



PEIRTA Newsletter

Prince Edward Island Retired Teachers' Association

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From the President

As I write this report it is still summer, but by the time retired teachers read it, the active teachers and students will have already settled into a new school year. Newly retired teachers will have experienced for the first time what it feels like to be 'not returning to school.' There were probably mixed feelings—maybe missing meeting new students but maybe not missing the tremendous amount of work associated with starting a new year. Sunday nights should now be their new favorite night of the week. I wish to congratulate and send best wishes for a happy retirement to each of the newly re-

tired teachers.

I attended the national meeting of the Canadian Association of Retired Teachers (ACER-CART) May 30-June 2 in Ottawa. I will expand on this later in a report in another section. One of the resolutions which was passed at the meetings was to lobby the federal government in advocating for a minister responsible for seniors. It was great news to learn that the Honorable Filomena Tassi was appointed in July as the federal minister of seniors. She was on PEI in August with PM Justin Trudeau. I did see her on the stage set up in a park in Charlottetown but I was disappointed that I did not get to meet her in person. Maybe there will be another opportunity at another time. Retired teachers' associations at all levels will continue to advocate that the government gives her the time and resources that she will need to carry out her work for seniors' issues.



The PEIRTA is hosting the Eastern Canadian Retired Teacher Organization October 24/25 at The Hotel on Pownal. We are looking forward to working together as executive members and to continue to advocate for retired seniors and our issues.

I am looking forward to seeing many island retired teachers at our 2018 AGM on November 1.

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Visit our website at
www.peirta.com

From the Editor

Much as I hate to say it, it won't be long before we're into cold and flu season. Most of us know how we should behave in order improve our chances of avoiding the flu, but I thought I few reminders might not be inappropriate. Tips are taken from a flu protection checklist that I found on the Public Health Agency of Canada website. Anything in parentheses is my editorializing and should not be considered medical expertise!

1. Get a flu shot. This is commonly considered to be the single best way to prevent catching/spreading the flu.
2. Wash your hands. Scrub with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Wash before and after eating, after being in a public place, after touching surfaces that may be contaminated, after using the wash-room, coughing, or sneezing.

- If you can't wash, use an alcohol based hand sanitizer.
3. Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose, and mouth.
 4. Cough and sneeze into your arm/sleeve, not your hand. Dispose of tissues as soon as possible and wash your hands.
 5. Keep common surface areas clean and disinfected. These include keyboards, telephones, light switches, door knobs. Viruses can live on hard surfaces for up to 48 hours. (Ever sit at a table in a restaurant, carefully use your hand sanitizer, then reach down with both hands and pull your chair in closer to the table? Think about it!)
 6. If you get sick, stay home. (I don't want you in my space if you're contagious or might be

contagious.)

7. A couple of other things worth mentioning do not appear on this particular site. A pneumonia shot may be recommended for some people—talk to your doctor. And all of this is even more important for anyone who has a depressed immune system or is on immunosuppressant drugs.

PEIRTA Executive does not necessarily agree with opinions expressed in material authored by those other than official representatives of the PEIRTA, and information about opportunities offered by others is for information only—no endorsement is implied.

Next issue mid-February.. Submit material to margstewart@pei.eastlink.ca.

If you wish to read this newsletter online instead of receiving a hard copy, send me an email and I will let you know when each issue should appear on our site and on the PEITF site.

Letters to the editor should be a maximum of 200 words, must include a one-line bio, and may be edited for length..

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First Annual PEIRTA Golf Tournament



Pictured with RTA Vice President Wayne Denman is Paula Finkle, Board Member of the Esther Finkle Walk for Kids, as they plan for a putting contest and the “Beat the Pro” contest to be held during the tournament to assist the organization in meeting its goals.

The Esther Finkle Walk for Kids assists children in their efforts to broaden their abilities. We wanted to support an organization that dealt with the youth of Prince Edward Island. Esther Finkle embraced the gift of children and viewed each child as unique and special. She believed in their dreams and potential and endeavored to help them in any way possible. Her caring and commitment to chil-



dren have inspired others to continue her work of honoring children. It is estimated that over \$700 was raised during the event. A final count will be done once all the bills are dealt with. A very positive first effort!

What began as a dull and wet morning became a perfect golf day for the 45 participants in the inaugural PEIRTA Annual Golf Tournament at Eagles Glenn Golf Course in Cavendish on September 4, 2018.

“They came from Souris, Tignish, Montague, Cornwall, Summerside, and Charlottetown, and all had a great time. It was nice to see people once again—you could see the genuine happiness as people reconnected with friends from the past,” reports Wayne Denman—initiator, chief organizer, and facilitator for the day. “They even enjoyed the “Pop Quiz” that they were given at the start—some even spent time after they had completed play to try to get the correct answers.”

We had division play for female, male and mixed teams. Bragging rights for the Female Champions went to Ginette Plourde, Marie Rocheleau, Christine Murphy, and Wanda Ellis with a fine score of 68.

Male champs were Keith Thompkins, Larry Wright, Roger Baillie,

and Ron Chambers whose 63 gave them a two-shot victory over Martin Elsinga's and Randy Cheverie's teams.

The mixed team championship team was comprised of Harvey Mazzerolle, Paul Cyr, Audrey

Buchanan, and Brenda Millar who shot a smooth 66.

Karen Fisher and Joe Brown “Beat the Pro” in a Closest to the Pin contest.

Brenda Millar and Ginette Plourde captured the closest to the pin on numbers 4 and 6 respectively.

A big thank you goes to sponsors and all those who donated prizes—so generously that everyone went home with something. And of course, kudos to Wayne and his team of volunteers to put a tremendous amount of work into making this first annual event a huge success.

PEIRTA AGM

Nov 1, 2018

St. Eleanor's Lion's Club

121 East Drive

Summerside, PE

Registration 9 A.M.

Meeting 10:00 A.M.

Lunch 12:00

Guest Speakers

Dianne Nabuurs, Cancer Society: Services Available for Cancer Patients

Zoe Hawkins, Home Care Consultant: Managing Care-giver Stress

ACER – CART AGM REPORT 2018

I attended the ACER-CART (national) meeting in Ottawa May 31– June 2. It was a wonderful learning experience. The successes and challenges of each of the 10 provincial organizations were shared and we had plenty of time to hold discussions regarding seniors' issues. On the first day I attended a very informative presentation for new directors, presented by the Exec. Director, Roger Regimbal.

There were a number of highlights over the next two days.

1. Alyson Hillier, President, NSRTA

Alyson did an excellent presentation on Advanced Care Planning, for which she is trained in NS. She presented advice on "Who will speak for you when you cannot speak for yourself due to illness or disability?" In this case, a substitute decision maker is needed. She gave excellent advice (not legal) on how to proceed with the planning. More information can be obtained from Alyson upon request.

2. Barb Farrell, Doctorate of Pharmacy, Ontario (Deprescribing)

Barb gave an excellent presentation on poly-pharmacy (taking more meds than needed) and deprescribing of medications. This was an eye-opener with the concern of too many seniors on too many and too much medication which leads to falls, kidney damage, liver damage, etc. Deprescribing (taking away meds) is now a reality. For further information, she provided a couple of

websites.

Deprescribing.org; Medstopper

info@predescribingnetwork.ca

3. Geoff Norquay – Lobby Consultant, Parliament Hill

Geoff has been very involved in political life on Parliament Hill for many years. He now has his own business whereby he teaches people and organizations how to lobby the government correctly and effectively.

4. Johnston's Team (Insurance) – Update on newer items

Members from the Johnson's Insurance team gave an informative update on medical insurance, particularly pertaining to medical marijuana, as well as an update on world travel insurance.

A revised strategic plan was put into place for 2018-2019, as follows:

- Participate in 2019 Federal election by cooperating with other like-minded groups to 1. Protect pensions 2. Advocate for a single payer national pharmacy 3. Advocate for a Federal Minister Responsible for Seniors;
- Continue to monitor: 1. The 10 year bilateral health funding agreements with the provinces 2. The conversion of defined benefit plans to target benefit plans;
- Support the enhancement of CPP;

- Oppose the privatization of health care.

Elections were held with the following results

President —Bill Berryman, NSRTA

Vice-President —Gerry Thiede, BCRTA

East Reg. Rep—Margaret Uruquart, NBSRT

Ontario Rep—Martin Higgs, RTO

West Rep – Gordon Cummings, ARTA

The CTF went over the top in supporting us and looking after us. They prepared us a BBQ lunch on Friday and served a catered lunch on Saturday. Both were delicious.

A banquet(sponsored by Johnson Insurance) with presentations was held at the Ottawa Marriott.

On the last day, a well deserved and emotional presentation was made to Jim McAulay, PEIRTA, who has been a much valued, hard working exec. member of ACER-CART. He will be missed by many.

PEIRTA—AGM—Nov 1, 2018

St. Eleanor's Lion's Club

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Speakers

Dianne Nabuurs, Cancer Society: Services Available for Cancer Patients

Zoe Hawkins, Home Care Consultant: Managing Caregiver Stress



How Do Retired Teachers Spend Their Time?



President Cynthia with Kelsey Duffy, recipient of the senior class PEIRTA award at UPEI. Kelsey is a graduate of Colonel Gray High, and received her Bachelor of Education in 2018. The recipient of the \$1000 entrance RTA Scholarship was Krystal Woodside (no picture), a Westisle Composite grad.

Peter Meggs (retired as Special Ed Coordinator after years as resource teacher) submitted this picture taken at a reunion for retired Summerside Intermediate staff members at Red Shores Summerside Raceway. Peter tweets, "Great to see Meeker, Gauch, Tom, George, Mike, Garth, Rudy, Peter, Paul, Guy, Bernie, Gwen, Reg, Real and Smitty again! Best people you could ever hope to work with."

Change of Address: Pension & Benefits

Pensions & Benefits asks that you keep your mailing address up-to-date.

Each year, the Pensions & Benefits office distributes pay advice slips, T4A's and newsletters directly to pensioners of the Teachers' Superannuation Fund (TSF). To ensure that pensioners don't miss any mailings, and to receive TSF related mail in a timely manner, please remember to keep your mailing address up-to-date with Pensions & Benefits. Please contact the Pensions & Benefits office by phone at (902) 368-4200 or by e-mail at tsf@gov.pe.ca to provide updated information and be prepared to provide your name and date of birth to confirm your identity.

Group Insurance Booklet

Please note that you can find the details of our group health plan online at www.peitf.com. The link is on the opening page.

Curling, Anyone? ~ by Kimball Blanchard

What a hot humid summer! Lots of sun, plenty of outdoor activities, the beach, the golf course, hiking, biking, concerts, socializing. Unfortunately living where we do means that summer is brief and as the fall approaches outdoor activities become a greater challenge and many of us begin a period of hibernation until summer arrives again. Senior activities, community card parties, bowling, skiing, and similar activities can fill some of the winter hours but many people find staying physically active a real chore.

A winter sport that has drawn the interest of many people, including retirees, through increased television coverage is curling. Top curlers like Brett Gallant and Brad Gushue have become household names and curling events have become must see TV programming. But the vast majority of TV viewers have never been inside a curling rink to see a “live” curling game and even fewer have ever tried to play the game.

Curling is a game for anyone from age five to ninety plus. Curling clubs offer programs for junior curlers and Curl PEI offers competitive events at all levels. There is a level of curling for everyone, including seniors, both female and male, who have never ventured on a sheet of curling ice.

“The rink is cold!” “The ice is slippery!” “I can get down in the hack but I can’t get up!” “I will never understand the strategy of the game, the in-turn, the out-turn, when to sweep and why!” “I am too old!” These are the most common com-

ments when the issue of trying curling is raised.

Many retired teachers have discovered that there are simple answers to all of these issues. Curling equipment reflects modern technology. There are lightweight brushes, and warm, comfortable curling shoes. Ice grippers that provide for safe movement on the ice have made it possible to be on the ice without a fear of falling. Some curling rinks have heating systems on the ice surface and the movement of the players on the ice serves to allay the cold temperatures. Sweeping rocks as they move down the ice provides cardiovascular exercise and helps to maintain fitness. The good thing about sweeping is that curlers can determine how much physical activity they can comfortably use while playing. The skip yelling “sweep” as seen on TV is a part of the game but for social curlers it doesn’t always mean a lot and may have little to do with the ability of the sweepers. Help is available to all curlers, enabling them to emulate Brad or Brett and while shots are not always made, the strategy used during the game makes it an interesting mental exercise as well.

One of the greatest developments for people wishing to learn to curl in their later years is the use of the delivery stick. Using the delivery stick involves delivering the 44lb. curling stone without getting down in the hack or lifting the rock, and the end result is a rock movement similar to a curling shot as shown on TV. The curling challenge is the same but the physical challenge is diminished greatly. Many seniors have the mobility to move up and down the ice and sweep, and the delivery stick, which

is used by many senior curlers, enables them to compete in social and competitive curling events.

“I can’t curl because I am not mobile and can’t sweep!” A stick curling game with two-person teams, designed for people with limited mobility, has been developed. The national stick curling championship will be held at the Cornwall Curling Club in April, 2019.



It’s worth mentioning that one of our members, Ernie Stavert, was the initial driving force behind the introduction of the delivery stick and the development of stick curling in PEI. He continues to help grow the sport.

Curling has been taken up by a significant number of RTA members. It is a social activity available at various clubs across the Island. Membership fees are very reasonable, and many clubs have flexible memberships and flexible schedules with drop-in programs. You will meet former students, people from inside and outside your community, people who want to help others learn the game and at the same time be physically active. No one is too old to curl as clubs have active curlers in their late eighties and early nineties. Curling clubs offer learn-to-curl nights at the beginning of the curling season as a starter. It is a great activity and one that will help pass the long cold winter.



It is really difficult to believe that I am now entering my fourth year as President of the PEITF. Once again I am amazed at the swift passage of time! As President I have seen many changes in Island education. The English Language School Board was dissolved which created major structural changes to our education system. We went through an arduous school review process and for the first time in many years, contract negotiations ended in arbitration. I believe it is safe to say that I have learned a great deal in my role as President.

Contract negotiations are still ongoing for our next Memorandum of Agreement. The Economic Welfare Committee continues to work hard to advocate for better working conditions for teachers. My school visits and conversations with teachers constantly remind me that teaching is becoming more and more difficult. Class size and composition are still among the biggest issues affecting teacher workload, and we are hopeful that our government will respond to the increased de-

mands of today's classrooms. We need access to services for our students and we need more teachers for our classrooms.

Substitute teacher shortages have been a growing concern for schools across the Island. Teachers are coming into work when they are sick, or sometimes absences remain unfilled. Teachers are being asked to cover classes on top of their own teaching assignments. We continue to raise this concern with the employer and government, as we believe substitute shortages will continue if they are not addressed soon.

As I'm sure you may have heard ... I was named President Designate for the Canadian Teachers' Federation

in July. This is the first time in CTF's 98-year history that a PEITF official will hold the presidency. So once I complete my term as PEITF President in July of 2019, I will be relocating to Ottawa for two years. I am truly honored and humbled to continue to represent the teaching profession at a national level.

I hope you all had an enjoyable and memorable summer with family and friends. I look forward to seeing you all in the months ahead.

Address Changes

If your address changes, or if you know anyone who has had a change of address and/or is not receiving this newsletter, please have him or her notify our membership chair (contact info on page 2).

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Teachers Do Make a Difference ~ by Kimball Blanchard

Teaching is a wonderful and honourable profession. After a career in schools working with children we have earned a pension and many memories that we can carry with us into retirement. But I wonder how many retirees leave their schools wondering if in fact they made a difference, whether they had an effect on the lives of the children they had spent so many hours with both in and out of class. The immediate progress of some students is often obvious as teachers see students grow and mature, gain confidence, learn social skills, and progress to the next level in their learning. In many instances, however, the results of our work are not overt and we are left wondering what more could have been done.

Meeting former students often provides some reassurance that our work was appreciated. This past summer I along with some other retirees attended a 30-year and a 40-year reunion. These former students are now in their late 40's and late 50's, have raised families, and in some cases have grandchildren in the school systems. To have these people greet you as a friend, as a person who had an influence on their lives, and tell stories about events that occurred 40 years ago but were entrenched in their memories makes us realize that we had an influence even though we were not aware of it. One student related a story to me about an incident that she has talked about during her career in the school system. The main point of her story was her relief when the incident was dealt with and I did not tell her mother (a teacher). Who knew? Many stories were told about successful careers in all walks of life, from people who stayed on

the Island and from people who left. The common theme was the opportunity for students to say thank you. The memories and poignant moments shared, the humorous events related, the fact that some former students were still prepared to show confidence in their teacher and detail aspects of their lives, both positive and negative, is indicative of the trust established thirty or forty years ago.

Observing the graduates at these reunions and remembering the academic careers of some it was obvious that people found their niche, whether it be as a dairy farmer on the family farm, a fashion designer on a national stage, a lawyer, a clerk, a teacher teaching because of their own positive school experience, etc. All had a thank you for a teacher or teachers at some level of their education career.

While leaving these reunions my question was answered. Have we done anything, have we made a difference? The evidence was there. We have had a lasting influence on the lives of many people and we should feel good and be proud of our accomplishments.

At a recent RTA Executive meeting an executive member related a story about receiving a knock on her door one morning and the person said, "Do you know who I am?" She didn't. "Do you remember chasing me down the road with your car?" Right away she knew who he was.

Often the reluctant learner finds a career despite the fact that learning was not a priority in school. The teacher obviously had an impact that went beyond academics. How often has that happened to our students and we were not aware. Reunions with individuals or groups of students allows us to appreciate our work over many years.

PEITF Travel

Insurance: Update on Pre-Existing Medical Conditions

Our out-of-province travel insurance plan has a 90-day medical stability clause. This means that if you have a pre-existing medical condition, it must be considered medically stable for 90 days prior to your departure date if you are to be covered in the event of a medical emergency related to this condition while you are traveling.

A pre-existing condition is considered stable if the member, in the 90 days before the departure date, has not:

1. Been treated or evaluated for new symptoms or related conditions;
2. Had symptoms that increased in frequency or severity, or examination findings indicate the condition has worsened;
3. Been prescribed a new treatment or change in treatment for the condition .
4. Been admitted to a hospital for the condition; or
5. Been awaiting new treatments or tests regarding the medical condition (does not include routine tests).

Number 3 generally does not include reductions in medication due to improvement in a condition, or regular changes in medication as part of an established treatment plan—but each case must be reviewed individually. A change shortly before departure, for example, with a subsequent reaction, might present problems. So if you have any doubt, call Medavie Blue Cross at 1-800-667-4511, Travel Department, for clarification if you are planning to travel outside PEI..