

Vernon Teachers' Association VOICES

Volume 107 June 2024

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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 Members of the VTA



Dear Respected VTA Retirees and Members,

As the school year draws to a close, it is with deep gratitude and admiration that we reflect on the remarkable careers of our esteemed retirees, who have dedicated 25 years or more to serving our students and our community. Your unwavering commitment, passion, and tireless efforts have made a profound impact on the lives of countless individuals, shaping the future of education and leaving an enduring legacy of excellence.

To each retiree, we extend our heartfelt thanks for your years of service and dedication to the teaching profession. You have made a difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of students in our community, nurturing their growth, inspiring their minds, and instilling in them a love for learning that will last a lifetime. Your contributions to our association, your advocacy for students with diverse needs, and your unwavering support for your fellow educators have left an indelible mark on our profession, and for that, we are truly grateful.

Reflecting on the wealth of experiences shared by our retirees, from the joy of teaching in the classroom to the collaborative efforts to support student success, we are reminded of the profound impact that educators have on shaping the future. Your dedication to providing inclusive education, your support for students transitioning into the community, and your commitment to professional development have been instrumental in creating an environment where every student has the opportunity to thrive.

As you embark on this new chapter of retirement, we wish you endless joy, fulfillment, and adventure. May this time be filled with cherished moments with family and friends, opportunities to explore new passions, and the freedom to savor the simple pleasures of life. Your contributions to education will always be remembered, and your presence will be deeply missed.

To our retirees and members alike, I extend my deepest gratitude for your unwavering dedication to our profession and our association. Together, we have created a legacy of excellence that will continue to inspire generations of educators to come. As we look to the future, let us carry forward the values of compassion, collaboration, and lifelong learning that have defined our union and continue to make a difference in the lives of our students and our community.

With warmest regards,

Dave MacKenzie
President, VTA



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.*

VTA RETIREES

2023 - 2024



Kelly Bibby

Yahoo! Retirement Time. I have always wanted to be a Teacher and after getting my 3 kiddos settled into elementary school I achieved my dream at age 40. I TTOC'd for five challenging years before getting my first full time job at Kidston Elementary. Soon a colleague encouraged me to move over to high school and enter into the world of teaching Foods and Sewing. After receiving an additional Diploma in Home Ec,... I was in and have loved teaching in this area for the rest of my career at both Kal and Seaton Secondary. I have loved working with students and being a part of their creativity and growth. For sure it wasn't all 'wine and roses' and some days after school I really needed wine and roses, but the good outweighs the bad. I have always been a strong supporter of fellow teachers and a strong supporter of the VTA. I 'walked the line' in a couple of strikes where there was time to really get to know my colleagues and I believe make a difference in education. I plan to continue to be creative in baking, sewing, weaving, felting, etc. I will be doing some TTOC'ing, but my husband Bob and I will mostly be spending time at the family cabin on Mabel Lake, skiing at Silver Star, camping on our property at Seymour Arm, Kayaking on BC's coast and playing with our 5 grandjoys. Thank you for the great memories made in the past 24 years. I am always proud to be called....Teacher

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!

- ♦ Nadine McGregor
- ♦ Mike Allen
- ♦ Hedda Dobson

VTA RETIREES

2023 - 2024

Mari Cebuliak

I consulted with teachers and School Based Team (SBT) regarding student needs, provided pre-referral collaborative consultation to schools and provided specialized assessment (formal level C assessments) for students K-12 for learning and/or behaviour concerns prioritized by the SBT. I formalized these assessments into comprehensive written reports, debriefed the assessment findings with the parent/guardian, relevant school-based personnel and when appropriate, with the student. This led to identifying students who meet Ministry of Education criteria for special education. I also spent a lot of time reviewing documentation for Designation Requests for students who meet Ministry of Education criteria for special education. It was a privilege to assist many families in collaboration with other professionals in obtaining services in the community (i.e., medical, counselling, social services, etc.) and to assist schools with adaptation and modification of the curriculum. I also assisted schools with the development of transition plans: Pre-school to kindergarten (NONA), elementary school to high school; high school to community and collaborated with CYSN and CLBC about vulnerable students transitioning into the community. I completed many CLBC Assessor or Review forms for students applying for CLBC services. I partnered with provincial outreach programs e.g., POPARD, and Inclusion Outreach and coordinated many specialized consultations for schools. Over the years I provided (planned, organized or delivered) professional development activities for VTA staff and CUPE and also taught CPI for 7 years. During the time-periods I also held the assignment of School Counsellor, I ran Friendship Groups and team-taught Executive functioning Skills in 2 classrooms. Over the years I did many student observations in classrooms and were always impressed by the quality of teaching our students receive. I loved the variety my job provided and working with so many teams and students of the years!

Personal Information:

I lived, studied, and taught high school and special education in South Africa till 1997. I 'canadianized' my South African qualifications in Saskatoon Saskatchewan and moved to Vernon in 2006. I was widowed in 2007 and prepared for my School Psychology exams and was ready to accept the job of School Psychologist in SD22 in 2010. I remarried in 2013. I have a daughter and 11-year-old grandson living in Lake Country and a son and his family (my 4-month-old granddaughter and 4-year-old grandson) living in Vernon. I love spending time with family and close friends cooking, and going to the theater, ballet, and music-performances.

I enjoy camping with friends, hiking, cycling, backpacking, paddleboarding and snowshoeing. I rest and relax by reading poetry, listening to books and music and dancing in a Tango-formation group with a formidable group of other women.

RETIREMENT PLANS:

1. Continue to work in my 'fun' job as Clinical Counsellor at my own pace, time and preference.
2. Taking things slower, allowing more time in nature, and enjoying the abundance of the Okanagan Lifestyle.
3. Connecting more to people and family that are important in my life.
4. Enjoying going away in off-seasons with my husband (touring, exploring, fishing)
5. Exploring more of Canada, some parts of Europe and the Forbidden Coast in Namibia.
6. Learning the Argentine Tango in Argentina.



VT A RETIREES

2023 - 2024



Anita Baturin

1991 I graduated from UBC, got married, moved to Winnipeg where I started my first teaching position at Ecole Belmont (Seven Oaks School District). Fast forward to 2002, now a mother of 2, when I began teaching at Ecole Beairsto, SD22. (where I have stayed for 22 years!)

Over these years, many wonderful memories were made and so many lovely friendships to cherish. I am thankful for the opportunities to share my joy of learning with so many eager young minds.

Looking ahead, I am excited to embrace the new adventures waiting for me. I look forward to performing with multiple bands, The Legendary Lake Monsters, The Shades, Cross and Crown. One new project that I am hoping to get off the ground is forming a French Jazz Ensemble. So, keep an eye out for this new group!

Also planning on lots of family time, sleeping in, gardening, traveling, volunteering, "treading the boards" at Powerhouse Theatre... just to name a few. Exciting times ahead!

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VT A RETIREES

2023 - 2024

Debbie Vandesande

I started with the School District in 1987, straight out of university, subbing (as it was called in those days) in a grade ½ classroom of 33 students at Coldstream Elementary. (It is hard to believe that those children are now 44 and 45 years old, and I have had the pleasure of teaching some of THEIR children!) In the years since, I spent 11 years at Alexis Park, 3 years at BX, 10 years at Kidston, and 11 years at Lavington. Within those years, I took one year to be home with my beautiful surprise baby, Ryan, who is already almost 22 years old!

I have always loved being a primary teacher. As I tell the kids I teach, “You are part of my family and will always have a special place in my heart... and I have a grey hair for every child I’ve taught so I won’t forget you!” What has kept me excited to go to school each day is the richness of these relationships with the kids, their families, and my colleagues. My best piece of advice I give to my student teachers (and I’ve had many) is, “Seek the joy”. My career has been joyful.

After retirement, I look forward to staying involved in my profession and my union, hanging with my husband of 37 years (Mark), and teaching more yoga classes. I will enjoy slowing down the pace and seeking new joys.

Pamela Sophonow

I have been teaching for 37 years, all of them have been with School District 22. I have worked at Alexis Park, JW Inglis, OKL, Harwood, Silver Star, and Coldstream, finishing my career at Lavington.

Highlights have been most definitely the people I have had the privilege of working with and the relationships and friendships I have formed along the way. Keeping in touch with many coworkers, students and families has contributed to a fulfilling career. Favorite memories are watching the bears sleep in the trees outside my classroom window at Coldstream and spending time in the park cheering on the spawning fish with my students. Also, taking a group of grade two students to a council meeting to have Christmas lights put on the trees outside of Coldstream Elementary.

I have been married almost 35 years with two children who are both local and one very special grandson whom I get to have a playdate with one day per week.

I am looking forward to flexibility with time to enjoy travel, camping, hiking, kayaking, gym time, long walks and hopefully cycling, golfing and skiing along with social time with family and friends.





Brenda Keay

Brenda completed her B.Ed. in 1989 at the U of A in Edmonton. Her first teaching assignment began in April for three months at Cadotte Lake School in Alberta. That was a quick initiation into teaching! Brenda then moved to Chetwynd, BC and taught in SD 59 for 26 years! She taught at Don Titus, Little Prairie and Windrem elementary schools. She taught everything from Kindergarten – Grade 6 throughout her career. Brenda took an interest in music education during this time and pursued a master's degree in Elementary Education (music) through the U of A, which she completed in 2013. She was the music specialist in the school for many years. In 2013, Brenda had the opportunity to help create and support the first Montessori School in Chetwynd. She took her Montessori training to become a lead teacher in the school and fell in love with the Montessori philosophy and methodology! Brenda also taught ESL in Ethiopia in the summer of 2015. Brenda moved to Vernon to be a part of the Montessori team at Silver Star Elementary in 2016. She taught primary Montessori for 8 years as a part of the Wolfpack, in addition to directing musicals and organizing school events.

Brenda loves the Okanagan and the outdoor opportunities it offers! She is looking forward to many adventures in her retirement!

Marvin Kadach

Marvin is retiring after 35 years of teaching, of which 28 years were with SD22, and specifically, 27 years on 27th Street at Seaton.

Marvin graduated from UBC with a Bachelor of Education Degree in 1989. That same year, on June 3, he married his loving wife, Linda, and in September, began teaching Grade 6 at Chaffey-Burke Elementary School in Burnaby, BC. He taught at Chaffey-Burke for 7 years. During this time he also completed his fifth year at UBC in special education courses, followed by a Master of Education Degree in Counselling Psychology.

In 1996, Marvin and Linda moved to Vernon, where Marvin held a position that included

part-time counseling at BX Elementary and part-time teaching Grade 7 and Kindergarten PE at Lavington Elementary. In 1997, he moved to Seaton joining the School-Based Resource Team for a few years before teaching Mathematics full-time.

Marvin and Linda are looking forward to traveling during retirement, especially during the off-season!



Paul Hunter

I have been a teacher for 35.5 years, 32 of those have been in the Vernon School District. I have taught at Shuswap Jr. Secondary, Ladysmith Sec, Quesnel Sec, Charles Bloom, Whitevale Elementary, JW Inglis, Clarence Fulton, West Vernon Elementary, OKL, Ellison, Mission Hill and Kalamalka.

It has been a pleasure taking students on multiple field trips to the Vancouver Opera, Edmonton, the Vancouver Symphony, Sun Peaks, and Disneyland. It always sounds trite, but the truth is, I have derived a great deal of pleasure from seeing my students succeed, either by simply graduating or by going on to bigger and better things.

I have been married to my lovely wife, Kerry, since 2010. Between the two of us we have 5 adult children (ages 25, 27, 29, 30 and 31) and one grandchild (8 months) My hobbies include: curling, golfing, painting ceramics, singing with the Okanagan vocal Harmony Chorus and playing saxophone in the Okanagan Valley Big Band.

Beginning in September, I will be returning to direct the Vernon Community Singers Choir. I founded the choir in 1993 but had to give it up when I was hired full time in the Vernon School District. Coincidentally, I have been rehired to direct the choir now that I am retiring, coming full circle some may say.

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



Rick Serafin

My teaching career has spanned 30 years, and of those years 18 have been with the Vernon School District. I have taught at Fulton, Mission Hill, Kalamalka and JW Inglis.

I am grateful for having the opportunity to help kids prepare for the rest of their lives!!

I am happily married to my wife Heather, we have three wonderful kids; Kaitlin, Zachary and Danika. We also have three grandchildren; Brayla, Tarek and Sullivan. I enjoy relaxing

and stay active playing many sports including Pickleball.

I hope, no matter what changes in the educational system continues to make, that they strongly evaluate and take serious consideration into how it will effect society.

Shane Valouch

Many years ago, I took a career aptitude test and my top two job choices were teacher or air traffic controller. Looking back, I feel I chose the more stressful of the two! I began teaching in 1993 and have taught all 31 years in School District #22. During that time my path took me from Silver Star to Mission Hill, West Vernon, J.W. Inglis, Coldstream Elementary and back to SilverStar.

Along the way I have been privileged to work with great teachers and administrators. Over the years, I have enjoyed watching diverse groups of students grow both individually and collectively from September to June. I believe that humor and respect are key ingredients in fostering a positive atmosphere in the classroom and I have tried to incorporate this daily. I have been married to my understanding wife Lyla, who has had to put up with the long teaching hours I have put in and of course, my wacky sense of humor. We have three children, Tyler, Jennifer, and Stephanie and I have recently become a grandpa when Theodore made his appearance on December 16, 2023. In retirement, I am looking forward to playing tennis, going on long hikes, swimming, visiting friends, and gardening.





Jim Garlick

I have been teaching for 25 years, all of those years have been with the Vernon School District. During those years I have worked at Kalamalka and Fulton.

I have enjoyed taking student out of school on a variety of field trips over my years of teaching.

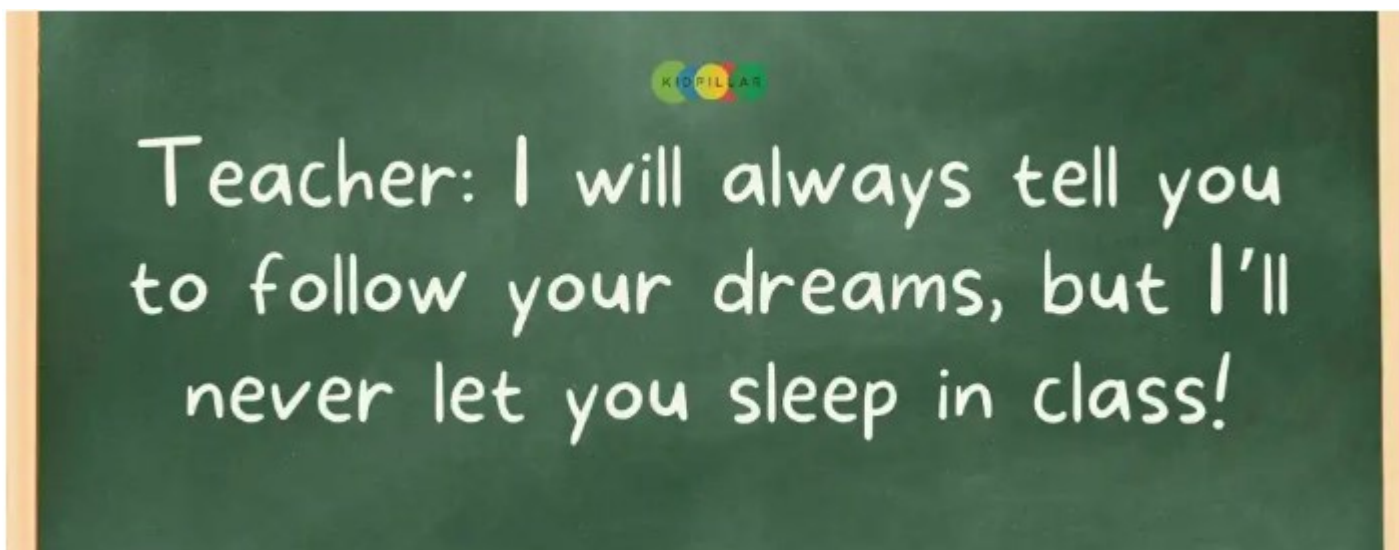
I have been married for 36 years to Karen Thoresen. We have two children; our son Eli is completing a masters degree in electrical engineering and our daughter, Mika, is a registered nurse working at the Royal Columbian Hospital in New Westminster.

I have enjoyed my time teaching, and I plan on completing the many projects around home that need to be finished up and to travel.

Dale Olson

I started teaching in 1992 and have spent the last 30 years at Fulton. I have always enjoyed my Fulton family and will miss them dearly, both staff and students. Coaching has been a large part of our Olson family and we have met many good friends through coaching over the years. I will always hold the Maroon Warrior deep in my heart and all of our students and athletes that have embraced being a Maroon.

I feel grateful to have had so many positive connections with so many students over the years, connections that will last a lifetime. If I could go back in time and do it again, I would just hit replay! Teaching is a job that can really wear you down mentally and physically but the rewards far out way the bad. Thanks to all the great admin over the years that helped us develop a great school and thanks to all my teammates on the Fulton staff who made it such a fantastic place to work.



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



Executive Position

2023-2024

2024-2025

President:
Past President:
1st Vice President:
2nd Vice President:
Secretary:
Treasurer:
Local Association Rep:
Bargaining Chair:
Professional Development Chair:
Social Justice Rep
P/R, Communications
Occupational Health & Safety Chair:
Local Aboriginal Education Contact:
French Education Chair:
IBIPOC Rep:
Members at Large:

Dave MacKenzie
Cori Huizer
Billie Jo Beaudoin
Vacant
Vacant
Steve Skultety
Meghan Black
Meghan Black
Deb Vandesande
Vacant
Vacant
Vacant
Vacant
Christine Buhler
Mike Lau
Melissa Reeves
Jennifer Lactin
Vacant
Damian Halvorsen

Dave MacKenzie
Billie Jo Beaudoin
Charlene Lau
Vacant
Steve Skultety
Lisa Laboucane
Meghan Black
Deb Vandesande
Melissa Reeves
Available
Cori Huizer
Stacey Mee
Christine Buhler
Mike Lau
Jennifer Lactin
Chris Brandle
Available
Damian Halvorsen

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

Annual VTA Year End

Dessert Table
Supplied by
CUPE 5523

BBQ

Thursday- June 27th
3:30-7:00pm



Paddlewheel Park Hall

Hosts:
WL Seaton
Staff

Come and congratulate
our retirees

All SD22 Employees
Welcome!
UTA, CUPE, Trustees &
Administrators

- Hamburgers
- Refreshments
- Music
- Snacks
- Drinks

