

Vernon Teachers' Association VOICES

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Ph: 542-0456

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.

Speaking for Teachers in the North Okanagan



Dear Colleagues,

I cannot believe that the year is nearing its end. And my tenure as president (2019-2023) is also nearing its end.

I have gone through many emails and files online and in the VTA Office as I sort it out and organize some things for Dave (sorry Dave, there are many more to go through, I'm afraid).
With all of it, there are many memories of the work we have all done.

The more I saw over the years, the more I understood how truly amazing you all are as human beings, caring for the next generation(s) of more human beings. And in all of that, the world continues to learn, grow and forever change!

As I part from this job and go back to the classroom to share in this work, side by side with you, I can't help but wonder where we all will be in 5 or 10 or 15 years. How much will Vernon grow? Will it grow? What will I learn from the students of tomorrow? AND how will I navigate MyEd or learn the new student lingo?

This experience in the VTA Office has given me so many learning opportunities that I never imagined. We work in a unionized environment that might be frustrating at times; however, ultimately the union is what makes us better and the work environment a better place. What you and I have as rights, should be what all workers have as rights. And with rights come responsibilities; responsibilities to support and improve working conditions for everyone.

I would like to thank the Executive Council members over the past few years who have supported me and shared in my passion for the VTA and our work.

To the Staff Reps at your sites, gratitude for all that you endlessly do for your colleagues; our discussions at meetings or during phone calls were always deep with resounding kindness for all members. You have a difficult task that usually involves working out issues or figuring out morale boosters. And you do it tirelessly. Thank-you!

Lastly and most importantly, I would like to thank the 2 persons who made working in the VTA office such a joy this year (and years past): Alana and Billie Jo.

Billie Jo and I can almost read one another's minds and yet, we had such a working relationship that involved such critical thinking, and we were never afraid to correct one another or tell one another what we really thought. We would laugh every day and do something positive for one another often. Working so closely, we wove our personal lives and love of our families into our workspace as well. We were (and always will be) a good team!

Alana... Alana is retiring at the end of the summer. She has spent 20 years at the VTA office, supporting and keeping over 7 (or more) presidents "in line." With frank honesty and grace, Alana would get work done and keep us on track with events, phone calls, meetings and making sure we eat lunch and take a break! She has overseen 2 large building renovations, over 20 VTA BBQs, 50 or more AGMs/General Meetings, 200 Executive meetings and 200 staff rep meetings! Strikes, COVID, technological advances and so much more! There will be a retirement party planned for the Fall so everyone who has had interactions with Alana will hopefully be around to share in this celebration. From the bottom of my heart, Alana, thank-you! We have shared so much of our lives together; I will miss you.

Moving forward, Dave Mackenzie, your next president, will be available by email for the first 2 weeks of July and the last 2 weeks of August for immediate questions and concerns (president@vernonta.com).

Alana will be in the VTA Office for the 1st week of July and the last week of August, if you need to go to the office for something. Before you go to the office, please call and see if someone is there (#250-542-0456).

In September, both Dave Mackenzie and Billie Jo Beaudoin (1st VP) will be full-time in the VTA office to support you all in your queries.

Thank-you again, VTA colleagues! It has been my honour to serve you all! I wish you all the best in your next adventures!

In health and wellness,

Cori Huizer

Stay informed!

If you are a teacher, be prepared in September to:

- ✓ check your Blue Cross statements when you make a claim – one recent example was a teacher whose spouse has the same first initial – Blue Cross was making mistakes with the deductible!
- ✓ check your pay statements from the District...there have been mistakes made from time to time! This is particularly true for those of you who are not in 1.0 assignments such as TTOCs and part time teachers. If you lost your password for the electronic pay statements, contact payroll to let them know.
- ✓ check your pension statements but also go on line with the pension plan to check information recorded about you and your employment record, your beneficiary, your spouse's name and so on. If there are 'gaps' it might be to your advantage to buy back those portions. Also, you might be in a position to get closer to '90' if you took time off to raise children. Check out TPP.CA and set up an account.
- ✓ check your collective agreement (on the VTA or the SD22 websites or hard copy in your staffroom). Some choice topics are seniority, transfers, layoff, recall, TTOC availability, part time teaching, resignation dates, different types of leaves, teaching autonomy, supervision, pay options, evaluation, harassment, staff meetings, and on and on!
- ✓ check your position on the seniority list to be sure it is accurate. For people below the layoff line, it determines the order of recall; for people above the layoff line it may determine who gets transferred out due to declining enrollment in your school.
- ✓ Engage with your representatives of the VTA at the school level for September: staff rep(s), PD chair, OH&S rep, Social Justice rep, Staff Committee.



*We acknowledge that we live, learn, play and
work within the ancestral, traditional, and
unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan People.*

VT A RETIREES

2022 - 2023



TRACEY BARRIE

I began my teaching career in the Prince Rupert School District in 1988. I taught grade 4 in the remote community of Lax Kw'aalams, a small village only accessible by float plane or boat.

One of my most memorable experiences occurred during my first year of teaching when myself and another teacher traveled with our classes to Haida Gwaii on the BC Ferry. Our trip was so rough that we had 18 students getting sick in about a 20 minute period.

I taught for 13 years in my hometown of Prince Rupert before accepting a position with the Vernon School District in February 2002. We sold everything and, while driving to Vernon, questioned leaving family and stability for a .4 position! Two days after moving, I was asked to fill in for the teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing until the end of the school year. I spent the next 17 years of my career at Mission Hill and Hillview Elementary Schools in various positions, including SBRT, Literacy Support, and grades K-5. I'm finishing my career at Hillview and Lavington Schools in my dream job as a teacher-librarian.

In my 34 years as a teacher, I am very grateful for the friendship and support of the many colleagues that I have had the privilege of working with. In retirement, I plan to enjoy the flexibility to visit family, travel during non-peak times, and continue volunteering with the Okanagan Learning Foundation and Emergency Services in Vernon.

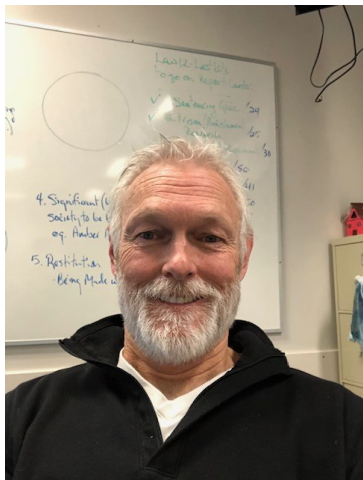
Changing Schools *and* Your PD Funds

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

Other Retirees We'd Like to Congratulate!

- ♦ Craig Leverman
- ♦ Brian McDougall
- ♦ Teresa Boyles



ALAN GEE

Al's teaching career has spanned 38 years and of those years, 31 have been in the Vernon School District, teaching at Charles Bloom Secondary and Clarence Fulton Secondary.

Education highlights/anecdotes:

Al's teaching highlights include, two years of teaching overseas in Kobe, Japan, at the front end of our teaching career. Co-Developing the Global Education Program at Charles Bloom and Fulton. Building a 26ft dug-out canoe with Master Carver, Gordy Marchand from the Syilx Nation and spending 4 days/nights on Okanagan lake with 57 grade 10 students, and 20 years of a steady commitment to get kids out of the classroom and into our community to learn. These endeavours collectively formed my belief in the power of experiential learning. A game changer for students and their old teacher.

Personal information such as marriage, children, hobbies, other interests, sports, etc:

Al is happily married to Barb, with 4 kids, Tay, Kia, Dani and Kalli who all live and work in Vernon

After retirement Al plans to get fit, and cut wood, with the bandsaw mill he bought with his son-in-law

CYNDI TETRAULT

When asked why Cyndi Tetrault became a teacher, she usually replied, "I always wanted the big desk." Well, she got a big desk and much, much more! She had the privilege of working with so many amazing humans, big and little, and made lasting friendships, through it all.

Highlights of her years included Winter camp at Silver Lake, Gardom lake with the Fulton Grads, BX musicals and Christmas concerts, and teaching Grade 4 (the best kept secret in education.) What other job can you push yourself to the limit, give everything you've got every day, and then do it all over again the next day and the next? Teaching has been one of the most challenging jobs I know and one of the most rewarding, next to parenting.

Dave and I, have together contributed 68 years to this District and raised four beautiful daughters at the same time. We will be forever grateful for the opportunities, relationships, and the legacy of excellence that we enjoyed. Old School Rules Emerson said it best, "Write it on your heart that every day is the best day of the year"... google the rest...It's a keeper.... With Gratitude....



SHARON SHAIGEC

My teaching career began in 1990 at Fulton Secondary as a Physical Education teacher and coach. I have taught PE, English, ESL, Leadership, and was the Athletic Director and PE Department Head for 5 years. I was the AA Sr Girls Volleyball North Zone Commissioner, and the AA Sr. Girls Volleyball Okanagan Valley Commissioner for many years. Teaching PHE and coaching was my passion! I always tried to encourage my students to participate to the best of their abilities and to have fun being physically active. I will miss my students, but the relationships built, and the memories formed, will be cherished for my lifetime!

During my 33.3 years at Fulton Secondary, I coached the Sr. or Jr. Girls Volleyball teams, Track and Field team (when Fulton was at Polson Park), then the Jr. Girls Soccer team, followed by the Grade 8 Girls Basketball team. It has been an enormous privilege to coach high school students dedicated to improving their skills, developing as a team, and competing together to qualify/win the BCSS Sr. Girls Volleyball Provincial Championships. I have received so much more from teaching and coaching than I could ever have imagined, and I will smile with pride and joy at the amazing experiences and connections made with so many amazing young people!



I have had the incredible opportunity to work with exceptionally talented, dedicated PHE Teachers. I continually learn from them - they have inspired me, made me a better teacher, and brought laughter to the gym. Thank you!

I would like to thank SD#22 for hiring me. Thank you to my husband Brad, my boys Brett and Jason, my family, and colleagues, who have supported me and loved me. They enabled me to be the best teacher and coach I could be, and have made my career an incredibly happy, proud, and memorable time in my life. My plans in the future include fitness, travel, family, friends, and fun!

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

THANKS FOR
TEACHING ME
THE MEANING OF
-PLETHORA-
IT MEANS A LOT



“

One child.

One teacher.

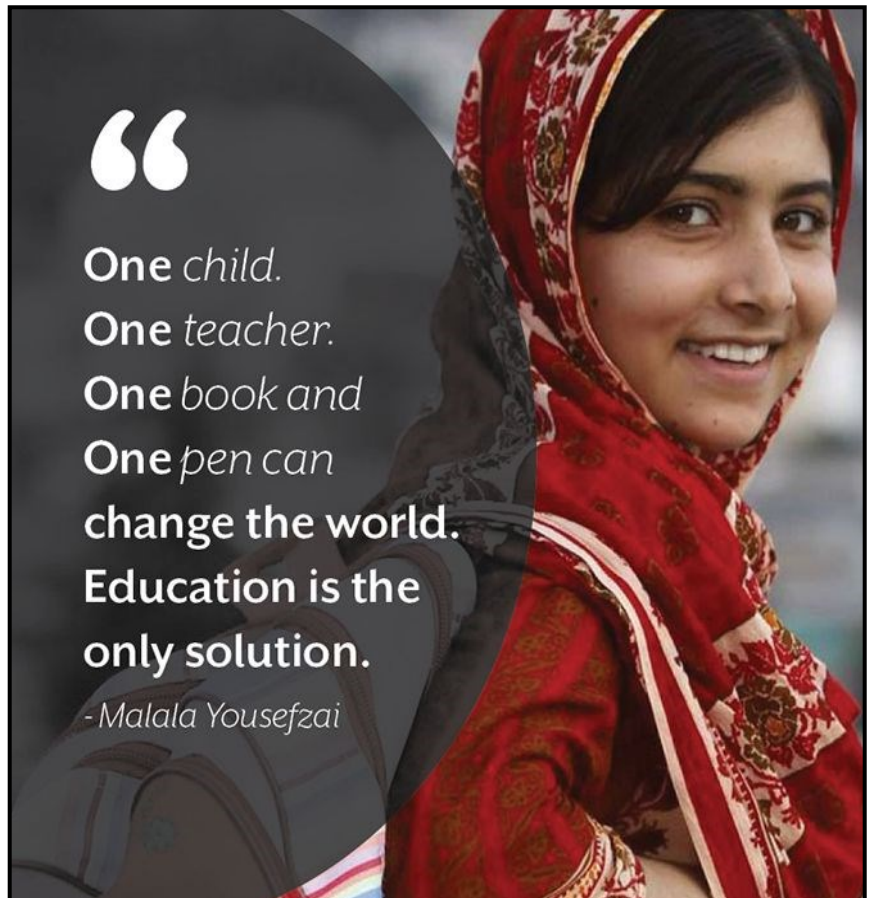
One book and

One pen can

change the world.

**Education is the
only solution.**

- Malala Yousefzai



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.



YOUR VTA EXECUTIVE FOR THE 2023 — 2024 YEAR



President:	Dave MacKenzie
Past President:	Cori Huizer
1st Vice President:	Billie Jo Beaudoin
2nd Vice President:	Vacant
Secretary:	Vacant
Treasurer:	Steve Skultety
Local Association Rep:	Meghan Black
Bargaining Chair:	Meghan Black
Professional Development Chair:	Deb Vandesande
Social Justice Rep	Vacant
P/R, Communications	Shawna Mitchell
Occupational Health & Safety Chair:	Shawna Mitchell
Local Aboriginal Education Contact:	Vacant
French Education Chair:	Vacant
IBIPOC Rep:	Vacant
Members at Large:	Melissa Reeves
	Jennifer Lactin
	Vacant
	Vacant
TTOC Rep	

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

Congratulations Retiring Teachers!

An Invitation to Retiring Teachers



The Vernon Retired Teachers Association (VRTA) offers sincere congratulations to this year's retiring teachers. We hope you have a long and fulfilling retirement.

Whatever activities you choose to pursue we hope that you will make joining the VRTA one of them. As a provincial and local association we can offer a variety of supports which will enable you to transition and maintain a rewarding retirement.

How does our organization operate? At the provincial level the B.C. Retired Teacher's Association (BCRTA) is a strong organization which takes an interest in all our concerns as retired persons. The BCRTA represents us on the pension board and liaises with other organizations to protect us in matters concerning our health and well being.

The BCRTA publishes a magazine on issues and activities of interest to retired teachers as well as maintaining an informative website (www.bcrt.ca).

At the local level the VRTA focuses more on social interests and local activities. We meet five times a year for a short business agenda followed by an interesting presentation and lunch with plenty of time to socialize with former colleagues and friends. You are welcome to invite friends and partners. Our local association offers almost \$4,000.00 dollars in scholarships each year. We also support the local food bank by twice yearly collections at our meetings.

Membership is voluntary and open to all retired teachers and administrators. One of the most positive advantages of membership is access to very good travel insurance packages. The larger the membership the more influence we can exert in matters of importance especially pensions.

We are holding our annual 'No Host, No Bell Breakfast', as per tradition, on the first day of school - September 5, 2023 at 9:30 at the Hot Spot on 6th. To find our more information about the breakfast and the Vernon Retired Teachers Association please email me. I look forward to hearing from you!

Cheryl Jennings
VRTA
cjcanada@hotmail.com