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**Association canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants retraités**

**Canadian Association of Retired Teachers**

Date:   January 14, 2022

To: ACER-CART Executive

From: Marilyn Bossert, ACER-CART West Representative

Re: ACER-CART West Members Update

**BCRTA – British Columbia Retired Teachers’ Association**

* + Submitted by Steve Bailey, BC ACER-CART Representative

The BCRTA is enjoying an increasing demand for its pre-retirement workshops. Now that these workshops are available ‘on-line’, participation has significantly increased. The next series will take place monthly from January to May. These workshops continue to be a great source of new members.

At its December 1 Directors’ meeting, the BCTA decided to extend the on-online format for meetings into 2022. Decisions concerning the resumption on in-person gatherings will be made as conditions permit.

The Executive has also created an Ad-Hoc Benefits Committee to oversee and make recommendations to the Board regarding our Extended Health, Dental and Insurance offerings. Outside consultation will be brought in to support this project.

BCRTA standing committees are currently meeting by Zoom, with the next sessions to be held before the February 2nd board meeting. Committees have established their goals and action plans for the current year.

The Board also approved that $10,000 be set aside to support Branch outreach in support of BCRTA members affected by recent floods around the province.

The BCRTA is also exploring ways to increase the effectiveness of provincial zone meetings to strengthen communication during the pandemic. This initiative presents challenges, particularly for the Northern Zone.

A motion from the Advocacy Committee places the current BCRTA goals in line with the work of ACER-CART’s stated goals. The BCRTA thus affirms solidarity with the advocacy goals of our national organization as we work with other like-minded organizations.

The Board also received an informative report on a survey entitled “Transportation in BC”. Findings indicate that there are areas of the province where transportation for seniors is quite spotty.

Our BCRTA information sharing dealing with comparisons of travel insurance plans and extended heath care and dental care plans continues to be very much appreciated by the BCRTA membership.

**STS – Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan**

* + Submitted by Murray Wall, STS Executive Secretary

Apologies for the delay in responding as we’ve had the last couple of days full with our provincial executive meetings.  There is not a lot to provide as an update from STS, although I will mention the following bullets and invite our President Sunil and ACER-CART Rep Helen to add anything they may wish:

 Provincially sponsored recreational activities have not yet begun again, although some are tentatively planned for spring of 2022.

* Provincial Executive and Committees continue to meet via Zoom and conduct the business of the organization.
* An extensive member survey will be started at the end of January through a professional surveying company.
* Some local chapters are beginning to have some activities, although the attendance at these activities seems to be mixed.
* The spring Annual General Meeting of STS will likely again be a virtual event.
* A new Ageism policy will be brought for approval to the AGM.
* The Group Health Benefits Plan that the STS administers was renewed for another two years.
* The STS continues to financially support a Home Supports Initiative for older adults through one of our partner organizations.

 If you are interested in any more detail about any of these items, please let me know.

**RTAM - Retired Teachers’ Association of Manitoba**

– submitted by JoAnne Hoyak, RTAM Vice President and ACER-CART Director

1. In December, the provincial Liberal party introduced to the Manitoba Legislature a private member’s bill which promotes that a seat on the TRAF board be designated for a nominated RTAM member. As the Executive is aware, the utilization of the “New Mode” software has been made available to RTAM to facilitate a letter writing campaign. This would allow us to contact Members of the Legislative Assembly and other stakeholders including OUR members soliciting and encouraging their support before the Bill is debated on the floor of the Legislature in March.
2. The December Board meeting was a “hybrid” affair in terms of virtual / face to face, after which some Directors enjoyed a dinner and an evening of holiday fellowship.
3. The Wellness committee continues to provide valuable and interesting workshops to our members. This month’s offerings include the topics -Retirement Well-being as well as Decluttering.
4. The Pension Committee and the Executive are working with TRAF on a written agreement that will clearly establish the extra services they generously provide RTAM. The engagement of an actuary ‘s advice is also being researched.
5. The Political Advocacy and Public Relations committees are researching the engagement of a professional lobby firm to help promote awareness of our organization with the provincial government particularly, and other stakeholders generally.
6. We continue to solicit meetings with the Government folks to present our 5 proposals which include official recognition legislatively, a designated seat on TRAF, a seat on the Minister’s Council of Education Stakeholders, a representative on the Pension Task Force, and an action plan to deal with COLA.
7. We are still in “move in” and “starting to feel at home” mode as we accustom ourselves to our new location. Huge gratitude to our office staff in this venture.

**ARTA** – **ALBERTA RETIRED TEACHERS’ ASSOCIATION**

* + submitted by Lawrence Hrycan, ARTA ACER-CART Director

Covid continues to present challenges for ARTA. The ARTA staff members continue to work from home, and meet once a week virtually to stay connected.

ARTA committees continue to meet on their regular dates via Zoom. The chairs of the committees met in the fall with the Strategic Planning and Advocacy Committee to go over the progress of the business plans.

At our AGM, we said goodbye to those leaving some committees and welcomed new members. Orientations for new committee members and board members were held after the AGM in October. All meetings are by Zoom.

Our membership passed a motion that everyone who wishes to enter the ARTA office needs to complete a “Voluntary Disclosure and Certification of Covid 19 Vaccination Status.” I filled mine out indicating that I have all my shots and sent it in.

The ARTA Charitable Foundation was launched in 2021 with the following Mission Statement. “From classrooms and beyond, the Alberta Retired Teachers Charitable Foundation and its members are linked by one passionate purpose: to help assist Alberta Seniors in the pursuit of appropriate housing, health services, and education to improve their lives – and our lives! – for years to come.” Our partners in this venture in 2021 are as follows: Parkinson Association of Alberta – received grant of $25,000; Alzheimer Society of Alberta – received a grant of $20,000; Alberta Branch of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind – received a grant of $25,000. We were pleased to be able to help our partners.

The Public Interest Alberta, Seniors Task Force that I attend on behalf of ARTA continues to meet monthly via Zoom. The priorities are similar to ACER-CART, and one of the focuses over 2021-22 is to promote the need for a Seniors’ Advocate. At the present time, it seems that the only province to have an independent Seniors’ Advocate is B.C. CARP is making a major push with the Seniors’ Task Force to stress the importance of this position to the provincial government. The task force also continues to work on striving for Universal Health Care, and one of the reports they are using in their discussions is the Baldwins Reichwein’s Discussion Paper (February 2020).

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Bossert