

Vernon Teachers' Association VOICES

Volume 79 June 2017
4004-31st Street, Vernon B.C. V1T 5J6

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www.vernonta.com



Have a wonderful summer everyone! Enjoy your time with family and friends, and most of all we hope you enjoy some much deserved R & R. See you at the BBQ!!

Speaking for Teachers in the North Okanagan



Reflections.....

Dear Colleagues,

As we see our students and some of our colleagues walking through the doors on the last day of school, I hope we can all reflect on the successes and celebrations this year.

Every year we see growth as an organization, through our commitment to the profession and through the wisdom of our collective and individual voices. We contribute to the community of educators, both in Vernon and in BC, by engaging in provincial committees, Professional Development opportunities and in our daily professional conversations at our schools. Our teachers in Vernon have stepped forward for BCTF advisory committees, local district and school committees, Ministry of Education committees, Local and Provincial Specialist associations, VTA and BCTF representation, in-school mentorship and leadership, and so much more. I want to acknowledge and celebrate the value of that commitment to our profession.

This year has certainly been a year of change, with the curriculum implementation (and drafts) and changes to reporting. We have taken this opportunity to work together to discover our own spaces and styles within the new curriculum. It is amazing to watch our colleagues respond to such massive change with such competence.

Of course, we also had a close eye on November 10th and the Supreme Court of Canada. After the unexpectedly quick decision from the bench, it has been a flurry of activity since. Change is never easy or quick, and it is a complex process to implement 20 year-old language. Unfortunately, we will not see substantial improvements to the supports in our schools but we can certainly look ahead to 2019 bargaining, where we can finally modernize the language and create real improvements to working and learning conditions in our classrooms.

As we look ahead, it is critical that our members continue to educate themselves and engage with the VTA and the BCTF. There are a multitude of ways that you can get involved, including joining the team of VTA representatives in your school: staff committee, Pro D committee, OHS committee, Social Justice rep and Staff rep. The work that we do is in response to the concerns of our members and our colleagues, and each person's contribution makes a difference.

Once again, I thank you for the opportunity to represent the VTA in the upcoming year. Have a wonderful, restful and well-deserved break.
In support and solidarity,

Lisa

What the teacher is, is more important than what he teaches. ~ Karl Menninger

Summer vacation is the time when parents realize that teachers are grossly underpaid. ~Author unknown



New Teacher Orientation

August 29, 2017 - 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Location: TBA

- ◆ New Hires to SD#22 including those hired since September 2016
- ◆ Please contact Jennifer Quiring, District Secretary for Teaching Personnel at jquiring@sd22.bc.ca for more information

Trinity United Church

3300 Alexis Park Drive

Open: Jul 26 - Jul 28, Aug 21 - Aug 22, Sep 20 - Sep 22



Canadian Blood Services
it's in you to give

The need for donors is critical. Please book your next appointment and donate.



For Rent.....

Beautiful Furnished One Bedroom Suite, North BX
Available Sept. 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

- ◆ Suitable for single or couple
- ◆ Great location for skiers yet close to town

Please contact Wendy Goodall at wendigo5886@gmail.com for more information.

A very big, heartfelt thank you to all of the VTA School Representatives, Executive members and District Committee members who stepped forward to represent the VTA over the past year. It's been a busy year to say the least and a great deal was accomplished - it wouldn't have happened without your participation. Speaking for myself and on behalf of our membership, we are grateful. Have a wonderful summer!*Lisa*

Speak your mind, even if your voice shakes.

- *Maggie Smith*

Your PD Funds

PLEASE BE REMINDED that if you are changing schools you **MUST** contact your current PD Rep and ensure that the balance of your available PD funds are transferred to your new school in September. It is your responsibility to ensure that your funds 'travel' with you.



Our newest neighbours! They do an awesome job of keeping the vegetation tamed on the lot next door to the VTA office. They are very sweet, quite shy and definitely the quietest neighbours anyone could ask for!

VERNON TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Year End/Retirement BBQ

THURSDAY, JUNE 29th

3:30 TO 7:00 PM at PADDLEWHEEL PARK HALL

Hosts: Mission Hill Elementary

Hamburgers ~ Refreshments

Snacks ~ Drinks \$3

Departing Cab Service Available



VT A RETIREES

2016 - 2017



DONNA ALLEN

Donna's teaching career has spend 34 years and of those years 28 have been in the Vernon school district. She has taught at BX elementary 21 years and Coldstream elementary for 7 years, Kispiox 5 years and Vanderhoof for 1 year.

Donna has thoroughly enjoyed aspects of every grade she has taught from 1 to 7, however having spent 29 years in Grade 1 and felt it was always heart filling to see a child's excitement when he/she could read! Over the past 34 years she has seen many trends and changes to curriculum to benefit students but nothing beats "kid watching" . The only way to know what a child needs is through teacher observation and direct interaction and intervention. Unfortunately class-size has made this more and more difficult to do and knows teachers will have to continue to fight the good fight which has always made her proud to be a teacher.

She has one son, Curran who lives in Kelowna and two dogs, Toby and Happy and a cat named Marbles who came to school in a basket of kittens brought by a student for Show and Tell and as Donna held her, was told, "That one doesn't have a home, Ms Allen".

After retirement Donna Plans to open a quilting studio on salt Spring Island and hike the islands with her two shelties. She also plans to do a lot of traveling around the world and has a destination wedding in Mexico in January.

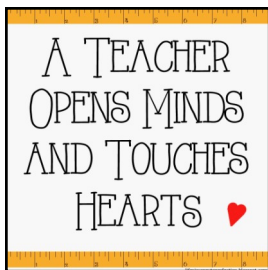
CHARLENE BAKER

Charlene has worked as a School Based Resource Teacher (SBRT) for 9 years, all of that time at Alexis Park. Her career has been varied and rewarding, having opportunities as a classroom teacher in Winnipeg and at St James in Vernon and as a Resource Teacher in Salmon Arm prior to her work in SD22 (29 years of teaching).

She plans to enjoy a lovely 'extended' summer and then plan for a trip east for the fall. You will also find Charlene travelling, spending more time with family, and reconnecting with her retired friends.

Charlene and her husband have 4 grown children and 2 beautiful granddaughters. She plans to explore places with their new trailer, and enjoy creative pursuits: gardening, photography, writing, knitting, sewing and perhaps try painting as well.





WENDY CLARK

Wendy Clark began her teaching career with Sd#22 in 2007 and has remained at Ellison the entire time.

GAYLE DILL

Gayle started with the district as a TOC in 1990 and successfully posted to Kal, teaching PE & Science, for 7 years before she moved to BX teaching grades 6 and 7 for 5 to 7 years. After a 2 year break for a business venture, Gayle returned to Coldstream where she has spent the past 9 years teaching grades 4 & 5.

Gayle has had some very fun and funny highlights in her career: from pulling her sweat pants down to kick them off on a hot day in PE at Kal - only to discover she'd forgotten to wear shorts! To lots of dance parties, spirit days, hugs and fun.....fun.....fun! She loved her time with the kids and working with exceptional teachers and support staff.

Her immediate plans include getting a puppy, initiate daily happy hours in her neighbourhood and NOT travelling in July or August. Gayle will spend her retirement travelling, exercising, visiting friends, napping, becoming a better recycler and skiing more often.

Gayle and her still-working-hard husband have 2 adult kids and hope to have grandchildren one day.



RETIREMENT - Many Things to Many People

Retirement of life begins when the kids move out and the cat gets run over. - *Author Unknown*

My only retirement advice is to lay off alcohol, tobacco, and wild women. Any can kill you. - *James Biggs (104 year-old resident in a Dallas retirement community).*

When a man retires and time is no longer a matter of urgent importance, his colleagues generally present him with a watch. - *R.C. Sherriff*

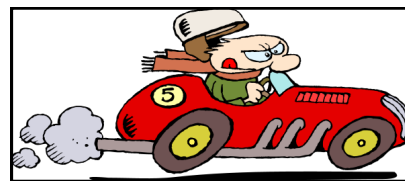
Retirement: It's nice to get out of the rat race, but you have to learn to get along with less cheese. - *Gene Perret*

Viva la retirement, grab it by the horns and go for it. - *Cheryl Marland at the Retirement Blog 'But What Now'*

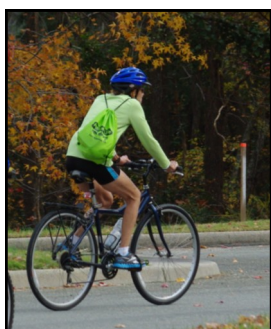
The money is no better in retirement but the hours are! - *Author Unknown*

PAUL ELMONT

Paul retired from WL Seaton in August 2016 after working there as the shop teacher. Paul has already begun his travelling adventures and is working on his drag racing car.



RITA ENG



Rita has worked at Beirsto since 1984. She is an expert teacher and inspired many students to sleepover in grade 3 and learn about the reveillon and other French culture. She also had students passionate about the government and organized a few trips to Victoria with grade 5 students. 11 years ago - upon completing her master's she went from classroom teacher to school based resource teacher. Rita is a Roots of Empathy Instructor. She is also a dedicated ride enthusiast.

Her immediate plans include building a new home. She is looking forward to having flexibility to exercise when it best suits her as well as flexibility to spend time with her daughters. Rita also plans to do volunteer work and travel as well as spend time on her hobbies (jewelry making, home décor, cooking, baking, hiking).

ROSEMARY ENZING

Rosemary started at Hillview as a 0.2 prep-relief teacher with a bizarre assignment that spanned parts of 3 days/week. She loved Hillview, and remained there for 3 years. The forced transfer to Mission Hill reminded her of the need to bloom where you are planted. She remained there for 19 years,

Rosemary is off to China to teach and will enjoy this new adventure with her very good friend and colleague, Beatrice.

She then hopes to stay active with biking, rowing and laughing upon her return.



SHERRY HAAF

Sherry began her teaching career with the Vernon School District in 1993 and has taught at Silver Star during her time. Sherry has been on leave and we wish her a healthy, happy retirement.

PAM FOURNIER

Pam's first position with SD22 was as a practicum student at Beairsto in 1982. She then returned as a TTOC in 1984 and from there went to Prince Rupert in 1985 to start their French Immersion program for 5 years. She returned to Vernon where she has remained, teaching kindergarten and grade 1. 11 years ago Pam completed her Masters and was hired on as an Elementary School Counsellor.....and has been "chick on the run" ever since.

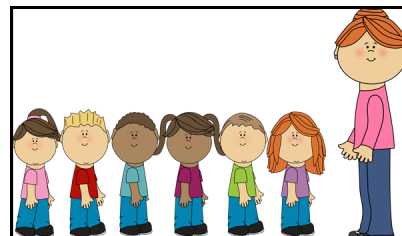


Pam has enjoyed working in a bilingual school, becoming involved with Roots of Empathy and working in a number of different schools as a counsellor and TTOC, and of course she has enjoyed working with the kids!

Pam and her husband John plan to have some adventures in Europe using their backpacks and Eurail passes. She will continue to be involved with Roots of Empathy and work on her Spanish as they plan to continue spending lots of time in Mexico.

WENDY GOODALL

Wendy has a tremendous wealth of knowledge regarding pro-social skills and working with at-risk intermediate students. She was instrumental in setting up the various pro-social skills programs at Alexis Park over her years working there. Many of the posters and problem-solving sheets that she designed and drew, are still being used. Students were drawn to her and appreciated the time, energy, and compassion that she gave them. Wendy is a good listener and sounding board for students and staff alike.



DAVID HABER

David Haber has spent his entire teaching career, from September, 1995 to October 31, 2016, at Kal Secondary.

LARRY JOHANNESSEN

Larry started his teaching career in Alexis Creek, a small community in the Cariboo-Chilcotin, SD27. He spent years working with at-risk youth and the Aboriginal population in the Cariboo. As a classroom teacher, alternate teacher and finally an elementary counsellor, his support, advocacy and empathy left him loved by the students he worked with and deeply respected by his colleagues.

Larry left School District 27 after many years in order to be closer to his wife and family, and thus completed his last years in education in SD22 as an elementary counsellor. Larry is a life-long learner, eager to seek out new ways to help support students and guide his practice. His colleagues have found him to be a master at building relationships and mentoring new teachers.



JANE MASKELL



Jane started her career as a receptionist and decided to go back to college to be a teacher. She graduated in 1983 which was a time when there were not many jobs in teaching. She managed to get a job teaching grammar in Vancouver at a college where she worked for two years and from there ended up working in an accounting firm and that is where she met her husband.

They moved to California for a year but decided to move back to BC and specifically Vernon where her husband's father lived. Jane began her teaching career on the TOC list in 1993 and has taught secondary school since 1994, and all those years have been at Clarence Fulton. Her main passion was teaching English. Students inspire her as they are full of ideas, are funny and just want to be liked. She will miss the people!

BEATRICE MERRICK

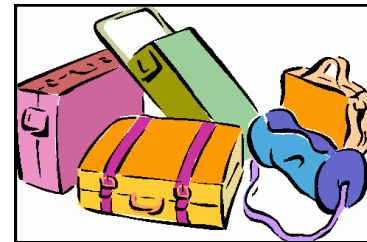
Beatrice became a teacher after her youngest child entered kindergarten, 23 years ago. She spent most of her career at Mission Hill and discovered her passion was Grade 1.

Beatrice will be teaching in China for 2 years and plans to continue having adventures. She also plans to spend time with her 4 children, 5 grandchildren and to take her home-based business on the road.



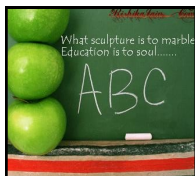
STEVE PLECAS

Steve Plecas was hired for the Career Challenge program at VSS in 1994 and moved to CBSS to provide learning assistance the following year. From there, Steve moved to a counselling position at Kal where he retires from.



Steve says the highlights are too numerous to mention but he has been very lucky to land in the community with very dedicated staff. Highlights come every time he meets a former student or staff member and they shake his hand and thank him.....and reminisce.

Steve plans to return as a TOC, hike, fish, kayak and cycle in addition to travelling with his wife throughout BC, Canada and other parts of the world. Steve's plans also include spending time with family and getting back into photography and skiing.



SANDI SASGES

In 1992 Sandi began teaching at Alexis Park Elementary. She has also taught at Lavington, JW Inglis, and Ellison. She has been on leave for the past few years.

We wish Sandi a healthy and enjoyable retirement.

DOROTHY TEALE

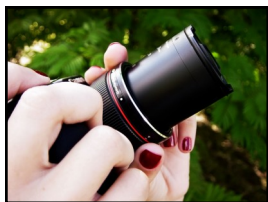
Dorothy moved to Vernon in 1992 where she was hired as a TOC followed a few months later with a continuing contract at 6 Mile. She has taught at Charles Bloom since 1993 and has loved her teaching years there noting the staff have been the absolute best, second to none.

She has enjoyed meeting and getting to know so many different students, getting to teach her granddaughter, coaching basketball and volleyball, and staff functions.

In retirement Dorothy plans to spend time with family and friends, visiting the ones far away. Additionally, she will spend more time on hobbies, swimming, sewing, knitting and travel.



MELANIE TOUSIGNANT



Melanie has worked as an Education Assistant at almost every school in Vernon over the last 22 years but has spent the last 13 at Kidston. She highlights seeing the kids she has worked with cope, progress and mature throughout their school career.

Her plans for the future include as much travelling as possible, and plans on working on her photography skills, and making use of her hammock - with a good book in hand. Melanie has 3 children, one of whom lives in France, and the other two in Calgary.

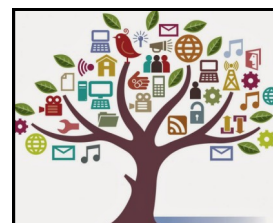
GAEL WEBER

Gail's teaching career has spanned 33 years and of those years, 20 have been in SD#22. She has taught in Vancouver schools for 10 years, in Prince George for 3 years and 20 years in Vernon at Ellison, OLK and Mission Hill - all in special education and has also taught kindergarten and K/1. Gail has always felt so blessed to see children learn and grow—no matter how small or significant those times were. Seeing children's successes and celebrating with them was always a joy. The struggles that some children have was heartbreaking, yet never stopped her from seeing their potential and encouraging them.

She has two grown children, Daniel and Sophie, who are so precious to her. Gail is getting married (at 63) and moving to Castlegar! Whoohoo!

After retirement Gail plans to continue working part-time for the Heritage Christian Online School as a support/special education teacher for families and their children with special needs.

Gail says she has truly enjoyed working with all of the students and their families as well as with all of the teachers along the way. They found ways to encourage and learn from each other every day.



DVOIRA YANOVSKY

Dvoira has been employed by SD22 for 16 years and began as a long term TOC at Kal providing learning assistance followed by a long term TOC position at Silver Star in learning assistance. In 2002 one day a week at Ellison in the resource room was added and from September 2002 to June 2006 she worked full time at VSS teaching in the basic education program. She has been a full time English teacher at Vernon Secondary since September 2006.



Dvoira enjoyed helping students be successful and working with like-minded colleagues. Her immediate plans include travelling over the summer and a return to the TOC list for the district in the fall. She is looking forward to having time to read, write, knit, and sing.



LYNNE WHISKIN

Wow! Where did the last 28 years go? It's hard to believe that I am now moving on to the next adventure in my life!

I spent all 28 years of my teaching career in Vernon. The first seven years were spent commuting between Whitevale and Cherryville as the music teacher. Yes, there were enough students at both schools to support a music program! I remember driving out to Cherryville for the first time and the drive seemed to take forever. The sign on the gym said, "No Horses Allowed", and that's when I realized how rural the school was. I loved teaching at both schools, and had a wonderful time. There was so much fun, comradery and laughs. Cherryville will always hold a special place in my heart!

Of course, with two rural schools, came fourteen Christmas concerts and fourteen choirs in the Choral Showcase over seven years! I was ready for the move to Silver Star Elementary in 1996 as a classroom teacher. Not being one to like change, I spent the rest of my teaching career at Silver Star. I found my niche in the primary grades and settled into many years as the grade 2 teacher. At a workshop once, grade 2 was referred to as the "country club" of the primary grades. I wholeheartedly agree! I love teaching grade 2. I never felt that I got bored, as there were constantly new strategies and techniques to try out and incorporate into my teaching style.

My career involved a lot of extra-curricular activities including being involved in the Music Teacher's LSA and coaching volleyball early on in my career. I also played an active role in the school Pro-D, cross-country running and, of course, accompanying the school choirs. I am particularly proud of having helped coordinate the Terry Fox Run for the past 18 years. In that time, Silver Star families and staff have fundraised \$16,991.42 for the Terry Fox Foundation by collecting "Toonies for Terry."

Luckily, I was able to laugh at the many silly things I did throughout my career. Flushing the school keys down the toilet was probably the funniest! I can't believe I am admitting to this in printed form! I also had many hamster and chick calamities, which may not be suitable for publication! I have thoroughly enjoyed all of my students, and I have been very lucky to have had a wonderfully supportive staff at Silver Star.

In 2005-2006, I took a year's 3-4-5 leave to do some travelling. It was an amazing year! I guess that is what I have signed up for now. In retirement, you'll find me in Naramata, soaking up the relaxed lifestyle. I will continue to enjoy spending time with my dad and my friends, kayaking, travelling and enjoying each day as it comes. Thank you to all the amazing teachers that I have had the pleasure of working with. I will be making frequent trips to Vernon to visit, and you are always welcome to come visit me in Naramata!

*The V.T.A. extends warmest
congratulations to all of our
retirees. We wish each of you a
long, healthy retirement that is
all that you wish it to be.*

Enjoy!!



YOUR VTA EXECUTIVE FOR THE 2017 — 2018 YEAR

President:	Lisa LaBoucane
1st Vice President:	Barry Dorval
2nd Vice President:	Vacant
Secretary:	Andrew Affleck
Treasurer:	Chris Brandle
Local Association Rep:	Kevin Bader
Bargaining Chair:	Rhiannon Johnson
Professional Development Chair:	Robyn Ladner
Social Justice Rep:	Sue Ghattas
Occupational Health & Safety Chair:	Craig Leverman
Local Aboriginal Education Contact:	Vacant
Members at Large:	Sandy Klein
	Paul Boyd
	Ryan Aujla
	Cori Huizer
OCTAV:	

Please check the VTA website: www.vernonta.com for contact information.

Congratulations Retiring Teachers!

Congratulations to all retiring teachers in 2017 from the Vernon Retired Teachers' Association. Welcome to the Wonderful World of Retirement!

Seriously no matter what activities you choose to involve yourselves in, we hope you will consider joining the VRTA. As a local branch of our provincial organization, the British Columbia Retired Teacher's Association, we can offer a link to the past and some ideas for enjoying the coming years.

How does it work? At the provincial level the BCRTA is a strong organization which takes an interest in many of our concerns in retirement. They represent us on the pensions board and liaises with many organizations to protect us in matters concerning our health and wellbeing. BCRTA publishes POSTSCRIPT, a magazine on issues and activities of interest to retired teachers as well as maintaining an informative website (www.bcrta.ca).

For this year only the BCRTA is offering FREE membership for one year for newly retired teachers as well as recently retired non members. It is my understanding that retirees will be contacted individually by the provincial office. If not please contact them through the website. Some other benefits are choices for travel insurance and health benefits through Johnson INC. Membership is open to all retired teachers and administrators.

At the local level the VRTA focuses more on social and local activities. We meet five times a year for a short business meeting followed by an interesting (short) presentation and lunch with plenty of time to socialize with former colleagues. You are welcome to invite friends and partners. We donate almost \$4,000.00 in scholarships and bursaries to graduates of our local schools every year. In addition we support the local food bank by twice yearly collections. This past year we donated over 300 pounds of food and over \$1,000.00.

So as you retire, please consider joining VRTA. Some of us make a point of meeting for a no host NO BELL breakfast on the first day of school at Country Tyme Gardens, please consider dropping by on Sept. 5th around 9:00 am.

Sincerely,

Clara Tees
President VRTA

