

## **A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE**



Ivory Tabernacle – Louvre (late 1300s)

**Join the STARTA choir singing Christmas carols and songs**

## Welcome to our Christmas breakfast meeting

We had a good run at fall this year and I suspect that surviving to November 16 without a major snowfall is unusual, in fact, I believe it might even be a record for Edmonton. However, winter has now settled in. Everyone seems to want to tell me Edmontonians love their winter, and if they don't they travel south to Arizona or plan a January break in Hawaii they ski or snowboard, I on the other hand read a great deal. I must admit that as I grow older I find it much more difficult to smile and be happy when the temperatures reach -15°C and there is a 30 kph wind. Everything seems to run cold! However, it is winter and there are many worse places one could be.

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## Events

We had a very successful last meeting with an enjoyable and entertaining presentation from Deborah Anzinger on "healthy eating". There were 108 members in attendance and the breakfast worked out successfully.

This month is our Christmas breakfast and we will join the STARTA choir in a Christmas sing-a-long. **We will also be accepting cash donations or unwrapped gifts for the Kinettes.** You have always been most generous with your contributions to the Kinettes' cause.

Future meetings are being planned to include genealogy, cancer issues, a fashion show and, of course, our annual silent auction.

## Secretary

We have a new STARTA secretary for the remainder of the year. Our secretary, Maureen Glen passed away in August and Dawn Curran has agreed to take on the role. We are very grateful to Dawn for her support.



## Thank you

Book and Magazine Sale: During our October breakfast we held a book and magazine sale at which we realized \$127.15. Thank you to all for your donations. The members who assisted with the sale were Dawn Curran, Maurine Maslen and Eryl Jones. Many thanks to those who helped with the setting out and cleaning up, and special thanks to Emil Guzik who took the left over books to SHAVA.

Decorating Committee: Our creative table decorating team deserves our thanks for providing original table centres each meeting. The decorations make a real difference and are very much appreciated. The committee members include Susan Supruniuk, Marian Oberg, Helen Kieran, Alison Weingardt, Anna Nord and Cres Estioko.

## **“Second Wind” One-Day Conference Planned**

A special conference entitled “Second Wind” is being planned for April 11, 2012, from 9:00 to 4:30. It is an inaugural event planned for retirees in the Greater Edmonton Community and spearheaded by the Edmonton Retired Teachers’ Association (ERTA).

The location will be the Chateau Louis Conference Centre. To reduce participant costs the event will be supported by ARTA and four involved chapters, Edmonton, Strathcona, St. Albert and Parkland. The early bird registration fee will be only \$50 which includes lunch.

Your STARTA executive is giving this venture its full support and has “invested” \$250 in financial support. We feel this will be an interesting, enjoyable and useful event that will help enrich our lives. So, if you

- love gardening and want to know about the newest varieties of plants available
  - would like to try laughter yoga
  - are intrigued with how to keep your memory and concentration power sharp
  - love to sing, or
  - are a grandparent who is raising your grand children,
- we know you will want to be among the first to register.

These are just a few of the breakout sessions being offered at the one day convention. Our keynote speaker, Wendy Edey, from the Hope Foundation will offer an uplifting and humorous presentation about the role hope plays in our lives. Visit our Art Show and Sale featuring local artists. Enjoy a delicious, nutritious lunch with entertainment by the Raging Grannies.

Come to the “wine” down at the end of the day to relax with your friends and share your experiences of the day.

Look for registration forms at your Christmas luncheon. Watch for more information and news on our website.

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## **Smile**

A frog goes into a bank and approaches the teller. He can see from her nameplate that her name is Patricia Whack.

"Miss Whack, I'd like to get a \$30,000 loan to take a holiday."

Patty looks at the frog in disbelief and asks his name. The frog says his name is Kermit Jagger, his dad is Mick Jagger, and that it's okay, he knows the bank manager.

Patty explains that he will need to secure the loan with some collateral. The frog says, "Sure. I have this," and produces a tiny porcelain elephant, about an inch tall, bright pink and perfectly formed. Very confused, Patty explains that she'll have to consult with the bank manager and disappears into a back office. She finds the manager and says, "There's a frog called Kermit Jagger out there who claims to know you and wants to borrow \$30,000, and he wants to use this as collateral." She holds up the tiny pink elephant. "I mean, what in the world is this?" The bank manager looks back at her and says. "It's a knickknack, Patty Whack. Give the frog a loan, His old man's a Rolling Stone."

(Thanks to Brenda Kane and welcome home Brenda)

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Why do croutons come in airtight packages?  
Aren't they just stale bread to begin with?



### **A Member replies**

The following letter was received October 27, 2011 and is from Orjan Henningson a former member.

“Greetings from the Philippines. Thanks for the invitation to the next breakfast meeting but I am still here in the Philippines doing research, writing, and volunteering my assistance in the start-up of a coffee distribution business. However, I enjoy reading your newsletter. By the way, I was surprised to find that, although the Philippines is a producer of excellent coffee beans and has been a major exporter in the past, I could not find a good cup of coffee anywhere here! The popular drink is American instant coffee premixed with sugar and whitener! Brewed coffee is not even served in most restaurants and only a

few stores sell ground coffee. I began mixing locally grown beans and came up with tastes identical to the good coffee I had enjoyed in countries like Sweden, Germany, Australia and New Zealand. Since I am not allowed to get involved in business here on a paid basis, I share and volunteer my ability and resources with my business partner, who is working hard to place our products in stores and restaurants. There is an interest in good brewed coffee here, and the government wants the Philippines to become a major exporter again, so we are in the right place at the right time, it seems. Anyway this is just a message to show that I have not forgotten about you, even though I won't be back for some time. Good luck and enjoy the autumn weather of there.



### **ARTA Golf Tournament**

The STARTA Executive at its August 2, 2011, meeting decided to host the provincial ARTA Memorial Golf Tournament on June 18, 2012, at the Sandpiper Golf and Country Club. The tournament will be held in memory of the late Rod Thronson, a highly respected member of STARTA and of the St. Albert community. The golf committee will be chaired by Lou Duigou. Several members have already volunteered to serve on the committee: Brenda Kane, Dawn Curran, Helen Kieran, Leo Bruseker and Mac Kryzanowski.



## Commentary on the “Occupy” movement

For several years my wife has said that the growing disparity between the rich and the rest of society has made her wonder when the revolution might come. That disparity was the problem in France in 1789 and in Russia in 1917 but, of course, such a thing would never happen in our stable and these days sensible society, right?

On November 5, 2011, I received a *Money Morning* newsletter on my internet. In it the author Bill Patalon included this information from a **BankRate.com** financial security poll:

1. Americans hate their jobs; every Monday morning 90% of Americans would rather do anything but start a new work week.
2. They hate their bosses, too, but see no recourse.
3. They aren't getting raises, but they are watching as their work hours increase – even as rising healthcare,

insurance, food and energy expenses erode whatever margin of safety they had once enjoyed.

4. Since only 11% of Americans feel financially secure, most do not see how they will be able to retire – and yet, with the way companies are cutting headcount as jobs keep getting shipped offshore, U.S. workers also do not expect to be able to remain employed long enough to make ends meet.

Is it any wonder that people are demonstrating across the U.S. and aiming their protests at the banks and financial institutions who they believe have caused many of the problems we are now facing: but they are seemingly impervious to the law?

The same concerns are being voiced in Europe. There are over one million unemployed young people in Britain! Some 46 percent of Spaniards between the ages of 18 and 25 cannot find jobs and similar figures can be found in Greece, Italy, Ireland and Portugal! At the same time, governments in these countries amassed enormous debts to the banks and the emphasis now is on debt repayment. The essence of the problem is that the world borrowed too much money and now the world has to pay it back. The free market system relied on the deregulation of the banks, promoting the borrowing of money with little or no collateral. Now the average working person is being penalized for banking greed. Civil Service jobs are being cut; public sector pensions are being reduced; more stringent welfare reforms are being introduced; salaries are being controlled; tuition costs at universities are being increased, and the private sector is not hiring. There has been little or no attempt to deal with the perpetrators of the original

financial crimes. Instead the problem is placed squarely on the backs of the working class tax payers. Meanwhile the financial machine continues unsullied.

Hopefully the “Occupiers” will continue to bring attention to the problem, not unlike the “Tea Party” that brought attention to the concerns of disenfranchised Republicans in the United States. The media initially laughed at the “Tea Party” concept but what followed was what Mahatma Gandhi predicted “**first they ignore you, then they ridicule you, then they fight you, then YOU win!**” The “Tea Party” won some 60 seats in the U.S. Congress a year ago. The “Occupy” groups are currently undergoing stage two of Gandhi’s four steps: — they are being ridiculed. Recent examples of ridicule include the British newspaper *Daily Telegraph* calling them “Fair weather revolutionaries”, the Republican candidates in the U.S. telling them to “get a job” and the BBC who ran a story entitled “How Occupy Wall Street nearly flopped on day one.” I wonder what the end will be!

**Do you have any thoughts on what is happening? If you do why not share them by e-mailing them to [davidflower@shaw.ca](mailto:davidflower@shaw.ca).**

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### **Protestant School Board By-election**

Nominations have closed and there are three candidates running for the position of Trustee for the Protestant School Board: Kim Bugeaud, Judy Huisman and Merrin Nuc. The three candidates have been invited to “meet and greet” our STARTA members before the Christmas breakfast on Dec. 2. The advance poll is Wednesday, November 30th from 4-8 p.m. The regular poll is Monday, December 5th from 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Both votes take place at our District Office

at 60 Sir Winston Churchill Avenue. We hope all STARTA members will take the opportunity to vote in this by-election.

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### **CBC Funding**

E-mail sent to Brent Rathgeber, MP Edmonton-St. Albert from David and Sue Flower:

“My wife and I fully support government continued funding of CBC –best news coverage in the country. Reduce order of F35s by one and support national communication and debate by funding CBC with the savings”.

Response from Brent Rathgeber:

“Thank you for your comments. I believe they are in response to a recent article in the *St. Albert Gazette* referring to my blog post about the CBC. I agree the CBC deserves our support but I also believe the CBC has fulfilled the role it was initially designed for and, as such, should slowly transition to a charitable model versus a perpetually publically-subsidised one. While the CBC continues to play an important role in Canadian society and culture, it cannot remain immune from the level of scrutiny being given *all* government programs and departments”.

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Mr. Rathgeber’s e-mail address is [brent.rathgeber.a1@parl.gc.ca](mailto:brent.rathgeber.a1@parl.gc.ca)

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I was thinking about how people seem to read the Bible a whole lot more as they get older; then it dawned on me . . . they are cramming for their final exam.

## ARTA Board of Directors Meeting

November 22-23, 2011

### Highlights

As is the practice at all Board of Directors meetings, each committee reports on its work of the last couple of months and makes recommendations for action in each of their areas.

- ✓ Wayne Flaska, yes our own Wayne Flaska, who is chair of the Health and Wellness Benefits Committee, reported on an evaluation conducted by his committee to assess the quality of services provided by Johnson, Inc., our Benefits Plan administrator. Overall, the services were judged to be of high quality with a few areas needing work.
- ✓ The Governance Committee (France Tallon, Chair) reported on their work of integrating the by-law changes approved at the AGM in October, and consequent changes in the Policy and Procedures. Also reported on the scholarship awards in the amount of \$10,000 given to six post-secondary students.
- ✓ Earl Barton, the Human Resources Chair, reported on changes occurring in the ARTA office with the new Executive Director, Daniel Malloy, and the re-classification of some staff and adjustments to pay scales. With the renovations at Barnett House, ARTA finds itself having a shortage of space, so more space will be leased and the office reconfigured (estimated cost--\$120,000, including furniture and equipment). A motion was passed to establish the first night of the AGM as An Annual Recognition Dinner to recognize

significant ARTA milestones such as farewell and merit awards.

- ✓ Greg Chitrenky, Chair of the Communication/Technology Committee recommended that this committee become the Editorial Board of ARTA Communications, including the *News and Views* magazine and website content. A motion was carried to do so. Our own Larry Wyatt sits on this committee.
- ✓ Paul Demers, Chair of the Finance Committee reported on the state of our finances starting from July 1, the start of our fiscal year. To date, we are on target with one third of the year gone by and having spent about one third of the budget. Work is continuing on the establishment of an ARTA Charitable Foundation.
- ✓ Brian Scott, Chair, Strategic Planning Committee, stated that a Board of Directors, members of all committees, and some members of the administration will be holding a retreat at the Cochrane Retreat Centre on February 21-22, followed by a Board of Directors Meeting on February 23-24. The purpose of the retreat is to identify new goals, reaffirm some, and become more future-oriented as the organization grows.
- ✓ Bob Pawlowski, Chair of the ARTA Pension Committee, reported that there was a meeting held for Pension Representatives, only five reps being in attendance. Leo Bruseker was to represent STARTA; however, through a miscommunication, he did not know of the time and place of the meeting soon enough to attend.
- ✓ The Membership and Marketing Committee, chaired by Sherry Robbins, explained that it has started

offering grants to branches to organize useful and enjoyable activities that would attract new members. An example was given of a successful bridge tournament that was held in Ponoka and brought in almost fifty new prospective members. Application forms are available in the ARTA office for individual branches to apply to the committee.

- ✓ Lastly, a motion was passed by the Board confirming that STARTA is the designated branch to host the 2012 ARTA Memorial Golf Tournament, and is providing \$1000.00 to our committee to help meet the costs of the tournament.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lou Duigou, President



## Silent Auction

Please don't forget when you are clearing out either before or after Christmas that we have a Silent Auction in the spring. If there are appropriate items for that auction please hang on to them and when the details of the collection of materials is announced then your contributions can be handed over. If you have any questions regarding the auction please contact Eryl Jones at 780-459-8407.

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## For the golfers amongst you

Golf can best be defined as an endless series of tragedies obscured by the occasional miracle, followed by a good bottle of beer.

Golf! You hit down to make the ball go up. You swing left and the ball goes right. The lowest score wins. And on top of that, the winner buys the drinks.

Golf is harder than baseball. In golf, you have to play your foul balls.

If you find you do not mind playing golf in the rain, the snow, even during a hurricane, here is a valuable tip for you: your life is in trouble.

Golfers who try to make everything perfect before taking the shot rarely make a perfect shot.

The term "mulligan" is really a contraction of the phrase "maul it again."

A "gimme" can best be defined as an agreement between two golfers . . . neither of whom can putt very well.