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Newsletter Editors: Mary McDougall & Linda Manwarren

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Presidents' Message

Denis Espedveidt / Mary McDougall



As we approach the holiday season - whether we are celebrating Christmas, Hannukah, Kwanzaa or just togetherness and family time, it is important to keep the spirit of gratitude foremost in our minds. Even in difficult times there are things we can be thankful for.

After 3 difficult years of a pandemic that made the world virtually stop, most of us are ready to get back to normal. Our Annual Christmas Lunch is now back to our usual numbers for the first time in three years. Everyone is still being cautious and sanitizer is very evident, and rightfully so, but people are eager to get together and catch up with old friends. CRTA hopefully provides us with more opportunities to maintain our social connectivity.

CRTA is grateful for the many volunteers who make our activities possible. A great deal of time goes into organizing our events but we do know that they are appreciated. So, thank you for your thoughtfulness and for writing up the reviews of the events for our newsletter. Many of our BOD (Board of Directors) have roles that often go unnoticed. They manage our huge membership, our website, our email messages, our finances, conferences and casino logistics. All of which take a great deal of time. We are also grateful for our other volunteers not on the BOD. We could not do it without those of you who step up at events to help pass out water and snacks, register attendees, unload books etc. Working well as a team is something to be grateful for.

CRTA is also grateful to ARTA for all the support and leadership they provide. Whether it is through the grants we receive or the advice and programs offered, it is great to be one of the 18 ARTA branches. In October, presidents of all the branches met and exchanged ideas of events that work well within their areas. A long list was compiled and hopefully we will be able to present you with a few different and interesting choices for your involvement. Check your email and regularly visit our website calgaryretiredteachers.org for the latest scheduled events and registration information. Hopefully there will be something of interest for you. If you have any suggestions for other activities, we are always interested in hearing from you.

We wish you a joyful holiday season filled with gratitude and love. Gratitude is a choice. May joy surround you during the many celebrations of light that occur this month.

Merry Christmas!



LOOKING BACK: CRTA ACTIVITIES

September – December 2023



Deerfoot Inn and Casino Golden Club Buffet Food, Fellowship and Fun

Sharon and Fred Kahut

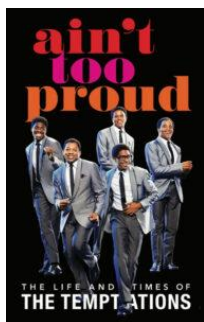
On September 7, and again on November 2, approximately 30 CRTA colleagues and friends gathered each time at the Deerfoot Inn and Casino 55+ Golden Club for a buffet luncheon consisting of a wide variety of delicious food, an opportunity to visit, all-the-while enjoying live musical entertainment.

At the conclusion of the luncheon, attendees had the opportunity to win a door prize. Ten individuals won a total of \$300.00 in prize money. Those who wished to linger at the Casino until 1:30, had the opportunity to sign up to display their dexterity in a free, fast-paced slot tournament. A cash prize was awarded to the nimble-fingered person who accumulated the most points.

Watch for the next Casino luncheon tentatively scheduled for March 7, 2024.

Broadway Across Canada

Ain't Too Proud - The Life and Times of the Temptations



On Saturday, September 23, fifty CRTA members and guests enjoyed this amazing musical production that followed the story of the Temptations - how they came together and how they worked their way to the top. The musical included 31 of the Temptations top hits and was thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance.

Body Composition Clinic

Eamonn Rutledge

Twenty members participated in the Body Composition Clinic on Thursday, October 19. Body composition testing is the process of measuring the components of your body. Weight alone is not a clear indication of good health. By regularly monitoring body fat, and muscle mass (muscular development), you can understand how your diet, lifestyle and exercise regime are influencing your body composition.

Following the testing, each participant discussed their personal results with the clinician. The largest component of our body is water. Surprisingly, throughout the day, many participants were measured as slightly dehydrated. Fluid balance and proper hydration helps the body transport nutrients and removes toxins and byproducts of metabolism. Blood pressure measurements, systolic and diastolic and blood glucose levels were tested next.



Following each session, participants were asked to complete a short questionnaire. In summary, many participants were happy to “confirm what they know and how to enhance their current health practices.” “Gives me greater confidence,” and “great information and more insight into what I can do.” “Happy that I was within range,” were some of the comments shared. Looking forward, topics such as managing ageism, health, stress, medication, pain, nutritional changes were suggested.

A special thanks to ARTA, for fully funding the clinician for the day! In conclusion, a quick reminder to take care of your health triangle components: Physical, Social and Mental Health!

Remembrance Day

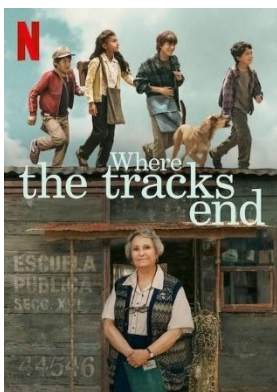
Every year CRTA honors the service and sacrifice of Canada's military by laying wreaths at Remembrance Day ceremonies. On November 11, 2023, board members Trudy Hall and Denis Espetveidt represented CRTA at the Central Park and Jubilee Auditorium ceremonies. .



CRTA Film Festival

“Where The Tracks End” Review

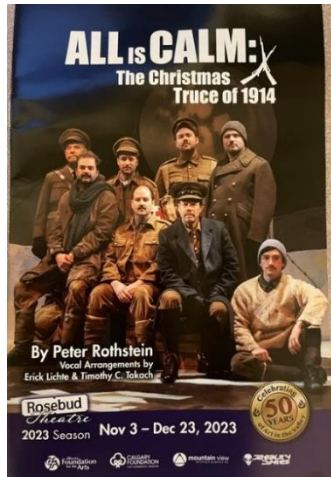
Ron Jeffery



“Where The Tracks End” was the November 14 feature movie. This film resonated with our viewers not only because of our own experience in schools as students and teachers – but also witnessing the challenges today’s schools and teachers face considering uneven parental support; lack of funding and the challenges of both special needs and diverse classrooms. Community, family, and friendships highlight themes in the film.

The film was not polished in places, but the children were authentic; the environment realistic and the message both clear and important. The “twist” at the end of the film is powerful and effective at illustrating the importance of education; the role of the teacher and the impact teachers can have on their students and community.

During the discussion after the film, we were all reflective of those “special students” whom we had taught and connected with seeing both growth and success in their lives.



Rosebud

Dean Romfo Van Camp

November 24, 2023 was an emotional day. Israel and Hamas began a four day truce and 98 Calgary Retired teachers had the privilege of seeing **All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914**, at the Rosebud Theatre. Through archival letters home to loved ones, a cappella music of the period, and transcribed military documents we were transported to the stark trenches of the First World War. 109 years have passed between the 2 events, and clearly, we have not learned all we need to from history, but in Rosebud we were shown the possibility through this remarkable production.



CRTA and CBEREA Christmas Lunch

On December 5, 2023, 210 members of CRTA and CBEREA (Calgary Board of Education Retired Employees Association) gathered at the Carraige House for the annual Christmas lunch and book give away. The number of attendees has returned to pre-Covid celebrations, and the smiles and chatter lightened the spirits of all.

CRTA once again purchased books in June from RESET (Rapid Exit from Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking) thus provided financial support to girls and women in need. Barb Smith and Linda Manwarren made the excellent book selections and it was not difficult to find a good read.

Marg Brucker was honoured with the presentation of an honorary lifetime membership by Gordon Cumming, the 11th one in the history of CRTA. Marg devoted many hours to several organizations including CRTA and ARTA for which we are grateful.

Our spirits and ears were treated to musical entertainment provided by a Bishop Carrol Jazz Ensemble. The 14 girls did an amazing job which we thoroughly enjoyed. The food and service were excellent and it was a delightful way to pass an afternoon on a 16 °C day in December.

Thank you to the generous support of the following groups for providing Door Prizes for our 2023 Christmas Lunch.

Donor	Prize	Winner
ARTA	Red Hooded jacket	Amy C.
ARTA	2 ceramic planters, thermal mug	Caren B
CRTA	\$15 Chapters Gift Card	Mary T
CBE/REA, Eve Keddie	Handmade cards, \$25 gift card	Marg M
CBEREA	Spot on Kitchen and Bar	Sheila G
CBEREA	Edelweiss Gift basket	Wayne M
Paul Demers	Boxwood Topiary	Betty A
CRTA	2Tubs of Honey	Tony Russell
CRTA	\$15 Callebaut Gift Card	Sandra S
CBEREA	Planter/Sweets Gift basket	Maria M
	\$20 Second Cup Gift card	
	2 movie passes	
Carriage House Inn	Sunday Brunch for 2	Lynn N



WHAT'S AHEAD: December - February

CHECK THE UPCOMING EVENTS/CALENDAR ON OUR CRTA WEBSITE!

Christmas Table Centerpiece Workshop

Monday, December 11, 2023

St. Joseph's Church Hall

SOLD OUT

Unsyncable, the Movie

Tuesday, January 30, 2024 1:00-3:00 pm

Canyon Meadows Cinemas

Members \$5, Non-members \$7

(Snack provided)

Registration opens December 12, 2024

No internet? Call Linda at 403-200-0472 to register after December 12.



FIRST CURTAIN CALL

It's Movie Night at CRTA

Ron Jeffery

Mark your calendars for the upcoming films:

Tuesday January 16 Nobody Knows I'm Here

Tuesday April 2 NYAD

Tuesday May 7 The Live Ahead

Registration and information for "Nobody Knows I'm Here" will begin following an email in early January. It will also be listed on our CRTA web site. The movie will follow 2 weeks after registration. All films are available on Netflix which you can watch at your leisure or watch as a group on Zoom. Discussion will follow the movie. There is no cost for this activity.

Calgary Philharmonic Open Rehearsals

Moira Kelly- Bucher



Join the Calgary Philharmonic for a full working concert in the Jack Singer Concert Hall (10:00 am to 12:30 pm) and discover the time and dedication it takes to prepare for a performance. For each rehearsal there will be an email sent out with registration ending about two weeks before the scheduled date. Come enjoy a

variety of music concerts presented by talented musicians from all over the world.

Call Moira Kelly-Bucher 403-921-2807 about three weeks before the performance date if you are unable to register online. Cost: \$10 members, \$15 non-members

- January 19, 2024 Spectacular Spanish Guitar
- February 2, 2024 Montgomery and Mesa
- March 1, 2024 Beethoven's Seventh
- March 15, 2024 Phillippe Quint Premieres Wallen
- May 10, 2024 Brilliant Bassoon



Steppin' Out 2024

Gordon Cumming and Linda Manwarren, co-chairs

Mark your Calendars! April 25 and 26, 2024

Your organizing committee has been hard at work searching out interesting, entertaining, and informative presenters for our annual spring conference. The Thursday Banquet will feature the "3rd Time Lucky Quartet", a dynamic barbershop group and Friday's program will be keynoted by Darrel Janz, who was the voice and face of Calgary News for so many years. The event staff at Riviera Plaza and Conference Centre have fine-tuned the menus and now all we need is you! Watch for registration information mid-February, and join us at "Steppin' Out 2024".



ART SHOW AND SALE

SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2024

10:00 to 4:00

PARKDALE UNITED CHURCH

2919 - 8th Ave NW **NEW LOCATION**

Free admission and door prizes



ARTA Update

arta.net

- Check out the new ARTA website designed for easier accessibility. The new “I Want to” drop down menu on arta.net makes it very easy to find what you are looking for.

Introducing Maple, ARTA’s Virtual Care Practitioner

- Effective November 1, 2023 the ARTA Extended Health Care Benefits Plan provides access to Maple. Instantly connect with a Canadian Licensed Doctor for medical care from your phone or computer.

ARTA Membership

- ARTA has now surpassed the 30,000 mark in memberships. Memberships include ARTA Benefit Plan members, membership only members, or ARTA 101 members. Check out the benefits ARTA has to offer including preferred discounts, post-secondary scholarships and much more. CRTA receives a grant from ARTA for each of our members who are also ARTA members. All members can now create their own myARTA.net account at myarta.net/users/signup

HumanaCare

- HumanaCare is committed to providing healthcare solutions tailored to meet the unique needs of ARTA members. As a member of ARTA, you and your family, have access to the ARTAcare services through HumanaCare. The comprehensive Medical Second Opinion and Eldercare Program, are designed to offer peace of mind and exceptional care.
- To learn more call [1-888-327-1500](tel:1-888-327-1500)



Your ARTA AGM Delegates 2023

Denis Espedveidt, Ron Jeffery, Gordon Cumming,
Mary McDougall, Sandi Grassick, Gord Weeks

ARTA organized a 60's theme dinner in recognition of their 60th Anniversary.

Membership Notes

Sandi Grassick

We may not always look forward to celebrating another birthday and sometimes adding another candle to the cake can be a drag, not to mention a fire hazard but 85 is one birthday you will be happy to celebrate!! Did you know? If you have been a member of CRTA for five years and have reached the wonderful milestone of 85, you are entitled to Complementary Lifetime CRTA Membership. You will still receive all of our email blasts and newsletters but will never receive another email asking you to renew.

All you need to do is let us know. Email spgrassic@shaw.ca so that we can make the necessary change to your CRTA account. We don't have a record of any birthdates so it's up to you to let us know. In the past couple of weeks, we have had the pleasure of tearing up a couple of membership renewal cheques and letting the members know they will no longer have to pay.

We currently have 557 members of which 26 are first year retirees and 39 are Life Members.

The BOD recently passed a motion that all NEW members to CRTA are entitled to their first year of membership FREE! Be sure to pass this on to any of your friends who may be interested in joining as a regular or affiliate member.

Registering and Paying for CRTA Events

- Register on our CRTA website <https://calgaryretiredteachers.org/>
- Pay by e-transfer: crtaatb@gmail.com Be careful entering the correct email address!
- Pay by PayPal
- Pay by cheque mailed to:

CRTA
Box 337, 305 – 4625 Varsity Dr NW
Calgary AB T3A 0Z9

Did you Know?

PayPay charges CRTA a variable fee for each transaction. Example: 0.91\$ is charged for your membership payment of \$21. Please consider paying by e-transfer or cheque.

Giving Back

Each year, CRTA grants financial awards to students in the Faculties of Education at University of Calgary, Mount Royal University and St. Mary's University. With the following letter, we are happy to introduce you to the latest recipient – Spencer Felesky.



My name is Spencer Felesky, and I am deeply honored to be chosen as the recipient of the CRTA Scholarship award. With sincere gratitude and humility, I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for this recognition. This scholarship not only provides financial support for my educational journey, but also validates my dedication to continue inspiring a future generation.

I was born and raised in Rocky Mountain House, Alberta, where I spent my formative years in a close-knit community with a very supportive family. In grade 8, my family relocated to Cochrane, Alberta, where I completed high school and was honored as the Class of 2018 Valedictorian. I applied to the University of Victoria (UVIC) for General Sciences and Mount Royal University (MRU) for Elementary Education. I embarked on my academic journey at UVIC, majoring in General Sciences. However, after the first semester, I discovered my lack of motivation and interest in my studies, prompting me to reassess my future.

In February 2020, I undertook a transformative month-long journey to Cape Town, South Africa. There, I volunteered in a low-income neighborhood, teaching English and Physical Education. In this challenging environment, I aimed to instill a sense of worth in the children and be a positive role model they could trust and confide in. They accepted me with open arms daily and taught me that smiles are universal.

Upon returning from South Africa, the world entered the first COVID lockdown. Motivated to pursue education, I reapplied to MRU for Elementary Education. I was accepted into MRU's Elementary Education program, moved to Calgary, and commenced my studies.

When I reflect on the wealth of knowledge and experiences gained in pursuit of my degree thus far, the list seems boundless. Not only have I honed valuable teaching skills, but I have also undergone a significant personal transformation, gaining confidence along the way. During my second year, I had the privilege of being placed in a Montessori School catering to grades 4-6. This experience exposed me to a dynamic learning environment characterized by hands-on, self-directed, and self-motivated approaches. My commitment to fostering individualized learning experiences was reinforced through my work there. Then just at the time when I believed this experience could not be surpassed in magnitude, I found myself in one of the most influential practicums of my academic journey thus far. I was assigned to a Grade 6-8 Paced Learning Program in NE Calgary. I developed a nuanced understanding of students with disabilities, their capabilities, and the barriers to their success. Profound moments occurred during this placement, such as a non-verbal student with autism who had previously

only spoken in single words progressing to form complete sentences. Overall, my practicum experience emphasized the reciprocal impact between educators and students.

I firmly believe that cultivating strong relationships is fundamental to the learning experience for both students and adults in educational settings. As I approach the culmination of my degree, I stand at the threshold of an exciting chapter where the knowledge and skills garnered from my program will be integrated into my future classroom. My goal is to create an environment where learning is not just a process but a lifelong adventure, and where each student is empowered to discover, question, and thrive. Teaching is about instilling a lifelong love for learning, encouraging the exploration of curiosities, and promoting self-discovery among young learners.



We welcome your comments and questions. Feedback about our activities helps us to plan other activities that best meet your needs. Use the *Contact Us* button on the website at calgaryretiredteachers.org or write to us at CRTA, Box 337, 305 – 4625 Varsity Drive NW, Calgary T3A 0Z9