**ALBERTA RETIRED TEACHERS’ ASSOCIATION**

**MEMBER REPORT**

**2019**

I am pleased to represent ARTA as the newly elected representative. I have been involved with other boards and committees including Olds College, Red Deer College, and minor sports and church organizations. Also, my wife and I work in both provincial and federal elections. I have been a member of ARTA for 12 years. I am currently a member of the Strategic Planning and Advocacy Committee and represent ARTA on the Seniors’ Task Force of Public Interest Alberta (PIA).

1. **Major Concerns at the Provincial level:**

Universal drug program - ARTA has been involved in discussions with the province regarding a provincial drug program. Our CEO and president met with the previous Minister of Health regarding this issue.

Seniors Housing–ARTA has concerns regarding the availability and affordability of assisted-living facilities in the province. ARTA members have researched and submitted articles in the magazine *news&views* regarding this issue. The previous Minister of Housing accepted an invitation to speak at an ARTA annual retreat.

With a new United Conservative Party taking over from the NDP, our challenge will be to make connections with a new government.

Ageing in place–ARTA has concerns with the lack of programs to keep seniors in their homes through home care and incentive programs offered by the province, including appropriate tax programs put in place for seniors to allow them to maintain an active and affordable lifestyle after retiring.

The above concerns were sent to candidates in the April election in a series of questions and the answers were posted on-line and in print. Five of the 12 political parties responded: NDP, Communist Party of Alberta, Green Party of Alberta, Liberal Party of Alberta, and the United Conservative Party.

As of April 16, 2019, Alberta has a new government led by the United Conservative Party. Jason Kenny resounded with the majority of Albertans, appealing to their need to have a stronger economy. He promised to repeal the carbon tax that the NDP brought in, set up a “war room” to fight the federal government, and get the pipelines through that the NDP failed to do.

We will wait to see how this government fulfills its promises. In the survey that the UCP completed for ARTA prior to the election, they indicated that taking care of seniors was a priority. We will see what unfolds over time.

1. **Major Concerns at the Federal level:**

ARTA is keeping an eye on what may come out of the Dr. Eric Hoskins Advisory Council report regarding National Pharmacare.

The issue of addressing the need to protect pensions is always in discussion. ARTA is pleased to have been actively involved in the ACER-CART Pension E-Petition, and we were pleased with the 5414 members that chose to participate. This was our first experience in this format, and we are looking forward to future involvement.

1. **Main Activities of our association since the last ACER-CART AGM**

ARTA’s Mission is to support an engaged lifestyle after retirement through member-centered services, advocacy, communication, wellness, and leadership.

1. **Membership**

Membership continues to grow, and as of April 2019, ARTA has 22,572 members. This is a year-to-year growth of 8.3%.

1. **Communicating in ARTA**

Our colourful informational magazine, *news&views,* includes information for seniors in all aspects of life. This magazine is produced 4 times a year.

ARTAfacts provides our membership with the latest news via email 8 times a year. It is sent to members in the months that *news&views* does not come out.

The ARTA website continues to improve and it has become very easy for all seniors to navigate.

There are constant updates on Facebook.

ARTA has also made its way onto You Tube with: ARTA–Animated Introduction. This is a quick, easy to understand, animated introduction to what ARTA is all about.

The Strategic Planning and Advocacy Committee continue to have orientation sessions for new committee members and Board members each fall. During the year, the Chairs of each committee meet to share, review, and discuss business plans and budgets.

Every 3 years, the Governance Committee meets with each committee to review the role and responsibilities of each committee to ensure that committees continue to follow the ARTA strategic plan with its Mission, Vision, and Values. This took place in early 2019 and the final report will be shared and discussed at a future Board of Directors meeting.

1. **Annual Retreat**

A yearly activity that ARTA undertakes is to hold a retreat with guest speakers dealing with all aspects of seniors’ wellness. The theme this year is Organizational Excellence. The retreat is held each year in a beautiful setting of the Rocky Mountains, usually in the town of Canmore. Each branch is invited to participate. Approximately 100 individuals attend. The last Board of Directors meeting of the year is held at the end of this retreat.

1. **Charitable Foundation**

Our Foundation continues its journey to become a charity of choice. Each year, ARTA has groups that we partner with.

This year, ARTA, through its Charitable Foundation has donated funds to the following charities:

Alzheimer Society of Calgary - $14,000

Canadian National Institute of the Blind (CNIB) - $34,000.00

Parkinson’s Society of Alberta - $26,000

1. **Writing contest**

The categories of TheWriting Contest 2019 are: *Flash Fiction, Poetry, and Confessions of a Classroom Clown.* The results are published in *news&views* and reaches an audience of over 22,000 people! The writing contest is well subscribed to.

1. **Photo Contest**

This year ***ARTA is hosting its seventh annual photo contest!*** Photos can be submitted for the categories of *Nature, Monochrome, Travel, and Hometown Pride.*

1. **Wellness**

ARTA is a leader and advocate in the promotion of wellness for retirees.

ARTA develops and implements strategies to enhance the quality of the life of its members and retired people in the community.

Wellness Challenge: Get Moving ARTA!

The Wellness Challenge is a yearly event where ARTA members are encouraged to focus on their personal wellness over the course of three months (April 1–June 30).

Not only are there ARTA branch prizes for winners, but there are also prizes drawn for participating! The ARTA Get Moving Wellness Challenge will track time spent doing any physical activity. Some examples (but not limited to) of physical activities are walking, golfing, swimming, Yoga, Kettle bells, Pickle Ball, biking, skipping, stair climbing, etc.

ARTA Diabetes Book

As a special initiative for 2018, ARTA prepared a *Wellness Guide on Diabetes.* As we age, our risk of being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes increases. This book is not just for those with a diabetes diagnosis, but for everyone. It contains information on what diabetes is, and how to mitigate the risk of it being a personal health concern in the future.

1. **Branch one-day conferences or workshops**

The conferences held in Edmonton (Second Wind), Calgary (Steppin’ Out), and other conferences and workshops in the 18 branches were all well attended.

1. **Annual ARTA golf tournament**

Golf is an extremely sociable sport. It’s a wonderful way to connect with people and make new friends. It’s a great game to play where anyone can compete with a different handicap.

Every year a tournament is organized by an ARTA branch for our members, partners, and community to take part and join in the fun.

1. **Staffing**

We are very proud that for 2 years running ARTA, under the leadership of CEO, Daniel Mulloy, has been a winner of an award for the National Canadian Non-Profit Employer of Choice for non-profit organizations.

Lawrence Hrycan - ACER-CART Director

Marilyn Bossert–ARTA President

Daniel Mulloy - ARTA CEO & Executive Director