



Edmonton Retired Teachers' Association Spring Newsletter

March 2024

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SPRING LUNCHEON

Join us for our spring luncheon at the

Chateau Louis

11727 Kingsway Avenue

Date: March 20, 2024

Lunch: 11:45 a.m.

Menu: Fillet of cod in shrimp & fennel cream sauce

Cost: \$35.00 (includes GST and gratuity)

Speaker: Dr. Phil McRae--Executive Staff Officer with the Alberta Teachers' Association and Adjunct Professor at the University of Alberta

Topic: "All Tangled Up: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Everything"

Door Prize: Everyone is eligible for a door prize.

Luncheon Registration Deadline

Please note the **March 13** deadline for luncheon registration. If you have not received a telephone call by 6:00 p.m. that evening and would like to attend the luncheon, contact Pam Roy at **780-473-5598** immediately.

Donations to the Food Bank are appreciated.



THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Ed Butler, 780-461-0261

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Joan Harrison, 780-467-3885

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Greg Wilson, 780-487-5218

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

I feel more confused than normal these days. Is it winter or is it spring?

A record number of people completed the online travel survey. Your comments indicated a high degree of interest on a wide range of travel topics and destinations which, in turn, led to discussions with several representatives of the travel industry. A travel symposium will be held this fall to address the myriad questions posed by those members who responded to the survey. Hopefully, the information gleaned at this assemblage will be of benefit to senior travellers and, perhaps, result in the organization of some branch tours.

New program initiatives are being supported by the Alberta Retired Teachers' Association (ARTA) through a major ARTA Branch Subsidy Grant, the amount of which was based on the total number of Edmonton Retired Teachers' Association (ERTA) members who also have an ARTA membership. Consequently, ERTA will be offering a variety of subsidized activities (except for food and drink) in an effort to encourage greater participation in branch events as well as enhance the quality of life of ERTA members.

Volunteers are needed to organize some of these undertakings. Any member willing to give of their time and talent to plan a rewarding experience for their retired colleagues would be held in high regard by the association membership.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Spring Luncheon	March 20, 2024
Mayfield Dinner Theatre	March 27, 2024
Wine Tasting	April 10, 2024
ARTA Wellness Walk	April 25, 2024
Muttart Conservatory Tour	April 25, 2024
Mayfield Dinner Theatre	May 1, 2024
Board of Directors Meeting	May 8, 2024
Wine Tasting	June 11, 2024
Summer Luncheon and AGM	June 12, 2024
ARTA Annual Golf Tournament	July 8, 2019
Mayfield Dinner Theatre	July 10, 2024
Second Wind Conference	September 12, 2024

LUNCHEON NEWS

Dr. Phil McRae is an educator, scholar and interdisciplinary explorer in the field of education. He has given keynote addresses and been on expert panels throughout Canada and internationally.

ERTA is fortunate to have Dr. McRae speak on the subject of artificial intelligence. This topic is increasingly in the news not only because of its potential to improve our lives, but also for its misuse. Either way, the implications for individuals and society as a whole are profound.

BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

The following topics were discussed at the ERTA Board of Directors meeting held at the Central Lions Seniors Recreation Centre on Wednesday, February 14, 2024:

- The ARTA Wellness Challenge has been altered dramatically this year (see ARTA Wellness Challenge).
- Arrangements for a number of diverse small group activities that will hopefully appeal to the branch membership are being contemplated (see Wine Tasting and If You Want It, It Can Happen!).
- Minor bylaw amendments are being proposed for consideration at the 2024 annual general meeting scheduled for June 12 (see Bylaw Revisions).

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

Together Some board positions are vital to the functioning of an organization.
Everyone Membership coordinator is one of those roles. After fulfilling the duties of that position admirably over the past eleven years, Cliff Otto has chosen to take a step back; however, he is willing to mentor a successor.

All that is required is a few hours a week (mostly working from home) and a rudimentary knowledge of Excel (or a willingness to undertake a small learning curve).

A computer with Excel and a colour printer are supplied, expenses are promptly reimbursed, you get to work with an friendly group of colleagues and will have the satisfaction of serving fellow retirees. In addition, you will develop new skills and will have the privilege of working under the tutelage of a marvellous individual.

Several other board positions will be vacated this year. If you are able to help out, telephone Joan Harrison at 780-984-6460 or send her an email at cornerstone@telus.net.

Your assistance will be very much appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Current total membership.....	444
<i>Regular</i>	371
<i>Complimentary</i>	47
<i>Honorary life</i>	7
<i>Nonagenarian life</i>	19
Newsletter distribution	
<i>Canada Post</i>	120
<i>Email</i>	321
<i>Not receiving by request</i>	3

A second nonagenarian is eligible for an ERTA life membership this year.

Dorothy Keeler was born in Toronto, Ontario, on March 4, 1934, to a philosophy professor and a social worker and political activist.

She attended three Forest Hill Village schools for eleven years before enrolling at the University of British Columbia in 1951 with the hope of becoming a recreation leader.

Two years later, Dorothy transferred to Antioch College in Ohio, a liberal arts institution that embraced an experiential education. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in June of 1956.

She was married in August of 1956 after moving to Nova Scotia to teach physical education and social studies in Liverpool for two years.

Her first daughter was born in May 1957.

The family moved to Edmonton in the fall of 1958 so her husband could complete his Doctorate in Education Administration at the University of Alberta. Dorothy worked for a part of the year at the Alberta School for the Deaf.

The family returned to Toronto for a year where her son was born in February 1960.

Upon their return to Edmonton, she registered in courses she required to complete her Bachelor of Education degree.

She returned to the classroom in 1963 to teach Grade Three at Elmwood School. Dorothy had a second son in October 1964.

After enrolling in night and summer school classes, Dorothy convocated in 1965.

Following her maternity leave, she accepted a teaching assignment in September 1965 at Rio Terrace School where she taught all the grades between three and six for the next nine years.

Her family of two girls and two boys was completed with the adoption of their second daughter in 1967. The family spent ten months of the 1974–1975 school year in France while Dorothy and her husband were on sabbatical.

After completing the courses she needed for certification as a school librarian, she served in that capacity at Rio Terrace for the next twelve years before retiring in 1988.

Following retirement, Dorothy and her husband travelled extensively. They visited seven countries in West Africa, travelled to Kenya and Tanzania in East Africa, toured Egypt and throughout western Europe and Scandinavia, and also vacationed in Hawaii.

Dorothy now lives in a retirement residence in the west end with her cat, Willow.

Wilbert Irl Miller was born in Carmangay, Alberta, on January 11, 1932. He was the oldest son in a family of six children whose parents, after receiving a university education, made farming their life vocation.

Irl attended Carmangay School for twelve years, graduating in 1950.

He registered in a two-year agriculture program at Olds College before transferring to the faculty of agriculture at the University of Alberta in 1952.

Since there were no jobs available for agriculture graduates, he was advised to enroll in the faculty of education, convocating in 1958 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture and a Bachelor of Education degree in Vocational Agriculture.

Irl's first professional assignment was teaching vocational agriculture in Rimbey.

In 1959, the Department of Education asked him to sit on the High School Vocational Agriculture Curriculum Committee. In 1960, Irl was invited to Edmonton to participate in the Science Olympics, the forerunner of the Science Fair, and remained active with science fairs in Edmonton until 1998. He piloted the new Physics 30 curriculum in 1961.

He accepted a placement teaching science and vocational agriculture, a new curriculum program, at Rocky Mountain House High School in 1964. He moved to Memorial Composite High School in Stony Plain in 1965 to teach high school science. Irl conducted physics in-services throughout the province on the weekends as well.

He enrolled in the Master of Science Teaching program at the University of Montana in 1965 and convoked with a Master of Science degree in 1967.

In 1958, Irl was elected president of the Rimbey-Sylvan Heights Sub-Local of the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), served on the executive of the Ponoka Local and chaired salary negotiations from 1962 to 1964. In 1962, he became an inaugural member of the ATA Science Council. Following his move to Stony Plain, Irl was elected president of the ATA Science Council. In 1968, he became the president of the Parkland Local and served on the Biology Sub-Committee. Irl was voted in as the district representative of the Edmonton District in 1971 and served on the ATA Executive Council until 1974.

He was granted a sabbatical in 1975 when he was appointed to represent Canada at the Commonwealth Institute in London as a travelling lecturer, educating British students about Canada.

Following his service in Britain, an application for a Canadian Teachers Federation Project Overseas posting resulted in an assignment to Gambia, a former British colony in West Africa.

Back at Memorial Composite High School in 1980, Irl was designated department head for science and mathematics until he retired in 1993. He also sat on the University of Alberta Practicum Committee, chairing the Program Committee. Irl continued to supervise student teachers until 1996.

He became an ARTA member immediately upon retirement in June 1993 and began working on the ARTA Health Benefits Committee in October of 1993, serving in some capacity until the inception of the ARTA Benefit Plan Trust in 2008, when he was elected chair of the ARTA Benefit Plan Trust Fund Board of Trustees. Irl was also a member of the Strategic Planning Committee, serving on the first retreat committee.

He played a significant role in the establishment of the Parkland branch and the satellite branch in British Columbia.

Irl also joined ERTA in 1993, serving as the vice-president for several years before being elected president in September 1998. He remained in that position for four years. In 2006, he received an honorary life membership for his dedication to the branch and its members.

Irl had been a member of the Alberta Institute of Agrologists for over fifty years and was instrumental in the purchase, by the University of Alberta, of the Bockock farm, located just north of St. Albert, for agriculture research.

He joined the Edmonton Seniors One Voice Association, a non-profit group that advocated on behalf of seniors for services provided by the City of Edmonton. Irl chaired the organization from 1998 until 2009. He served as a board member of the Alberta Council on Aging for more than twenty years after retirement and advocated for affordable housing for seniors as a member of the Edmonton Coalition for Housing and Homelessness for ten years until 2013.

In 1996, he became an active member of SAGE (the Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton), organizing and serving as a travel guide for their day trips to points of interest in central and northern Alberta for over fifteen years. He had been actively involved as a volunteer and a participant in the Elderhostel Program, hosting forty programs in various locations in Canada. Irl was a charter member of the Alberta Ability Lodges Society, a charitable non-profit organization established in 2008 to provide respite for disabled individuals.

He received an award for organizing community as well as high school blood donor clinics for over twenty-five years, an activity he began in 1966. Irl was involved as a blood donor until 2002.

In 1987, he joined the Orchid Society of Alberta, was an active member of the executive and even chaired the Canadian Orchid Congress in 1995, the largest held in Canada. That year, he joined the Wagner Natural Area Society. He spent over thirty years overseeing the delicate ecosystem located between Edmonton and Spruce Grove.

He has travelled throughout most of Canada, in the United States, in several countries in western Europe and to China.

Irl currently resides in a seniors' care facility in northeast Edmonton.

Vi Oko

ARTA ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

The ARTA Annual Golf Tournament, hosted by the Alberta Retired Teachers Charitable Foundation (ARTCF), will be held at the Quarry located at 945 167 Avenue in Edmonton's northeast. The Charity Golf Classic begins with a shotgun start at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, July 8, 2024.

Go to artaevents.net for more information and to register.

ARTA WELLNESS WALK



The ARTA Wellness Challenge has been transformed. This year, each of the eighteen branches is organizing a walk and inviting their members to participate. The ERTA branch event will be held on Thursday, April 25, and will involve a choice of either a short 1.2 km. walk or a 1.9 km. walk (or both walks if one wants an extra physical workout).

The ARTA office has set up an online registration form. To register, open the February edition of ARTAfacts that was emailed to all ARTA members. Go to the section titled ARTA Heart and Sole Wellness Walk and click on the dark blue rectangle. On the page that opens up, scroll down to the bottom where you can state your name, select your walk of choice and indicate a T-shirt size.

T-shirts will be ordered for all walkers who register before March 15. They will be distributed at the event. Anyone is welcome to join the walk but only ARTA members will receive an event T-shirt.

Those people who sign up will have maps emailed to them showing the route of each walk. One route goes through Louise McKinney Riverfront Park and the other around Henriette Muir Edwards Park.

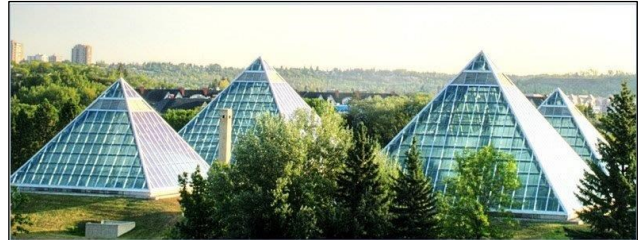
Participants will assemble at the north end of the Muttart Conservatory parking lot about ten minutes prior to the 1:00 p.m. start time for both walks.

Donations for the Food Bank are encouraged.

There is no need to enter the pyramid admission area (see Muttart Conservatory Visit) to access Café Bloom.

MUTTART CONSERVATORY VISIT

The Muttart Conservatory has one of Canada's largest indoor botanical collections with over 700 plant species housed in three climate-controlled pyramids. A fourth 'feature' pyramid has fabulous themed displays.



On April 25, immediately after the ARTA Wellness Walk, ERTA members will have an opportunity to tour this lovely attraction at a subsidized cost of \$8.00 (regular \$12.95). This offer is possible due to a branch subsidy grant from ARTA.

Family and friends are welcome to join the tour; however, they will be required to pay the regular entrance fee.

Register for the Muttart Conservatory visit or the walk (see ARTA Wellness Walk) or both events.

Since some members will be engaged in one or both walks while others will be registered for the Muttart visit, people will arrive at different times. It is recommended that those who are only visiting the pyramids come at 2:15 p.m. Go into the main entrance of the building where an ERTA representative will greet you, record your arrival and give you further instructions.

To register for a visit to the Muttart Conservatory, please phone Joan Harrison at 780-467-3885 or email her at cornerstone@telus.net then send a cheque for \$8.00, made payable to the Edmonton Retired Teachers' Association, to 57 Highland Way, Sherwood Park, Alberta T8A 5E7. Alternatively, sign up at the spring luncheon. The deadline for registration is April 4.

There is a restaurant on site called Café Bloom. It is located just inside the main doors and can be accessed by patrons without going through the admission gateway. The café offers a wide variety of beverages, pastries and sandwiches along with main dishes. No formal arrangement will be made for a group lunch.

IF YOU WANT IT, IT CAN HAPPEN!

All the evidence anyone needs is already in—the key to staying young and healthy for as long as possible is to stay active and socially engaged.

Ending a career means leaving behind a ready-made social group. New retirees often find it difficult to meet people who share similar interests and with whom they can enjoy activities.

Paul Rykes, a new retiree and former physical education teacher who has just joined the ERTA Program Committee, is interested in setting up small group activities with the aim of providing opportunities for members to get out, meet other retired teachers, reconnect with former colleagues, laugh and just have fun.

You might be interested in participating in physical activities such as pickleball, yoga, tai chi, biking or walking. Perhaps becoming part of a group to play cards or board games like bridge, cribbage, chess, Monopoly, Scrabble, etc. would appeal to you. Getting together to attend a summer event such as the Folk Festival or The Fringe could be arranged. Any activity for which there is sufficient interest can be set up—even some games popular in other countries such as boules, darts and pub quizzes.

You might find kindred spirits for areas of mutual interest such as travel, home renovation, health concerns, or even finding out what that driver's licence test is like when you turn seventy-five.

If you would like to see a group activity created so you can meet colleagues but do not know where or how to start, Paul can help. He is willing to set up requested activities and get the groups started. When, where and how often people get together would be determined by the participants.

The degree of interest in any activity needs to be established before planning can start.

Please call Paul at 780-257-8452 or email him at pauljer9@gmail.com to tell him about any or all activities you would like to see offered to ERTA members. He would love to hear from you.

The Wi-Fi went down for five minutes, so I had to talk to my family. They seem like nice people.

~ Author Unknown

WINE TASTING

Link up with your friends and colleagues to learn about the marvellous wines of Spain and Chile! Thomas Coburger from Wine and Beyond will lead us in a fun-filled evening of wine tasting. Each participant will receive six wine samples and a small charcuterie and cheese plate from the Italian Centre Shop South, as well as a wealth of knowledge!



Event 1: *Wines of Spain*

Date: April 10, 2024, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Registration for Event 1 closes April 2. (Note: If numbers warrant it, a second date has been set for April 16.)

Event 2: *Wines of Chile*

Date: June 11, 2024, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Registration for Event 2 closes June 3. (Note: If needed, a second date has been set for June 13.)

The location, price, registration and process for payment for both events are as follows:

Location: The tasting room at the MacTaggart Ridge Wine and Beyond at 5962 Mullen Way

Price: Members—\$30; Non-members—\$35

Registration: Members who receive the newsletter online, click [here](#) to fill out and submit the registration form. Those members who receive their newsletter by post or anyone who requires assistance, please contact one of the following board members:

- Janice Aubry at janicedaubry@gmail.com or at 780-868-9269; or
- Lyndi Karbonik at lckarbonik@gmail.com or at 780-932-7314

Payment: The registration fee will be collected by staff at the store upon arrival. Debit or credit cards and cash will be accepted.

Space for both events is limited, so register early.

Please note that food allergies or preferences cannot be accommodated at these events.



Come taste the grape!



MAYFIELD DINNER THEATRE

Seating in all of the booths in Section C reserved for *One Night with the King* at the Mayfield Dinner Theatre on March 27 have been spoken for.

Reservations may be possible for the more expensive seating, but only if requested immediately.

Reservations are available for the iconic musical, *Grease*, on Wednesday, May 1, 2024. Sing along with the instantly recognizable hits and enjoy an afternoon of nostalgia.



Brunch tickets in Section C are \$85.47 apiece. Seats could be booked in other sections (B-\$96.18, A-\$100.65, and Gold-\$109.57) if requested early. Telephone Vi Oko at 780-459-8013 then mail a cheque to her, made payable to the Edmonton Retired Teachers' Association, at 20 Glenhaven Crescent, St. Albert, Alberta T8N 1A5. Tickets are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.

SECOND WIND CONFERENCE



Shifting Gears

Retirees will be wheeling their way to the Chateau Louis Conference Centre in Edmonton on **September 12, 2024**, to attend the eleventh **Second Wind Conference**.

Comedian Ken Valgardson kicks off the day followed by a wide variety of engaging speakers, refreshment breaks and a delicious buffet lunch. Senior-focused businesses and local artisans host displays throughout the day, and a 'wine down,' along with dozens of door prizes, caps a great day.

All of these features are included for the same low conference fee as last year!

For a list of session topics and speakers, visit secondwindconference.ca in mid-April.

Treat yourself to this informative and uplifting health and wellness event with friends and former colleagues!

Mark the date, invite a friend and see you **at the Second Wind!**

ARTA PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

Enter the 2024 photography contest in one of two divisions—as a novice who has not won before in any category, or as a master having previously been a winner.

Participants are welcome to submit entries in one or more of the following categories:

- **Travel**—Photographs of your travel adventures, wherever they took you.
- **Nature**—The physical world including plants, animals, the landscape, and other features and products of the earth, excluding humans and human creations.
- **Colour**—Interpret this category as you will. Snap people, objects or entire scenes that embody colour.
- **Detail**—Zoom in and focus to show as much detail as possible.



All regular and affiliate ARTA members in good standing are eligible to enter. It is important to include your ARTA membership number on the official entry form. Full details for the contest are available online at arta.net/photo-contest.

Winners of the twelfth annual photo contest will be announced in the fall issue of *news&views* as well as posted on ARTA electronic media sites.

All entries must be received in the ARTA office on or before May 31, 2024.

BYLAW REVISIONS

The *Societies Act* specifies that the association's membership be notified of any proposed amendments a minimum of twenty-one days prior to an organization's annual general meeting.

The existing Bylaw 2.1.3.2 cites May 15 as the deadline for submitting a nomination for an ERTA Honorary Life Membership. The revision would change the deadline date to April 30 to allow for sufficient time for the evaluation of each nomination and a recommendation to be made before the May board meeting.

The other change would involve substituting the uppercase letters in "Annual General Meeting" for lowercase ones in Bylaw 3.1.

ARTA CPP WEBINAR

The Alberta Government's proposal to establish an Alberta Pension Plan (APP) prompted ARTA to host a webinar with facts about the Canadian Pension Plan (CPP). Jeffrey Hodgson, a manager of the CPP, provided a comprehensive overview of the plan. The Alberta Government did not accept an offer to participate.

The CPP is administered by an independent Board of Directors that operates at arm's length from the government. Members of the CPP Investment Board (CPPIB) are financial professionals who direct the fund. Changes to the *Investment Act* require the approval of two-thirds of the participating nine provinces. Quebec had a pension plan prior to the formation of the CPP so the province chose not to participate in the federal plan. Their members now pay more for equivalent benefits. All CPP contributors pay the same rate regardless of where they live in Canada.

The governing board aims to keep risks low while maximizing returns. Initially, investments only included provincial bonds and low-risk investments. The Office of the Chief Actuary tracks all fund investments and payouts.

Canadian birth rates were declining and people were living longer by the 1990s. For fund sustainability, the investment strategy was changed to investing globally. The CPPIB now has assets of \$576 billion with the funds being invested in fifty-five countries through nine international offices.

Among national pension funds, CPP investments were ranked first with a ten-year annualized rate of return of 10.9% between the fiscal years 2013 and 2022.

Before leaving the CPP, many things need to be considered including calculating the actual dollar amount Alberta would get from the asset transfer; contribution rates required of Alberta workers to maintain the fund; portability of pensions when people move in and out of the province; the benefit of risk pooling (there is strength in numbers); and the costs for both start-up (estimated at between \$100 million to \$1 billion) and for the management structure set up. One must also keep in mind that, as Alberta's currently young population ages, payouts will increase and that an APP would be very vulnerable to political interference.

No mention was made about a referendum—not the possible wording or whether or not the results would be binding.

Creation of an APP raises numerous concerns. Keep yourself informed!

Maurine Maslen



HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

The honorary life membership award is intended to formally recognize ERTA members who have made a significant contribution to the association.

The ERTA bylaws state that three criteria must be met for a nominee to qualify for this award. Candidates must be a current member of ERTA, they must have been a member of the branch for at least five (5) years and they must have made a significant contribution to the association.

Any ERTA member may nominate an individual for this award by hard copy or electronically using the nomination form on the myerta.org website.

Email the form to Ray Roy at rayroy@shaw.ca or to Mary Dunnigan at mary.dunnigan@gmail.com with the subject line *ERTA Honorary Life Membership Award*. If preferred, send a printed copy to Ray at 9926 176 Avenue NW, Edmonton, Alberta T5X 5W2 or to Mary at 10403 135 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2C5.

Submissions must be received by 6:00 p.m. on April 30. Awards will be made at the September luncheon.

ARTA VOLUNTEER AWARD

The ARTA Volunteer Award recognizes the outstanding volunteer contributions made by retired teachers within their respective communities and beyond.

In 500 words or less, describe how the retired teacher you have nominated has provided exceptional service in their community or elsewhere in Alberta. Include a maximum one-page biography of the nominee composed of a bulleted summary of their personal background and their teaching history.

Submit your nomination to either Mary Dunnigan or Ray Roy (see Honorary Life Membership submission information above).