



**Association canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants Retraités**  
**Canadian Association of Retired Teachers**

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### **2024-25**

I am pleased to report that ACER-CART remains a vibrant, strong and effective organization with sufficient investments and annual dues from our eleven organizations after the RTO/ERO withdrawal from the organization in October 2023.

I want to give a sincere thank you to Gerry, Marilyn, Sharon, Katherine, Helen and Lawrence for their tremendous leadership on the Executive and Committee Chairs over the past year. I would also like to thank the Directors, Alternates, Presidents and Executive Directors for their participation in the November 5, 2024; February 4, 2025 and April 15, 2025 Directors' meetings. Last, but not least, a warm thank you to Executive Director Roger Regimbal for his wise counsel, corporate knowledge and efficiency in making everything run smoothly over the year.

I would not provide what I believe are the 2024-2025 highlights.

### **2025 Federal Election**

A most sincere thank you to Marilyn Bossert and her Communications Committee for the many hours and multiple changes/edits in the production of the two election brochures – Seniors Issues for the 2025 Federal Election, Questions Relatives Aux Personnes Ages pour les Election Federales 2025, the one-page questionnaire for candidates and the setting up of the New Mode software program.

Marilyn worked diligently with her team of Virginia, Yvette, Johnathan, Gary and Jennifer from the Retired Teachers Association of Alberta (ARTA) in developing the written materials. This would not have been possible without the approval of Daniel Molloy, ARTA Executive Director and we owe Daniel a huge debt of gratitude. As the saying goes "It takes a village".

I received many positive comments and thank yous from members across Canada for the excellent information on the five topics in the brochures, as well as the stunning colors and vibrant layout of the brochures. Many members also informed me that they used the one-page questionnaire at candidates' forums/townhalls or when candidates knocked at the door.

### **National Pharmacare Plan**

ACER-CART was extremely pleased when on October 10, 2024 Bill C-64: An Act Respecting Pharmacare received Royal Assent. This has been an ACER-CART priority for many years and is now the law of the land.

ACER-CART is working collaboratively with the Alberta Working Group on Pharmacare in monitoring the work of the Committee of Experts. This committee is now responsible to provide advice and guidance on how to operate and finance the national, universal, single-payer pharmacare program. It will also serve as a roadmap for expanding pharmacare beyond contraception and diabetes medications. It is our hope and expectation that antibiotics, cholesterol medicines, blood pressure and psychological medications will be added as a second phase of the program.

The Federal Minister of Health has signed bilateral agreements with British Columbia, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island and the Yukon to provide funding for the program and extra funding for catastrophic drugs. It is now our duty to advocate and pressure the remaining provinces and territories which have not signed bilateral agreements.

### **Strategic Plan**

The Executive have worked diligently over the past year in completing the Strategic Plan. I want to thank all member organizations that provided their SWOT analysis in 2023-2024. You will recall receiving a summary developed by Sean Seywright, Executive Director, Retired Teachers Association of Manitoba (RTAM) at last year's Annual General Meeting.

The Table Officers carefully reviewed Sean's document in late September and developed responses to the Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities. This document was presented to the Executive at the January meeting and at the same meeting there was agreement that the appropriate responses would be placed under three core pillars – Advocacy, Communication, Operational Excellence. The new document with up to eight strategies for 2024-2027 under the pillars was presented to the Executive at the March meeting and now needs final approval at this year's Annual General Meeting.

### **Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP)**

ACER-CART is working with the Alberta Friends of Medicare and the National Pensioners Federation on requesting the federal government to revise the eligibility requirement for the plan. We are requesting that rules be revised as some retired teachers and seniors on very small pensions might have opted out of their previous dental plans due to cost and now are unable to participate in the CDCP.

All organizations have written letters to Health Canada asking for a revision of the eligibility rules to ensure low-income seniors are not arbitrarily denied coverage due to this so called "access" to private or employer insurance plans.

### **Canadian Radio Television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)**

I was pleased to participate in two four-hour webinars with other senior groups, consumer associations, affected individuals and service providers on February 24, 2025 and February 27, 2025. I want to thank member associations who provided their thoughts on the sale process, consumer rights, customer support and technical support in allowing me to speak on

behalf of Canada's organization representing retired teachers. Participants now await a "*What We Learned*" report and see if the service providers listened to our concerns and if there will be an improvement in service delivery to address consumers' needs.

### **Regional Conferences 2025**

I acknowledge that many of this year's Annual General Meeting participants are looking forward to the regional conferences in Saskatoon and Fredericton on June 9-11, 2025. I want to thank Helen Sukovieff and her team in the planning and development of the western conference and Rob Campbell and Francoise Beaulieu and their team in their planning and development of the eastern conference.

I am positive that participants will enjoy the many guest speakers, social activities and warm hospitality they will receive at each event.

**Bill Berryman**  
**President, ACER-CART**