

May 27, 2011

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**Welcome to STARTA's  
Annual General Meeting**

**With entertainment from STARTA's choir  
and a travelogue on South America**

## Welcome to our May meeting

What an exciting weekend immediately after our April meeting, a little like a variation of the movie “Three Weddings and a Funeral” though in this case a wedding followed by a funeral followed by an election, thus becoming “Three Funerals and a Wedding.”

My family enjoyed the royal wedding. I know there are many cynics and anti-monarchists who have no time for such things—but each to their own. I was particularly impressed with the address by the Bishop of London who began by quoting from St. Catherine of Siena:

**“Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.”**

We can only wish the couple well and hope that they have a happy and successful marriage.

Then we woke on Sunday morning to be told that Osama Bin Laden had been killed by U.S. troops. It has certainly taken long enough to track him down. My daughter expressed some concern about people celebrating his death at “Ground Zero.” I think he might have been out of the picture for some years but does one cheer and dance when a person is killed?

Finally there was the election on May 2. How one voted really does not matter but I am not sure that the attack advertisements from both the Conservatives and the Liberals were particularly productive. Perhaps simply trying to persuade people that your policies were the right ones and worth voting for would have been more useful. I had my concerns about health care, pensions, post-secondary education costs and social services. I am not sure how much control we as a country have over the economy but it appears that the economy was the issue for at least one major party. However, it is all over now for at least another four years and we have a majority Conservative government, so we will wait and see what transpires.

**“I don’t mind ministers boffing themselves into a stupor, but when they start fiddling**

**around with my pension I get really mad.”** Wilbur Smith’s “The Seventh Scroll,” McMillan 1995.

Or to quote from the first letter on St. Peter:

**“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”**



## Smile!

I’ve sure gotten old! I’ve had two bypass surgeries, a hip replacement, new knees. Fought prostate cancer and diabetes. I’m half blind, can’t hear anything quieter than a jet engine, take forty different medications that make me dizzy, winded and subject to blackouts. Have bouts of dementia. Have poor circulation and hardly feel my hands and feet anymore. Can’t remember if I’m 85 or 92. Have lost all my friends but, thank God, I still have my driver’s license.

## Summer Activities

There will a number of summer activities, as usual, and you will be contacted by telephone regarding them at an appropriate time. There will be the STARTA golf tournament set for June 14 in memory of Rod Thronson. The registration form is on the back cover of this newsletter. There is also an ARTA golf tournament slated for St. Paul Golf and Country Club on June 15. The registration deadline for

this tournament is June 10 and to register contact Paul Boisvert at 780-645-3409 or e-mail [hawkow14@telus.net](mailto:hawkow14@telus.net).

There will be the STARTA picnic in July and there will be our annual gambling day at the horses at Northlands in late August.

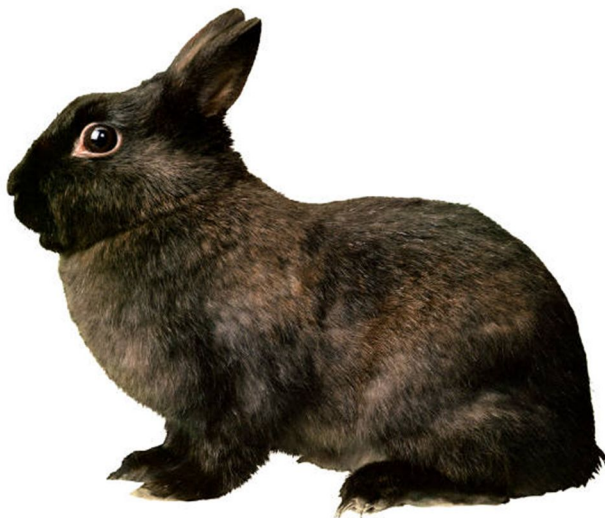
### One-liners

If you jump off a Paris bridge, you are in Seine.  
Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead to know basis.

When she saw her first strands of gray hair, she thought she'd dye.

### It's the Economy, Stupid!

We have been told on a continuing basis that the way to get rid of the deficit as well as the debt is to stimulate the economy. That was not the way that the Progressive Conservatives resolved the problem in Alberta—on the contrary they cut spending because the treasurer at the time was convinced that Alberta did not have a revenue problem, it had a spending problem. The same economic mantra is being sold federally. It is necessary to make cuts at all levels, by reducing the civil service, by reducing departmental budgets, by selling off crown corporation assets while at the same time cutting taxation levels, building more prisons and purchasing, at enormous cost new military equipment.



To appease the corporations the government is proposing to lower yet again the corporate tax rate. That rate in 2000 was 29 percent, by 2009 it had been reduced to 19 percent, to 18 percent in 2010, to 16.5 percent in 2011 and a proposed rate of 15 percent in 2012. The argument in favour of such reductions is that corporations create jobs and increase their research and development activities—in other words they reinvest money that they save by paying lower taxes. A study by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives argues that there is no evidence to suggest that lower corporate tax rates have directly stimulated more investment in Canada. Rather corporations make increased profits. The study concluded that “198 of Canada’s largest publicly traded corporations made 52 percent more in profit in 2009 than in 2000, while paying 20 percent less in taxes.”

The direction of corporate taxes suggests that the corporations have significant input into government policy at the expense of the working taxpayer. (Source: “No proof for Tory tax policy, think-tank says” *Edmonton Journal*, April 14, 2011)

### A Cautionary Tale

In a hospital’s Intensive Care Unit, patients always died in the same bed on Sunday morning at about 11 a.m., regardless of their medical condition.

This puzzled the doctors and some even thought it had something to do with the supernatural.

No one could solve the mystery as to why the deaths occurred around 11 a.m. Sunday.

A world-wide team of experts was assembled to investigate the cause of the incidents.

The next Sunday morning, a few minutes before 11 a.m. all of the doctors and nurses waited nervously outside the ward to see for themselves what the terrible phenomenon was all about.

Some were holding wooden crosses, some prayer books and other holy objects to ward off the evil spirits.

Just when the clock struck 11, Pookie Johnson, the part-time Sunday sweeper entered the ward,

unplugged the life support system and plugged in his vacuum cleaner.

### Scholarships

If you have a granddaughter or grandson who is currently attending a post-secondary institution or planning to and you are a member of ARTA, you might like to apply for one of the ARTA/Johnson scholarships. Details are in the last ARTA *News and Views* on pages six and fifteen and will also be in the Summer issue that should be out early in June. The application deadline for these scholarships is July 31, 2011. Forms are available on request in writing from the ARTA office or on the web at [www.albertarta.org](http://www.albertarta.org).



### Elder Abuse

Show the world that you care about ending Elder Abuse and neglect by wearing something purple on June 15, 2011, as the Canadian Association of Retired Persons observes the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. You could remind both your MLA and your MP of the significance of the day and of the issue.

### Losing out Again

The April 30 edition of the *St. Albert Gazette* announced on its front page that the increase in Municipal Property Taxes for 2011 had been set at 3.2 percent. Considering that my teachers' pension increased by only 0.75 percent for 2011, it appears that I am being left behind again. Year after year the provincial, federal and municipal taxes increase thereby eroding my

pension. Perhaps we need to tell our municipal, provincial and federal politicians.

As teachers, our annual pension increase is based on the Alberta Consumer Price Increase (ACPI). The basis of the calculation are a series of eight items that are carefully weighted and measure the price changes of goods and services purchased by consumers in Alberta over the year. The eight items that constitute the ACPI are:

	Weighting
Shelter	27.70%
Transportation	19.50%
Food	15.50%
Recreation, education, reading	12.90%
Household operations, furnishings and equipment	11.40%
Clothing and footwear	5.20%
Health and personal care	4.50%
Alcoholic beverages and tobacco	
Total	100.00%

### Smile!

Two brooms were hanging together in the closet and after a while they got to know each other so well they decided to get married.

One broom was, of course, the bride broom, the other was the groom broom.

The bride broom looked very beautiful in her white dress. The groom broom was handsome and suave in his tuxedo. The wedding was lovely.

After the wedding, at the wedding dinner, the bride groom leaned over and said to the groom broom "I think I am going to have a little whisk broom!"

"Impossible!," said the groom broom, "We haven't even swept together!"

It sounds to me like she has been sweeping around!

**Cleaning your house while you children are still growing is like shovelling the walk before it has stopped snowing.**



**ROD THRONSON MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT**

**Tuesday June 14, 2011  
Twin Willows Golf Club**

Our annual STARTA Golf Tournament is being named in memory of Past President, Rod Thronson (1935-2010) who served for six years on the executive.

Join us for 9 or 18 holes of Texas Scramble followed by a BBQ lunch.

Clip the registration form below and submit with cheque (payable to Helen Kieran 83 Morgan Cr. St. Albert, T8N 2E3)

**Deadline for registration June 7, 2011**

Your golf committee:

Brenda Kane 460-2414 Dawn Curran 458-6245 Helen Kieran 458-2420

You will be notified of your tee time. Cart rental extra. Lunch menu: 6oz steak sandwich, baked potato, garlic toast Caesar salad, dessert, coffee, tea.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Register as a group or as an individual. A STARTA member may invite up to three guests.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ phone \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ phone \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ phone \_\_\_\_\_

9 holes golf (includes lunch) \_\_\_\_\_ @ 46.80 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

18 holes golf (includes lunch) \_\_\_\_\_ @ 60.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch only (guest name) \_\_\_\_\_ @ 22.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total payment \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*In the event of a rain out, the lunch will still be served. Golf fees will be refunded.

