

The K.R.T.A. Bridge

Spring 2014

Editor and assistant Frank Veszely and Donna Sharpe

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Our motto: "It's great to remember but the bliss is to forget."



A century ago a well known investigative reporter into world affairs, named Douglas Reed, published a book of his findings.. Its title: *Insanity Fair*. Since his day the fair has grown bigger and bigger, and insanity appears to have no limits. Take the newest, biggest case: China. This huge country is experiencing massive urbanization, economic expansion, colonizing (as opposed to being colonized), huge debt-buying and borrowing, building booms and dislocations, problems associated with an aging population akin to ours, infrastructure problems, and massive investments in space and technological innovations as well as in its military – all at once.

Move over, everyone! China is coming, for sure. But where is it going? Reportedly, China is creating new jobs at a rate of 18% annually, but it is not enough. Chinese are leaving the countryside at a rate of 23 % over the last decade. Where are they going? A relatively few lucky ones are going overseas. The Chinese government is buying up land for them in places like Zambia, the others go to the cities where unemployment is on the rise. Some are absorbed into the ever-growing military. Still, the tension is rising. In less than two decades the Chinese have moved from the world's most egalitarian society to one of its most unequal. Local unrest, demonstrations, resistance movements are widespread but unreported. The communist clamp (intimidation, informants, control of all organizations, and an oppressive secret police) is on. Concentration camps are growing. Chinese nationalism, fueled by deep seated resentment brought on by the memory of past humiliations suffered in the Opium War and the Japanese occupation all add up to a tinder box atmosphere. When this insanity fair lights up, it won't be just by firecrackers.

Kamloops Retired Teachers' Executive for 2013-2014

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**Kamloops Retired Teachers' Association
Cottonwood Centre
2013-2014 General Meetings & Programs**

- Sept. 3, 2013 “No more bells” Drop-in Coffee Party (10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.)
- Sept. 27, 2013 - Introducing New Retirees, sharing Fall produce, flowers, preserves etc.
- Oct. 25, 2013 - “Bridges of Kamloops” (Colleen Stainton) Halloween costumes optional Nov. 29, 2013 - Pre Christmas Celebration (entertainment) Christmas Amalgamated.
Turkey dinner. Don't forget to bring Food Bank donations
- Jan. 31, 2014 - Riverboat Cruising (Presentors: Sheila Park & Carolynne Miller)
- Feb. 28, 2014 - Pensions Presentation (BCRTA VP Patricia Clough) Next Bridge out
- Mar. 28, 2014 - Bursary Recipients in attendance. Harambee Silent Auction
- Apr. 25, 2014 - **Mystery tour replaces April luncheon, which will be canceled.**
- May 30, 2014 – AGM, visit by BCRTA President Cliff Boldt and a J. & J. Insurance rep.

**2013/2014 Executive Meetings
ABC Family Restaurant**

	Feb. 18, 2014
Oct. 15, 2013	Mar. 18, 2014
Nov. 19, 2013	Apr. 15, 2014
Jan. 21, 2014	May 22, 2014

KRTA Life



Halloween in costumes. Janet Doubt won best costume.



Our wicked treasurer, Eva Harvey



Colleen Stainton spoke on the bridges of Kamloops. There is quite a history associated with them all. The oldest existing bridge is the CN bridge. It dates back to the nineteenth century. The present (3rd) Red Bridge dates back to 1936. Check out the sign and landscaping work recently completed at both ends of the bridge, thanks to a group of local enthusiasts that Colleen belongs to. Go and see it!



If you missed our January luncheon, you missed a lot of good pictures shown by Sheila Park and Carolynne Miller during their Riverboat Cruises presentation, not to mention a Beef Stroganoff. The tables were beautifully set for the Chinese New Year, so we had a Chinese Stroganoff! I duly paid for my November Christmas dinner I had missed because I did not know what day it was. Donna Sharpe was there with the camera but did not take any pictures, because she so enjoyed both the dinner and the choral presentation that she had forgotten about the camera. So it is now official: we are both seniors! And in September there was a well attended, real “To hell with the bell!” gathering, now with a politically correct name. Just don't ask me what it is!

The Bridge, in retrospect

“This is the first day of the rest of your life, mine, and that of The Bridge. Your new editor is filled with whim, vigor, and not much else, but has some gas to burn. He has turned seventy last

*year and in a moment of temporary insanity he felt his hand rise when The D. J. asked for a volunteer, so here we go until the gas lasts in the tank... I do mean to liven up these pages with some new features added to the tried and trusted ones: **Oh, Canada!** A few facts about our country that the title inspires, **Alerts** about things not to be missed, **Goings on** for the wannabe informed that has not made the newspapers or those who would like us to know what they are doing, and pass on their news to the **BRIDGE**, **Calendar** for the wannabe organized, **Swap** for the barter minded – lamps, books, husbands (har-har) et al by naming the item and giving a phone number, **Presentations recaps and/or follow-ups** from our lunch presenters, **Travel Tips** for those who would share recommendations or alerts, **Close-up** featuring a member or two at the time to get to know, **Fun(ny) Page** for jokes and puzzles **S. O. S.** Calls for assistance by members that need trustworthy help, **Announcements** et al, **Tribute and/or in memoriam** lines about our still loved colleagues, **Literary Leanings** short originals from our members submitted to the editors, book recommendations **I wish...** column for your requests and gripes, and of course **Letters to the Editor** you would like to see published. Your chances of being accepted are very good indeed. Donna and I mean this connection to be of service to you, first and last, quality comes next. You will have to read *The Bridge* s-l-o-w-l-y, for you won't see another till the fall, September, that is. At least you know that it comes tax free!"*

And thus began The Bridge under my editorship. Donna Sharpe's contribution to it turned out to be mostly of the moral support kind, but was not any less needed or appreciated. Her name shall continue to be on the front page for as long as I feel her welcome support behind me. Seven years later it seems appropriate to look back on what materialized of the above. **Oh, Canada!** Has appeared in most editions, but not all, and I think maybe that is how it should be. Contributions to it by others remain most welcome. **Alerts** as such did not appear, but its intent has been amply carried out in numerous notices and articles on timely topics of pensions, wills, organizational affairs, COSCO, fraud alerts, occasional ads, etc. **Goings on** and **Announcements**, **S.O.S.**, ditto. The **Calendar**, along with the names, addresses of the current Executive and how they could be reached took up the second page of every Bridge I edited. **Presentations recaps** continued throughout and have made up much of the body of our organization's life, thus preserving its history. This may be the most important function of The Bridge that reflects the wide range of interests worthy of our diverse group. Of late, I changed its name to **Our Organization's Life** and, increasingly, have been supplementing it with many pictures. The **Close-up** section is ongoing though intermittent. Marie Laroche is writing a series of articles about our Past Presidents, and in this issue Janet Doubt is featured. In the **Tribute/In Memoriam** column I endeavored to remember our members as best I could. As I am writing this the thought is occurring to me to ask the chair of the Sunshine Committee for a biannual report for The Bridge, that could well complement these features about our members past and present. **Literary Leanings** morphed into a **Poetry corner** by and large, but we managed to publish both poems and stories from half a dozen people or so, and I hope others are to follow. Of **Letters to the Editor** were none. The opportunity continues to be there and continues to go begging until someone submits one. Do note that, to date, no member has been turned down. **The Funny Page** was intermittent, but humor has consistently been featured and provides a significant contribution to every edition. Some of it is included in the **Food for Thought** section, a regular column that I conceived of early and maintained throughout. Although this column sometimes served as my informal editorial forum, it is also open for any of you interested in sharing his/her ideas with others. Readership of The Bridge appears to be still riding high, show of hands support during meetings most encouraging, responses on the recent questionnaire both helpful and positive. At any rate, please do not hesitate

to contact me with your questions/concerns. Technological problems have frustrated me and annoyed both Harvey Dalley, our webmaster, and I as the transfer of The Bridge from my old computer onto the KRTA website has been anything but smooth. I seem to have made us Harvey's worst client. It remains to be seen how much, if any, my planned new computer purchase will help. I fear my planned move from XP to Windows 7 will not eliminate the technology gap between us and I may already have convinced Harvey that I am a hard to deal with techno-idiot. I can only assure you that the transfer has been nothing if not sheer perseverance on both of our parts. Please smile and thank Harvey when you see him. Our website, thanks to him alone, is a marvel to behold. Submission deadlines are September 30 and January 31

Simple Truth Samples

#1 Lovers help each other undress before sex. However after sex, they always dress on their own. Moral of the story: In life, no one helps you once you're screwed.

#2 When a lady is pregnant, all her friends touch her stomach and say, "Congratulations". But, none of them touch the man's penis and say, "Good job". Moral of the story: Hard work is never appreciated.

Five Rules to remember in Life

1. Money cannot buy happiness, but it's more comfortable to cry in an expensive Ferrari than on a bicycle. 2. Forgive your enemies, but remember all their names, so that when you hear them again, you can quickly plan an escape route. 3. If you help someone when they're in trouble, you can bet on it they will remember you when they're in trouble again. But it's only up to you for how long. Tell them the gravy train has left. 4. Many people are alive only because it's illegal to kill them. And if you do kill them, then everyone will turn against you. 5. Alcohol does not solve any problems. TRUE! But then, neither does milk. But, milk is a lot cheaper & you can still drive without getting a ticket, You'll fight less with your spouse, you'll be a lot better at your job, People will shun you less & you will be much more tolerable socially, Your kids will actually love you & come up to you to give you a sincere hug. AND FINALLY Condoms don't guarantee safe sex. A friend of mine was wearing one, when he was shot by the woman's husband.

Old Jokes make the Past seem *passée* – or not

Nowhere is this as evident than in old jokes. Here is a good sample from the communist era. 1953, East Berlin. People are in a long lineup for meat. After hours of waiting, some meat arrives. "Thank God!" Says one. The wife of a Russian occupying soldier says: "In the Soviet union we would say "Thank Stalin!" "Hm. And what will you say after Stalin dies?" "Then we will say thank God!" * Mother-in-law to Ivan in Moscow: "When I die I want you to bury me in the Kremlin." "But only great people are buried there! Do you know how many people would I have to bribe to arrange that?" "But when you married my daughter you promised you would do anything for me!" A couple of days later Ivan comes home, beaming. "It's all arranged! The funeral will take place this afternoon!" * In the Pravda a newspaper article appears. "Near the Chino-Soviet border a soviet harvester was peacefully doing its job when a Chinese aircraft appeared and fired on it. The harvester returned the fire and flew back to its base unharmed." * A

soviet passenger liner is waiting for departure on the tarmac for more than two hours. Finally the stewardess announces: Sorry for the delay, comrades, but the comrade pilot did not like the sound of the engine when he started it and we had to find another pilot.” * An old farmer is about to leave his bicycle in front of the parliament buildings, when a policeman stops him. “Sorry, you can’t leave your bike here, the Soviet delegation is coming.” “No problem,” says the farmer, “I chained it to the lamppost!” * There is a medical conference in Moscow. At one of the lectures it is announced that contrary to widely-accepted notions, proof has been found that the X-ray is a Russian invention. There is authenticated documentation. Already some centuries ago, a well-known Russian scientist had written to his wife: ”I can see right through you!” * Soviet authorities advertise a painting competition with the title: “Lenin in Finland.” The ministry is inundated with paintings: Lenin sitting, standing, thinking by a Finnish landmark. The jury is surprised to find a painting, showing Krupskaya, Lenin’s wife, cheating on her husband. They summon the artist before the jury and demand to know where Lenin is. “Lenin? He is in Finland!” comes the surprised reply. * Q. “Is it possible to build socialism in Switzerland?” A. “In theory, yes, but what for?” * A Soviet soldier gets a three day leave home. He puts on his skis and leaves. Three days later he arrives. His comrades all want to know: What was the first thing you did? “I made love to my wife.” The second? “I drank a bottle of vodka.” Don’t say, and the third? “I took my skis off.” * Aljoshka and Vladimir decide they should quit drinking. Aljoshka says “I am going to hide a bottle of vodka behind my back in my hand. If you guess correctly, we will drink the bottle, then quit drinking. If you guess wrong, we just quit drinking.” Vladimir ponders for a long time, then says “It’s in your left hand.” Upon which Aljoshka: “Think, Vladimir, THINK!” * Q. “What’s a Siberian toilet like?” A. “It has two sticks. One to lean on, and one to keep the wolves at bay.” * Q. What happened when Michurin crossbred the lice with the firefly? A.: Moscow lit up. [Nasty, but the audience of its day saw a grain of truth in this.] * What is the Russian midget like? A. The biggest! * It reaches the sky, is made of reinforced steel and concrete, and is chirping. What is it? A. A skyscraper chirper. Ok. It reaches the sky, is made of reinforced steel and concrete, but is not chirping. What’s that? A skyscraper chirper, made in Russia. * International medical conference in Moscow, an American and a Russian doctor are talking. Says the Russian: “ Last year at my mother’s workplace acid sprayed into my mother’s eye. I went to the lake, caught a fish, and gave my mother a fish-eye transplant. Since then, she has 20-20 vision and greets me from afar.” “Hm. That’s quite something! Last year my brother lost both of his legs. I went into the forest, shot a deer, and transplanted its legs onto my brothers’ stumps. Since then, he can run like a deer, and has set the world record high jumping.” “Hm. And who saw that?” “Your mother with her fish eyes!” * A Brit, an American and a Russian try to prove who produces the best rubber. Says the Brit” “We can make a chewing gum that one, falling out of the second storey window can stick mid-flight onto the wall and will have a soft landing.” Says the American: “Ours can do the same from the tenth floor!” That’s nothing, says the Russian. “This guy has fallen out of the twentieth floor. He is as flat as a pancake, but his rubber boots are like new! See? I am wearing them now!” A Brit, a Frenchman and a Russian discuss what may give a guy the greatest joy. Says the Brit: “After a game of golf I go into the club and smoke a great cigar.” Says the French: “I buy a case of Champagne, and spend the night with a couple of girls in a fine hotel.” Says the Russian: “You know nothing of joy. It is when you are awakened in the middle of the night to answer your door and are faced with six secret policemen who yell at you at once: ‘Stephan Stephanovich?’ And you can say: ‘No. One floor above.’”

Come to think of it, even jokes from another world can retain their incisiveness!

Picture Essay



Food for Thought

A) An unheralded new age is upon us?

Technology helps the world advance. As humans it is in our nature to investigate, innovate and solve problems. This curiosity means we make things, create things and develop new technologies. You can look back thousands of years for basic examples of technology pushing civilization forward. Most people don't understand the rapid change technology has on their life...or the speed at which change occurs. For example, the following are the five 'Great Ages' of human progress and their approximate duration:

- Stone Age — 3.4 million years
- Bronze Age — 2,500 years
- Iron Age — 500 years
- Industrial Revolution — 80 years
- Information Revolution — 20 years

You'll notice the length of each 'age' diminishes as technology improves. The computer industry calls this trend 'Moore's Law'. It dictates that computer processing power doubles every 18 months. You may have heard about graphene. If you haven't, it's a newly discovered, very special refined form of graphite. It's a one-atom-thick sheet of densely packed carbon atoms arranged in a honeycomb lattice. Put simply, it's a sheet of carbon atoms 150,000 times thinner

than a human hair. Under a powerful microscope, it looks like chicken wire. But what's so special about it? Everything! For starters, it's 200 times stronger than structural steel... It's so strong you could suspend an elephant from a single strand of Graphene...and the strand would not break. It's extremely lightweight too...Soon, everything from bicycles and boats to airplanes and cars could be made out of graphene composites. And when they are, their energy efficiency and durability could skyrocket. But that's just the beginning of what this new 'smart material' can do... Not only is it the strongest material researchers have ever tested — it's also one of the best conductors man has ever found. IBM has already created a graphene based processor capable of executing 100 billion cycles per second. Researchers believe that in the future, a graphene credit card could store as much information as today's computers.

Be clear...This one material alone could prove more revolutionary than —(and soon REPLACE) — plastic, Kevlar and the silicon chip. Kiss goodbye to shattered screens! In fact, it's such a breakthrough that the first two scientists to successfully produce single-atom-thick crystals of graphene were awarded the 2010 Nobel Prize in Physics. And for good reason... In just two years, over 200 companies from a wide array of industries have researched the magical potential of graphene...Scientists in the US and China are already using tiny graphene based probes to target and identify tumors in live mice. They hope similar graphene based particles could shuttle cancer drugs to tumors...or even kill tumor cells directly! Engineers at Northwest University, Seattle, found that specially crafted graphene electrodes could allow a lithium-ion battery — like those found in your smart phone or Toyota Prius — to charge 10 times faster and hold 10 times more power. And in 2011, chemists at Rice University, Houston, created graphene based thin films — unlocking the secret to incredibly flexible, super-durable touch screens and solar cells that can wrap around just about anything... The Smallest Revolution in History... Down at the molecular level there's a lot of friction. Particles can stick together really easily. This means new and complicated structures can be formed. Today scientists are experimenting with different conditions to see what sorts of new molecular structures they can create.

The results are astonishing. Some look like thin wires... Some look like pancakes... Others look like flowers... All these different molecular structures have different properties. And soon they'll change the way we live...From solar panels you can spray onto your roof...to computers and batteries so small they are invisible. From mobile phones that you can stretch, twist and even imbed into your clothing...they'll make stronger houses...tougher cars...and even make us healthier! Medical researchers are already looking at using nano particles to deliver drugs or hunt down cancerous tumors. Just imagine 'nano medicines' patrolling your body, hunting down diseases and zapping problems as soon as they arise... Samsung have already said its flexible displays should enter full-scale production later this year — and it expects to have a dozen more graphene based products on the market within the next five. IBM, Nokia and Apple are hot on their heels too. Touch screens...processor chips...casings...and batteries in everything from PCs and HD TVs to tablets, mobile phones and hybrids could be all made with graphene. It could change entire industries...economies...and our lives. Imagine... HD TVs as thin as wallpaper...Smart phones so skinny and flexible you can roll them up and put them behind your ear...and so durable you can beat them with a hammer! It's mind-blowing. Imagine how our world — and your life — would change if the batteries that run your I Phone...your Kindle...and your laptop held 10 TIMES more power and charged 10 TIMES faster than they do now... If you could eliminate breast cancer or prostate tumors with a simple injection...or by swallowing a

graphene charged pill...If your house were strong enough to withstand a bush fire — and your windows processed enough solar energy to heat your home in winter and cool it in the summer...If the car you drove were six times lighter and 20 times stronger... The effects would be staggering! Fuel-efficiency would shoot through the roof. People would live longer, healthier lives. Cars and airplanes would be lighter, faster and safer than ever before. And electronics of every type would be launched into an era of unprecedented growth and evolution. This is just a taste of the cutting-edge innovations coming in the Molecular Age.....innovations that will reshape the future in the months and years ahead...and it's starting now. You're looking at a simultaneous eruption of new-age technologies that will alter our lives on a scale not seen for 100 years All this technological change and innovation will transform the world...

- 'Nano batteries' will charge your mobile in seconds...and even power whole cities...
- 'Smart phones' will carry the computing power of IBM's Watson Supercomputer...
- A new era of computing mobility — none of the solid rectangular things we carry now but flexible, wearable devices...
- Hand held 'breathalysers' will diagnose disease in seconds...
- Bionic limbs with human fluidity and dexterity, but the strength of Superman!
- Spacecraft with the capacity to take us beyond our solar system into places and worlds never explored...

Is insanity fair about to gain another major impetus?

B) No clear definitions, no clear concepts; no clear concepts, no clear thinking.

Increasingly, in our commodity-inundated world I find the rarest commodity to be conceptual clarity. Yet we cannot think straight without it. Ruling concepts such as “democracy,” and “freedom,” “progress,” “development,” etc.. have become buzz words without content, subjects of debate, rather than of definition, and may mean diametrically different things, depending solely on who it is being applied to. For example, “democracy,” or “the people's rule,” seems to mean as many things as there are countries even in the Western democracies, and in fact no longer means rule “by the people for the people” whenever and wherever it becomes rule by *some people* in the *name of* The People. It may be argued that the world has not seen a democracy since Athens. (Even there, a large segment of the populations were considered property, not people.) Our representatives – a lifetime of experience ought to have convinced us – are routinely enacting the best interests of the influential few, rather than the public interest. To politicians world wide democracy means winning a party's nomination and his party winning an election, not governance in the best interests of the country – never mind the demos. I cannot think of a less democratic system than Communism under Stalin, yet in their system they regularly held elections with 96-98% participation of the electorate (forced to vote for the same party mind you, and not turning out to vote was not an option), and the communists never tired of saying that they were ruling for the workers and the peasants, even as they were enslaving the one and destroying the other. They were always building “the people's democracies” everywhere they seized power, no matter what populous sentiments they were riding to power. Once in power they turned out to be the same terrorist organization obsessed with power everywhere. “Democracy” is the most widely used, most meaningless word on the planet. The next is “freedom.” Don't let me get started on that! If it exists at all, it exists to serve the self-interests of

those temporarily in power at a locality. World freedom can only mean one thing: a despot ruling a planet. About as far from the original concept as one can get. Yet an undefined concept is a concept that does not exist. Is it any wonder that often insanity and self-interest – and not sanity rules the planet?

Luckily, in the real world, experience betrays some discernible meaning of these much touted words, regardless. It is yet possible to discern, from time to time, where we are actually going. Nowadays progress, we learn from our experience, means “the rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer.” Corollary to this is that the powerful are getting more powerful, the populace is getting more powerless. While we exhort the virtues of freedom and democracy and equality, we are really progressing toward a more and more unequal world, where freedom and democracy has meaning for fewer and fewer people among us. The upshot is that we are progressing toward a more dangerous, less civilized world. We ignore the common good to our peril. Deregulation ditto. When we mix in the technological advances in destruction, the light at the end of the tunnel of our unthinking existence may be the flash of a nuke going off.

C) Development as an existential threat.

As I well recall from my geography classes at UBC, developed countries show marked urbanization and a much greater division of labour among the populace. Primary and secondary industries employ fewer and fewer people while tertiary industries (also known as the service industry) employ many more. While this arguably leads to much easier lives and greater advancement of science and technology, this also leads to greater and greater dependencies and to a dangerous loss of independence and self-reliance – the prerequisites of freedom – to the far too many. In North America, the perils of our dependence have become clear. Consumer “I” depend on so many other people and services I cannot possibly list them all. The list of problems associated with this is just as endless. A frost in Florida, the threat of war in the Middle East, a new fungus in Mexico, a dockers' strike in New York, a breakout of a bird flu in Asia, or just a company going out of business somewhere may affect the supplies I depend on. Deregulated drug companies, a lack of government oversight, the ambitions of Monsanto, the wilful risking of my life for monetary gain by a tobacco company – all play a role in undermining my personal well being, security and existence. Given the situation, we should be happy to be alive, never mind living the quality of existence we still enjoy. But for how long? With growing dislocations, environmental threats, China on the rise, our happy existence is far from guaranteed.

Canadian Headlines, 2090 – Hm.

Ozone created by electrical magnetic cars now killing millions ... * White minorities still trying to have English recognized as Canada's third language. * Children from two-parent, married, heterosexual families bullied in schools for being 'different'. Tolerance urged. * Brampton schoolgirl expelled for not wearing a burqua: Sharia law must be enforced. * Japan announces that Japanese will no longer consume whale meat as whales are now extinct and workers in the scientific research fleet are unemployed. * Canadian Government has told the Japanese that Grey and Black Squirrels taste like whale meat. * Canada now has ten Universities of Political Correctness. Professor Goldman of U of T says there is still a long way to go in the fight to stop

people saying what they think. * Canada's deficit \$20 trillion and rising. Government declares return to surplus in 100 years which is 300 years ahead of time. * Prime Minister Mohammed Yousuf claims increased growth through more immigration is the secret to his success. * Wall Street banks merge to form new super bank, Goldman Rothschild Ebenezer Epstein Drescher (GREED): Huge bonuses paid to executives to celebrate launch. * Baby conceived naturally! Scientists stumped. * Iran still quarantined. Physicists estimate it will take at least ten more years before radioactivity decreases to safe levels in Israel. * France pleads for global help after being taken over by Islamic Countries. No other country has volunteered to come forward to help the beleaguered nation again! * Jose Manuel Mohamed Bush says he will run for second term as US President in 2052. * Canada Post raises price of stamps to \$280 and reduces mail delivery to once a month on Wednesdays only. * After a ten year \$175.8 billion study, commissioned by the Halal Liberal Party, Scientists prove diet and exercise is the key to weight loss. * Average weight of a white Canadian male or female drops to 292 lbs. * Supreme Court rules punishment of criminals violates their civil and human Rights. Victims to be held partly responsible for crime. * Average height of professional basketball players is now nine feet, seven Inches. * New Canadian Liberal government law requires that all nail clippers, screwdrivers, fly swatters and rolled-up newspapers must be as lethal weapons. The registering of pencils is temporarily delayed. *Revenue Canada sets lowest tax rate in decades at 75 per cent. *

Health Care Crisis – the Issues

Rick Turner spoke at our January luncheon and issued a warning. The present 2004 Health Accord is expiring in March, 2014, and the Federal government is unwilling to negotiate with the provinces and territories to establish a new national health accord. Instead, in December, 2011, the Federal Government unilaterally announced a withdrawal from anything but a reduced financing role: in 2017 the transfer of health care funds would be cut from the current annual 6% increase to a percentage pegged to the GDP with a guarantee base of 3%. This is a time of an ageing population and an increasing demand for health care services; unless transfer funding is stable and certain, our cherished public health care system (Medicare) is in danger.

It is projected that by 2024, the provinces will lose a cumulative amount of \$36 billion in transfers. The provinces and territories will thus be forced to reduce health services, health care will vary widely across the country. There is a fear that the profitability of private services will move professionals away from public health care services. Meanwhile, failure to institute a universal pharmaceutical program under the new health accord costs Canadians, some estimate, up to \$ 10 billion a year.

Unless a new health accord is negotiated to establish community health centres and to include universal home and palliative care, health services will continue to skyrocket; and elderly Canadians will continue to suffer, facing the end of their lives in unfamiliar environments while society pays billions for their care.

More than 94% of Canadians believe that health care is a core social right, a symbol of Canada as a compassionate, caring society. We want governments to work together to share information about how to best deliver public health care and to ensure that every Canadian has equal access to quality care provided by a national public system. [Time to write a letter or two!]

Close-up on People – Our Past Presidents series by Marie Laroche



JANET MARY DOUBT
KRTA President 1992-1994

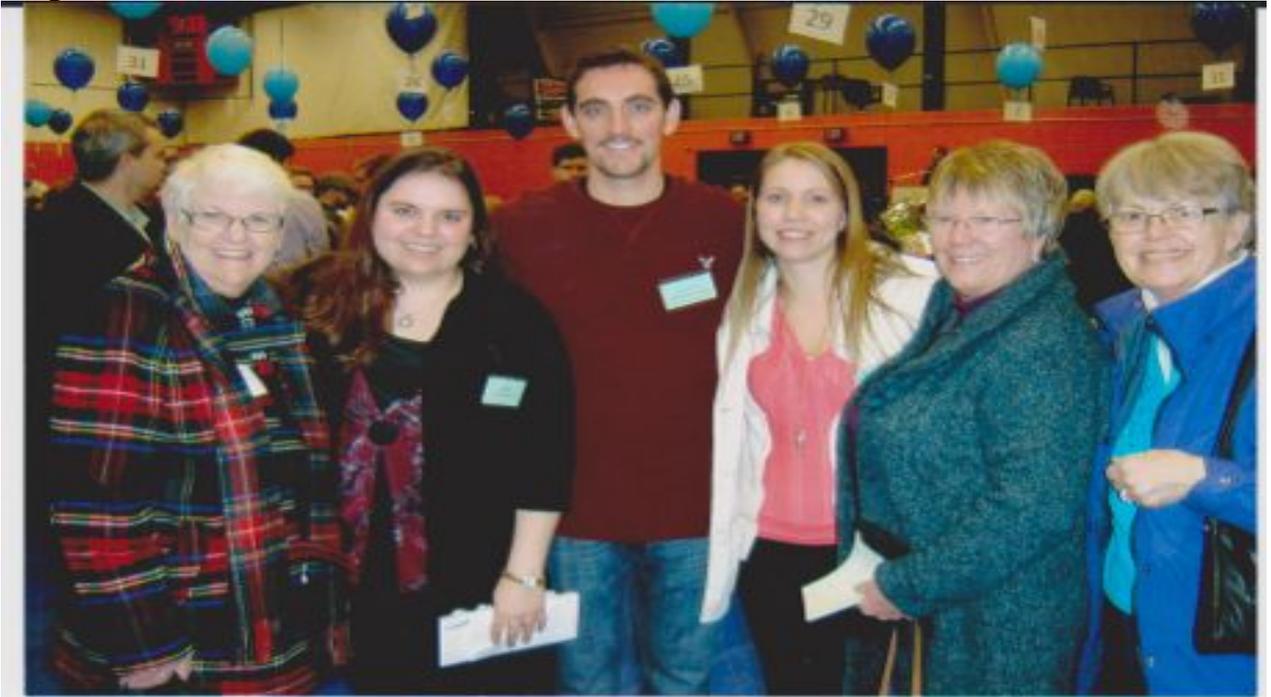
Janet taught for 27 years. In this district she has taught 16 1/2 years. She taught at Beattie, South Sahali, and R.L. Clemitson. She has held the positions of Secretary, President and Director of Primary Teachers; in the K.D.T.A. she has been Staff Rep, Member-at-Large, 2nd V.P., and 1st V.P.; in the B.C.T.F. she has been on the Federation Appeals Board; in the B.C. Primary Teachers Association, she has been a Member-at-Large, and Treasurer for 7 years. M. L.

JANET WRITES:

I was born and grew up in Trail, B.C. I wanted to be a teacher, but my father wouldn't hear of it. He wanted me to be a nurse. After graduation I worked in the lab at the Cominco Assay office for a year. I married my high school sweetheart, Fred. We moved to Vancouver for his last year at the Vancouver School of Art. We lived in the West End and I volunteered at the Gordon House Day Care Center working with five year olds. This began my interest in Early Childhood Education. Fred and I had four children, two girls and two boys. One a teacher, one a B.C. Tel installer, one a X-ray technician and finally one an Electronics technician. We have five grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. As our children grew, my interest in Early Childhood Education continued and I began the two year diploma program at U.B.C by correspondence. When our youngest son was in Kindergarten, I was asked to teach at the United Church Kindergarten. I had the training and there was no reason why I shouldn't, so I did. At different times, I taught at the United Church Kindergarten, and a Kindergarten class at the Community Hall on the Indian Reserve. The next year I bought my own Kindergarten in Valleyview which was named Jack and Jill. When Kindergarten began in School District 24/73 I was asked to teach at Beattie School. I was asked if I would complete my degree under a program called Rescue that was specifically designed for a few others like myself with the experience, but no University practicums. I already had two years of training and it was accredited to me in my fifth year. I then began at the first year, taking courses at summer school, some winter courses at TRU and some by correspondence. With Fred's continuing encouragement and support I was able to do it. He was the one who insisted I go to my graduation so he could watch me get the degree we had both earned. Once that was done we were able to enjoy many trips to Hawaii, Mexico, Britain and Europe. From Beattie School I went to South Sahali and then to R.L. Clemitson. I have worked with many happy staffs. I have enjoyed the opportunities that have been offered through the K.D.T.A., B.C.P.T.A. & the B.C.T.F. I have met many dedicated teachers and have enjoyed being associated with them.

Did you know? 2 glasses of water **after waking up** - helps activate your internal organs. 1 glass of water 30 minutes **before a meal** - helps digestion. 1 glass of water **before taking a bath** - helps lower blood pressure 1 glass of water **before going to bed** - avoids stroke or heart attack.

Report on Bursaries



From left to right: Donna Walsh, Kerri Longholt, Travis Unsworth, Jennifer Bakusta, Anne Brogden and Beverly Maxwell at the TRU Awards Presentation Ceremony last November.

This year the KRTA bursaries were \$ 1,500 each. Kerri and Jennifer are first year students in the Education Program, Travis, the R.R. Smith Bursary recipient was in his final semester at TRU. Kerri is from Williams Lake, while Travis and Jennifer are from Kamloops. The students are looking forward to attending our March luncheon.

Fundraising for the KRTA bursary requires a great deal of planning and volunteer work, beyond the generosity of the donors. The annual Silent Auction is a major event, as is Marianne Trestain's Mystery Tour. Glenda Miles' Bring-a-book-take-a-book goes on all year long. The Penny Drive brings in a pretty penny, thanks to Sandy Baird's tireless counting, adding up fast. We have 50-50 draws (we miss Alf Law, but there is always someone to step in), Mystery bags are being tirelessly prepared by people too numerous to mention. Individual donations are given unanimously as brown envelopes are always present on every table. This year alone they brought in over eight hundred dollars. All these amount to approximately \$2,800 dollars annually. And when we see our recipients, we know the efforts have been worth while.

Flour for first Aid

Instead of running cold water on your burns, cover them with cold flour for ten minutes. The result is no blisters, no pain, no red marks. The remedy was discovered accidentally during the Vietnam war. A soldier was on fire and in desperation they threw a sack of flour on him. Not only did the flour put the fire out, the man suffered no blisters, no burn marks. Hm. I now have a bag of flour in the fridge and can't wait to burn myself to try it! (I knew we had to have gone to Vietnam for *something!*)

ARE YOU INFORMED ABOUT THE AJAX MINE PROJECT?

It appears that moneyed interests local and international are pushing through the project. The mine is sold as an economic boon to Kamloops; it promises to be a bust to most of us, especially in Aberdeen, but the whole city's air will be additionally poisoned. Be it air or water – down wind, down slope – down flow. It's that simple. At first I thought “Oh well, we already have a mine here, what's the fuss about having another?” Then it dawned on me. It's not just the location and the SIZE, but a large addition to existing air and water pollution that can tip the balance from tolerable to intolerable. Indeed, we may move from a semi-pastoral to an eventual disaster zone. Major concerns exist about the dubious project.

The copper and gold ore to be mined is low grade, mining will be profitable only if high prices persist. As prices fluctuate, the mine will open and close, but once opened the toxic air pollution off the slag piles will remain constant and the now poisoned groundwater keep on seeping. The mining jobs will not be secure, they will represent less than one percent of employment in the city, and the mine will likely cause more future job losses than it creates. It is a finite project causing long term damage. The economy? Millions may be invested, billions will be taken out to disappear into foreign corporate pockets. On the whole we will be subsidizing the project, not profiting from it. The bills will keep coming in long after the corporation is gone. It does not make good economic sense – not for us.

Toxicity issues will produce a wide range of ailments from respiratory problems to mental functioning. Toxic dust from the mine will pollute the air and will be carried by the wind all over town and beyond, polluting rivers and lakes.

Mining will require huge quantities of water to be pumped up to the site. We are under water restriction in Aberdeen in order not to destabilize the foundations of our houses. The mine above us will have no water restrictions. To add insult to injury, **we will be subsidizing** the mine's electricity bill through increases to ours.

The developer of our new housing district has to improve drainage now to accommodate the housing development. His system is not designed to deal with the seepage from the mine. In fact, it is likely to be overwhelmed and rendered dysfunctional. Moreover, this seepage is liable to be containing more heavy metals dissolved in the groundwater, which will inevitably be gravity fed back to the river. What effect will this have on the city water supply? On the salmon run? On our property values? It seems inevitable that Jacko Lake will drain into the pit.

The mine stands directly in the way of a major city development. City planners have been laying plans and building infrastructure to expand the city towards the south, and housing developments are now proceeding towards the proposed mine which will be stopped by a huge pit and slag piles.

The approval system is rigged. Although the mine is within city limits, in fact the city has no jurisdiction. City planners' plans are overridden by mining claims. These claims are the affairs of the provincial and federal governments who make the decisions from afar. Health concerns, environmental concerns, regional development, etc. are spread between different departments. The buck is passed from one to the other. ***The whole picture seems to be missed by each as if by design.*** Unless we individually and collectively raise a BIG FUSS, the mine will go ahead.

Although “the decision is not yet made,” Ajax Mines have invested 30 million recently, and is advertising. Do they know the answer beforehand? It seems they do.

As Hohener on www.kamloopsnews.ca wrote, “eighty Percent of mining Corporations are governed by Canadian standards which are dismal. One of the main reasons that we have deficits in Canada and BC is extravagant subsidies and flow through shares where billions of tax dollars from working people are given to investors in the mining industry. Alain Deneault and William Sacher write in *Imperial Canada Inc. Legal Haven of Choice for the World's Mining Industry*, that as a result of lobbying by the mining industry "The Canadian government has structured Canadian law and regulations to channel investment capital towards the mining industry." Since the Liberal government in BC and the Conservatives in Ottawa are partners with the corporate sector, for those who question the project, nothing less than an independent review is acceptable for the proposed Ajax mine. Ever since Confederation, BC governments have been a major source of revenue and cost reduction to the mining industry, providing subsidies, tax benefits, write-offs, grants, and low-interest loans in hopes that this industry will stimulate the economy. Accompanying this government generosity, Harper is also deregulating the industry environmental laws, consequently, *the expert opinion on health and environment from government insiders and chosen experts must be questioned.*

“The mining industry has promoted the idea that if they receive favorable public policy from the provincial and federal governments, such as subsidies and de-regulations, the industry will stimulate the economy. Governments have assisted the industry in making this principle acceptable to the electorate. This led to a marriage of convenience between the provincial and federal governments and the industry resulting in mining codes, as Deneault and Sacher write, *with "negligible taxes, full socialization of costs, disregard for customary and native rights, contempt for environment and the list goes on."*

“The primary corporate focus in the industry is profit and share value. That’s important to the public, too, but it’s limited to a small circle of investors. *We need to learn from the history of mining and remember the political connections and inadequacies that have evolved. We should not forget how government policy is compromised by mining lobbyists and by companies involved in resource exploitation.*

“*We must not leave the decision making to the insiders whose concept of ethics and standards is measured monetarily.* Corporate media responsibility to freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law must trump promoting speculation in land and its resources. And, when an injustice occurs or turning a blind eye is being contemplated to accommodate a mining industry, an industry often subsidized by the taxpayer, *the citizens need to be diligent and vocal even when the media is silent.*” [End of Hohner, my italicizing.]

Hohener is right. Indeed, while in light of the above, the proceeding with the mine may become understandable, it can never make sense socially, economically, environmentally. Ajax is lying through its teeth. If it were otherwise, Mr. Lacasse would never insist on “zero harm.” **There is a real danger of Ajax quadrupling its pollution should they decide to open a lucrative smelter.** They have purchased the existing licence issued to Afton Mines. No new application is needed.

Health information links:

<http://www.kamloopsnews.ca/article/20130311/KAMLOOPS0101/130319997/-1/kamloops/utah-doctor-warns-of-mining-risks>

Dr Jill Calder's presentation on TRU campus on U Tube: <http://youtu.be/5RoTTBW0gxY>
The link to her slide presentation is <http://faculty.tru.ca/cross/CALDER.pdf>

Other links/ Info.

Mel Rothenburger's Nov 24, 2013 talk at TRU <http://youtu.be/aGDvtFZYyg>

Upcoming presentation March 9, 2 p.m. Clocktower theatre, TRU: “What are the possible economic costs of an increase in air pollution in Kamloops?” Speaker: Dr. Peter Tsigaris

In this presentation, an economic valuation of the potential health impact of a deteriorating air quality in Kamloops including the possible impact of the Ajax mine will be explored. Our own lifestyle and technology, existing industries and new projects such as the Ajax mine produce benefits to producers and consumers around the world, but economic activity often comes with external/social costs. What are the economic costs of the potential health impact from an increase in air pollution in Kamloops? How big are these costs? In this presentation Dr. Tsigaris will attempt to provide some insights and make recommendations into this important issue for the community.

Dr. Peter Tsigaris is Professor (Full) in the Department of Economics at Thompson Rivers University (TRU), Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada. He has been in Kamloops since 1993 with his spouse and two young children. His research interest is diverse and spans the areas of taxation policy, environmental economics, decisions under risk, and economics education. He has presented his research in numerous conferences around the world and published his research articles in numerous peer-reviewed journals.

Poetry corner: THE AJAX LULLABY

**If a foreign company
takes your ore for seed money –
don't worry! Be happy!**

**Or if your own government,
has been bought by Management –
don't worry! Be happy!**

**If the standards have been set
low enough – they shall be met!
Don't worry! Be happy!**

**If those jobs you've been promised
turn out to be hit and miss –
don't worry! Be happy!**

**There *will* be lots of spinoff jobs:
doctors, lawyers and the like –
don't worry! Be happy!**

**If after the ore they took,
leave you with the oozing muck –
don't worry! Be happy!**

**If your house should start to slide,
lean back and enjoy the ride!
Don't worry! Be happy!**

**If we spoil water and air,
if you're sick and don't feel well –
don't worry! Be happy!**

**For your role in this thick plot
is to play The Idiot –
don't worry! Be happy!**

Suss baby – be “happy!”

Frank Veszely,

Oh Canada!

Upon retiring I started to realize a life-long and always postponed ambition of mine: to write. In 1997 I began with my life story as a documentary poem, a truly Canadian genre. In the Preface I wrote:

Although individual stories are as different as individuals who lived them, first generation immigrants share many experiences that are common to most. These are: separation from family and friends, coming in contact with a new society, learning a new language, starting out a new life in a strange place facing various discrimination, entry level job experiences, to name a few. There is a story repeated many times in Canada, which accepts large numbers of immigrants every year. I feel an obligation to tell my story because few first generation immigrants master English well enough to tell theirs, and because I believe that these immigrants as a group are undervalued in our society, and their struggle to integrate into society is not well understood. Some regard immigrants as a threat. Yet Canada's very existence is owed to such immigrants of the past and our continued well-being as a nation will depend on accepting such immigrants. I have done well by the country, and the country has done well by me. Integration into a new society, as every immigrant knows, is far from easy. Yet I am living proof that it can be done. We need to retool ourselves, but we can become what we chose to be.

May this poem serve to promote acceptance and understanding, and provide encouragement for other immigrants to know that they are not alone.

Frank Veszely,

Kamloops, April 8, 1997.

Here is an excerpt depicting a subtle problem with integration from the work I titled: The Immigrant's Saga. The rest is available upon request. Readers interested in a copy of the 37 page work may contact fveszely@gmail.com Electronic copies only as I have no printed ones.

Where are you from?

How many times have I heard this question,
posed by so many people,
asked in so many tones,
uttered in so many ways -
demurred by friend, demanded by foe,
yearned by the curious, yawned by the bored,
implored by the ignorant and delineated by the learned:
Where are you from? Where are you from?
Repeatedly, always: Where are you from?
Whenever I opened my mouth betraying my accent: Where are you from?

This question that is more than a question
even when it was meant to be a question,
because the conclusion precedes the question
that you do not belong here.

You are not from here, so where are *you* from?
It hits like a rejection.

It does not matter that you have lived here for years,
that you worked harder than most,
that you paid more taxes than the millionaires,
that you have become a homeowner and a citizen,
that you are brighter than most politicians,
that you have served this country well -
that you have raised children and grandchildren,
that you can speak without an accent for hours
before a single word pronounced with an accent gives notice
instantly noted:
You speak with an accent, you are not from here,
you do not belong: "So where are you from?"

The rejection is always keenly felt,
because all we want to do who have left our native lands is to
find a place to which we may belong.

For wanting to belong is instinctive, primordial,
a craving like hunger, all-penetrating like sex,
our herd instinct's hard drive for security.
This "Where are you from?" acts like a shot of adrenaline:
it triggers our glands, makes us tense,
puts us on our guard, and its blow
always catches us on the chin.
(Oh Canada, we "from far and wide" *do* stand on guard for Thee –
more than anyone knows!)

"I love it here," I say, quite contented.
Where are you from?
"I think the Canadians will win." (I am into the game.)
Where are you from?
"I think Freud is a fraud." (I am being clever.)
Where are you from?
"I love rock and roll." (A blatant lie, I just want to belong.)
Where are you from?
"These are good doughnuts, don't you think?" (Being hungry in a hurry.)
Where are you from?

Always, out of context, when you least expect it:
Where are you from?

When you thought you were at home at last –
"Where are you from?"