperation was recognized and the vast majority of individuals showed a willingness to comply with shifting medical recommendations as epidemiologists gradually learned more about how this new virus functions and how to bring it under control.

Perhaps we can get together again soon. If the warmer weather brings about a diminishing viral infection rate, the prospect of venturing out and returning to a more normal version of life will be a welcome possibility. Attending the luncheon on June 8 would be an incredible re-entry event—a chance to relax and enjoy the company of friends and colleagues.

Hopefully it can become a reality.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Board of Directors Meeting	May 5, 2022
Mayfield Dinner Theatre	June 1, 2022
Summer Luncheon and AGM	June 8, 2022
ARTA Annual Golf Tournament	June 10, 2022

IMPORTANT LUNCHEON NEWS

After nine lunch cancellations, including the one originally planned for March 16, the Edmonton Retired Teachers’ Association (ERTA) Board of Directors would like to hold the summer luncheon and Annual General Meeting (AGM) on June 8, at the Chateau Louis Conference Centre.

High vaccination rates among seniors, implementation of safety protocols and the tendency for the infection rate to trend downward as the weather warms up made board members confident that a group function would be safe to attend.

Costs

Food costs have gone up considerably, resulting in higher luncheon fees. Recognizing that costs are of great concern to retirees on fixed incomes, board members did a price comparison with a few other venues and found that buffet prices ranged from \$31.00 to over \$44.00. The Chateau Louis still offers the best value for branch members.

The good news is that ERTA will be able to host a delicious summer luncheon buffet at the Chateau Louis for not more than \$35.00 per person. The exact fee will be stated in the June newsletter.

With a convenient location, a lovely facility, great meals and excellent service, the Chateau Louis delivers a winning combination.

Please note that most venues—the Chateau Louis included—require that event planners guarantee a minimum number of guests, below which a room rental fee is applied and costs become prohibitive.

The per-plate lunch fee is predicated on a minimum of 100 attendees, below which a room rental fee of \$800.00 will be added to the invoice.

Historically, ERTA has had at least 120 guests at each luncheon, but with the pandemic and inflation factored in, predicting numbers for future turnouts is difficult and needs to be based on more than guesswork.

To that end, volunteers will call members in late April to ask if they are likely to attend the summer luncheon and AGM on June 8. Your response is not a commitment, but it will help assure planners that attendance will exceed the minimum number before they confirm the contract with the Chateau Louis. Please help us estimate numbers.

BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

The ERTA Board of Directors met, using internet meeting services, to discuss the following items on Wednesday, February 9, 2022:

- Arrangements are being finalized for the June luncheon and an in-person annual meeting.
- Session topics, presenters and the keynote speaker for the 2022 Second Wind Conference are currently being confirmed (see Second Wind Conference).

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Current total membership.....	430
<i>Regular</i>	362
<i>Complimentary</i>	48
<i>Honorary life</i>	5
<i>Nonagenarian life</i>	15
Sponsored members.....	4

Two more nonagenarians now qualify for a life membership in ERTA.

Alice Bell, the oldest of two daughters, was born on February 10, 1932, in Consort, Alberta. Her parents operated a general store in Monitor, just seventeen kilometers east of Consort.

She went to a one-room school in Monitor for her first seven grades. In November 1945, the family moved to Edmonton where she attended Parkdale School before enrolling at Eastwood High School in 1947.

In September of 1951, Alice registered in the one-year Temporary Licence Program at the University of Alberta. The Temporary Licence Program, later called the Junior Elementary (Junior E) Program, was instituted to alleviate the teacher shortage in the 1950s.

She embarked on her lengthy professional career in May 1952, teaching seventeen students at Batt School, a one-room school north of Fort Vermilion. In September, Alice accepted a teaching position in the town of Beverly, on the eastern outskirts of Edmonton, teaching Grade One at Central School.

Following two years at Central, she registered in classes at the University of Alberta for two years.

In 1956, Alice was hired by the Edmonton Public School Board to teach a Grade One class at North Edmonton School, remaining for four years before transferring to Killarney to teach in a combined first and second grade classroom in 1960.

Alice continued her education by taking night and summer school courses. In 1962, she was granted a sabbatical, which enabled her to complete her Bachelor of Education degree.

Alice returned to the classroom, teaching Grade Three at Glengarry School for four years, prior to accepting a vice-principal position at Argyll in 1967, where she also taught third grade students.

For the next nineteen years, Alice fulfilled the role of vice-principal at seven elementary schools—Mount Royal, Norwood, Calder, Mee-Yah-Noh, Belvedere, Abbot and Kensington, serving for three years at each school except for Belvedere where she was the vice-principal for only one year. She taught Grade Three for most of those years and had three split second and third grade assignments and one class of third and fourth graders.

Alice retired in 1987 after thirty-two years in the classroom.

In 1985, she married Alan Bell, whom she first met in Grade Eight at Parkdale. They provided a home for two Vietnamese refugees for ten years and supported the citizenship of their cousin.

Throughout the years, Alice served in many leadership capacities at her church and was on the Board of Directors of Buchanan Manor, a senior citizens residence operated by Eastwood United Church. She has been a member of the Gamma Chapter of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International for forty years. Over the years, Alice worked on several committees and held various executive positions at the chapter as well as the provincial level. She received the Zeta Province Achievement Award for her longstanding commitment to the sorority. Alice has been a member of the Daughters of the Nile women’s group for twenty-five years and is also affiliated with the Canadian College of Teachers, the Association of Canadian Clubs and the Associated Canadian Travellers. She volunteered for ten years at the Provincial Museum of Alberta. Alice and her husband also support a number of charitable organizations.

She enjoys crafts of all kinds, especially knitting. Alice belongs to a knitting group that has knitted more than 1500 blankets over the past eighteen years for Blankets for Canada.

She has motored across Canada and the United States and has travelled to Mexico, Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

Mary Oswald and her twin brother were born on March 6, 1932, on a farm near St. Paul, Alberta, the middle children of a family of seven.

For the first eight years of her formal education, she attended a one-room school in the Lake Eliza district, southeast of St. Paul. Mary finished Grade Nine by correspondence. Since she was the first student in the area to aspire to a higher education, locating a school that would accept her proved difficult.

She lived on the north side of the North Saskatchewan River in the Two Hills School Division. School buses were non-existent and the ferry that crossed the river was out of service every spring and fall due to ice formation and breakup. St. Paul High School was operated by a Catholic order and did not accept non-Catholic students. Mary enrolled in Grade Ten classes in Ashmont, a small town west of St. Paul, where she lived in a dormitory. She matriculated after attending high school in Vermilion for two years.

In 1950, Mary registered in the one-year Junior E and I Program at the University of Alberta, which was financed by a conditional bursary from the St. Paul School Division.

At the end of April 1951, she was sent to teach at Bentley Lake, a school east of St. Edouard with only seven students who had had correspondence supervisors exclusively for years. In September, she was assigned to Swedeboro School south-east of St. Paul where she taught all nine grades for two years.

By taking both summer and night school courses, Mary was able to complete the second year of a Bachelor of Education degree program.

After teaching first grade in Vermilion for a year, she moved to Edmonton. Mary accepted a placement with the Edmonton Public School Board in a Grade One classroom at Hazeldean School for a year then returned to the university as a full-time student in September 1955.

Mary married a junior high school physical education teacher shortly after convocation in May 1957. She taught first graders at H. A. Gray School prior to the birth of her first son in the fall of 1958 and at Capilano for a year before the second of three children was born in 1961. Mary accepted a long-term substitute teaching assignment in a Grade One classroom at Gold Bar School in November

1964 and one at Fulton Place in November 1965, finishing the year in both cases. She continued to substitute teach for another year before teaching part-time for a year in a first-grade classroom at Clara Tyner School.

In 1968, Mary returned to teaching full-time in a combined class of first and second graders. After three years at Waverley School, she took a leave of absence to enroll in post-graduate courses in early learning and development. Mary completed her thesis while teaching a kindergarten class at Cromdale School, earning her master's degree in 1976. She was among the first few kindergarten teachers in the Edmonton Public School District.

After working as a primary consultant for three years, Mary was seconded in 1979 to teach language development and early childhood learning and development at the University of Alberta.

Subsequent to two years in the classroom, she was once again appointed to an early childhood consultant position, one she maintained for eleven years. Mary worked on curriculum writing projects that included language and reading development, science and learning development.

She retired in 1993 after thirty years devoted to the education of young elementary-aged children.

After retirement, she often provided in-services for teachers in school districts outside of Edmonton.

Mary earned her private pilot's licence in 1979, flying for enjoyment for many years. She joined the 99s, an organization of female pilots started by Amelia Earhart in 1929. She became a volunteer with Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame in 1995. As a member of the Operations Committee, she has researched the lives of inductees, has written a book about their lives and their contributions to aviation in Canada, has written the biographies that appear on display panels in the Hall of Fame and still assists with the organization of the annual induction dinner.

She made numerous trips to Sweden, sometimes accompanied by a child or grandchild, to visit with relatives who remained behind when her parents emigrated to Canada. Mary often extended these trips to include travel to Norway, France, England, Scotland, Denmark, Germany, Austria and Italy. She has spent many winters at her time-share in Puerto Vallarta and enjoys participating in local activities while there.

Mary was a prolific seamstress over the years and has recently developed a keen interest in writing, which she shares with a group of retired teachers.

Cliff Otto

Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds you plant.
~Robert Louis Stephenson

ARTA WELLNESS CHALLENGE

Prolonged sitting is bad for your health; however, there is a cure for that—get up and get moving! Benefits are myriad and include sharper thinking, better sleep, reduced depression and anxiety, improved weight control, stronger muscles and bones, reduced risk of diabetes, heart disease, and stroke, as well as cancers of the breast, the colon and other organs. An investment of just thirty minutes per day nets an incredible return; simply being on your feet is beneficial.

If you are a member of ARTA, plan to partake in the 2022 Wellness Challenge representing ERTA. Start recording your daily activity in either minutes or steps on the Personal Daily Log sheet on April 1, then compile your best thirty days on the Personal Best-30-Days Report sheet. Both forms are available online at arta.net/wellness-challenge and can be found in the spring issue of *news&views* as well.



Call Veronica Hellweg at 780.456.7640 or email her at hellwegv@telus.net to register. Information on how to submit your final results will be included in the June newsletter.

Awards and prizes for top performers are additional motivators. Participation prizes will be awarded by a random draw of those who submitted their results sheet. Consider elevating your activity level and join the challenge.

The best portion of a good man's life is his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love.
~William Wordsworth

ARTA BRANCH SUPPORT

The past two years have been a challenge for all branches that have waived membership fees due to the 'event-drought' caused by the pandemic.

To support them, the Alberta Retired Teachers' Association (ARTA) has provided branches with a generous Branch Subsidy Grant. In addition, the Zoom Licence Grant was again made available to local associations for the purchase of a one-year subscription. Having access to a digital platform improves communication within branches, allows for presentations over the internet, and enables business to be conducted in a safe, virtual setting.

ERTA is indeed appreciative of ARTA's financial support.

ARTA PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

Remember to submit pictures for the ARTA photography contest by May 31, 2022.

Category descriptions, detailed contest rules and submission guidelines can be found under the 'Wellness' tab at www.arta.net.

ARTA ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Alberta Retired Teachers Charitable Foundation Charity Golf Classic

The ARTA Annual Golf Tournament, hosted by the Alberta Retired Teachers Charitable Foundation as a fundraising event, is back after a two-year hiatus. The tournament will be held at the Ponoka Golf Club on June 16, 2022.

Go to artaevents.net/golf/ to register or for more information.



DIGITAL NEWS&VIEWS SUBSCRIPTION

Did you know that *news&views* is available online? If you would prefer to receive the digital version of the newsmagazine, email marketing@arta.net or call the ARTA office at 780.822.2400. A notice will be sent to you via email when the digital copy is available for download.

MAYFIELD DINNER THEATRE

Tickets for the brunch production of Mamma Mia! at the Mayfield Dinner Theatre on Wednesday, June 1, 2022, are still available.



The storyline involves a bride-to-be who wants her father to walk her down the aisle. But which of her mother's three former boyfriends is he? ABBA's famous hits provide the backdrop for the hilarious situation that develops.

Reserve your seats by first contacting Vi Oko at 780.459.8013, then mailing a cheque for \$80.22, made payable to the Edmonton Retired Teachers' Association, to 20 Glenhaven Crescent, St. Albert, Alberta T8N 1A5.

The theatrical complex has operated successfully since September with nearly sold-out attendance at each show. The ticket count needs to be verified with the Mayfield by April 15.

SECOND WIND CONFERENCE



Welcome back! The ninth annual Second Wind Conference will be held on September 22, 2022, at the lovely Chateau Louis Conference Centre in Edmonton.



All retirees in the Edmonton area and beyond, who are looking to expand their knowledge, acquire information, connect with colleagues and friends and meet new people, are welcome to attend.

This conference features a stimulating lineup of interesting topics presented by knowledgeable, enthusiastic speakers, focusing on all aspects of well-being. Learn how to stay safe in an online world; how to protect your hard-earned money from scammers; how to build a balanced fitness routine or how Qigong or Yoga can positively impact your life.

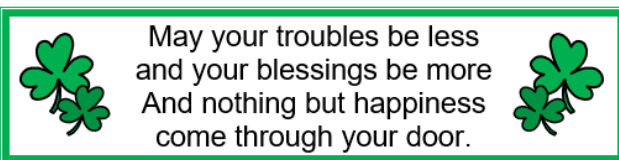
By March 15, all eighteen topics, speakers, and session descriptions will be posted on the website at secondwindconference.ca.

Register before July 31 to take advantage of the \$95.00 early bird fee rather than the regular one for \$110.00 that comes into effect after that date.

Included in the conference fee is a light breakfast of assorted pastries, a keynote presentation with Dr. Wagg, eighteen compelling breakout sessions, a delicious buffet lunch and coffee breaks, along with a relaxing 'wine down' and door prize draws.

There are also opportunities throughout the day to visit the exhibitors and browse the craft display and sale tables.

Please note that registration will be capped to ensure comfortable, safe seating in session rooms and in the dining area.



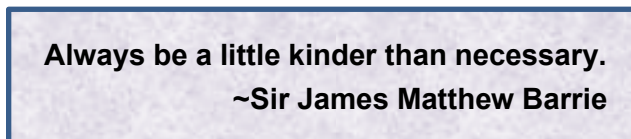
HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Three types of membership are identified in the ERTA Bylaws. The honorary life category formally recognizes those individuals who have made a significant contribution to the association.

Eligibility for the award is outlined in subsection 2.1.3.3 of the ERTA Bylaws. The award can only be presented to a nominee who is a current member, has been so for a minimum of five years and has made a contribution of consequence to the association.

Nominations for this award must be submitted in writing to the Selection Committee using the nomination form on the myerta.org website.

Email the form to Ray Roy at rayroy@shaw.ca or Sheila MacKay at smackay1@shaw.ca using the subject line *ERTA Honorary Life Membership Award*. Alternatively send a printed copy to Ray at 9926 176 Avenue NW, Edmonton, Alberta T5X 5W2, or to Sheila at 9343 96 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta T6C 3Y6. The deadline for submission is 6:00 p.m. on May 1. Awards will be made at the September luncheon.



BIODEGRADABLE VS COMPOSTABLE

There has been a realization for years that plastic waste causes severe damage to the environment. Only 10% of petroleum-based plastics are recycled; the rest persist in the environment for hundreds of years. When they eventually break down, toxic chemicals are released.

In an effort to curb the problem, improved ways to recycle are being sought, legislation has been passed to reduce or even ban various single-use plastics, and researchers are working to create plant-based alternative products.

In order to appeal to environmentally conscious consumers, companies use the terms compostable and biodegradable, which can be misleading if interpreted as synonymous—they are not!

All compostable materials are biodegradable, but the corollary is not true. They differ in the materials from which they are made, the way they degrade and what is left after they break down.

Compostable products are organic in nature and break down completely into humus, an organic material that provides nutrients to plants, with no other elements or toxic residue left behind. They decompose quite quickly when exposed to warm temperatures, moisture and sufficient oxygen—an environment in which microbes flourish.

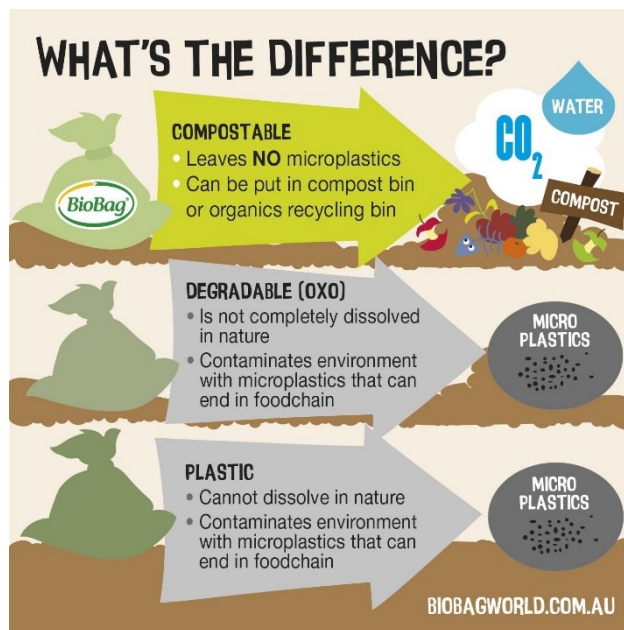
Plastics labelled as biodegradable take longer to break down, even in a compostable environment. In addition to plant-based materials, they are composed of other elements, some of which are toxic to the environment such as microplastics. Many items that are labelled as 'biodegradable' are not accepted by composting facilities.

Most people have a genuine desire to do whatever they can to protect the environment. Look for products labelled as compostable. They are composed of organic materials such as potato starch, cornstarch, sugar cane, etc. Products made from polyvinyl alcohol (PVOH, PVAL) are also safe as they break down quickly into H₂O, CO₂ and biomass. Multiply the small, individual efforts of several billion people and the world will reap significant benefits.

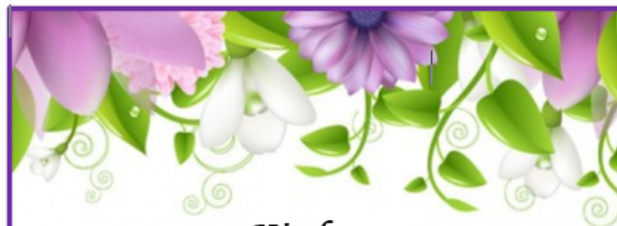
Compostable—enriches soil, no toxins.

Biodegradable—breaks down but leaves contaminants in the soil.

Plastic—persists for hundreds of years and breaks down into microplastics.



KINDNESS POEM



Kindness

*Kindness breaks down barriers
With words, a smile, a touch
It links us all together
In a way that says so much.
It shows concern for neighbours
For communities and friends
To be there for each other
Is the message kindness sends.
Reaching out in friendship
Taking time to show you care,
Being the anchor in their stormy lives
When they're drowning in despair.
Kindness is essential,
It's resilient and tough.
A global glue to bind us all
With gentleness and love.*

~Yvonne Ugarte

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

A canny young fisher named Fisher
Once fished from the edge of a fissure.

A fish with a grin

Pulled the fisherman in—

Now they're fishing the fissure for Fisher.



A tutor who tooted the flute

Tried to tutor two tooters to toot.

Said the two to the tutor

“Is it tougher to toot or

To tutor two tooters to toot?”



A certain young fellow named Bee-Bee
Wished to wed a woman named Phoebe.

“But,” he said, “I must see

What the clerical fee

Be before Phoebe be Phoebe Bee-Bee.”



A dozen, a gross, and a score

Plus three times the square root of four,

Divided by seven

Plus five times eleven,

Is nine squared and not a bit more.



Said the man with a wink of his eye

“But I love you,” and then the reply

From the girl, it was heard

“You are truly absurd!

I have only this moment walked by!”



A maiden at college, Miss Breeze,

Weighed down by BAs and LittDs,

Collapsed from the strain,

Said her doctor, “It’s plain

You are killing yourself—by degrees!”

