

# British Columbia Exchange Teachers' Association

March 2019

BCExchangeTeachers.ca

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Where to begin...Our Association has been so busy so far in 2019. We had our Welcome Conference in January ([read here](#)), then one of our exchange teachers and I visited Ottawa to join the Ontario exchange league ([read here](#)), we came back just in time for the annual curling ([read here](#)) and rolled into March with our annual [5 Pin Bowling event](#), but not without having fun on the slopes as the last days of February brought excellent ski conditions ([read here](#))!

As I write this, the Victoria Spring Conference planning is underway. The challenge again this year is to find some host schools to welcome us. **We have 2 great elementary and middle schools to visit but I am still searching for a secondary school in the Victoria area that would like to host up to 3 teachers for a morning visit. Please contact me if you have any suggestions!**

As you can imagine, a lot of planning and organization goes into creating activities for our exchange teachers. If you would like to be part of future events, such as info sessions, social gatherings or just help us with planning, please [contact us](#) as soon as possible.

### From the CEEF:

Applications for Exchanges for 2019-2020 are being processed. New this year, is the opportunity to arrange Interprovincial Exchanges. We currently have one exchange between BC and Quebec. See the poster [here](#).

Sad news from Victoria in AU, the International Teaching Fellowship Program will no longer be supported by their Dept of Education. The ITA President, Mary Moore, is working very hard in consultation with the Dept to ensure teaching exchanges continue in future years.

## The current executive for the BCETA is:

### President/Communications Chair

Catherine Gagnon – [bcexchangeteachers@gmail.com](mailto:bcexchangeteachers@gmail.com)

### Vice-President

Martin Wheeler - [wheeler\\_m@surreyschools.ca](mailto:wheeler_m@surreyschools.ca)

### Treasurer

Kulwant Toor – [ktoor@shaw.ca](mailto:ktoor@shaw.ca)

### Secretary

Leon Jensen – [Leonj1@hotmail.com](mailto:Leonj1@hotmail.com)

Members at large - Mel and June Caldwell, Gayle Hernandez, K Lopez & Sandra Willing

## About Us

The BC Exchange Teachers' Association is a volunteer organization dedicated to hosting information sessions and social activities with the intent to make the year an exciting and memorable one for exchange teachers and their families. [BCETA Facebook discussion group](#)

Welcome to BC! Our association is made up of former exchange teachers who are delighted to share their experience with current exchangees. We welcome any questions or comments you might have regarding all matters related to your teaching exchange.

Newsletter Editor: Catherine Gagnon

[bcexchangeteachers@gmail.com](mailto:bcexchangeteachers@gmail.com)

Now available – newsletters from CLEE (Canadian League for Education Exchange) and other Australian International Teaching Fellowships <http://feb122010.wordpress.com>

## GETTING INVOLVED

At this time, the Executive and activities of the BC Exchange Teachers' Association are mainly located in the Lower Mainland. The Association would like to improve on that by **bringing information sessions to various areas of the province.**

To this end, we would welcome your assistance and involvement. If you are interested in presenting an information session in your area, either a weekend/evening/after school or a Professional Development Day session with your local union, contact [Catherine Gagnon](#). We would also be glad to make a presentation to a small group at your request.

**Help us plan our calendar of events** - Do you have an idea for an activity that exchange teachers might be interested in and could travel to without too much difficulty? It could be a skiing event in the interior over a long weekend, winery tour, whale watching, hiking trips, a corn maze, hosting a BBQ or potluck, or even a walking tour of your town or city. We are open to all suggestions. If you have an idea and would like to help out, please contact [Catherine Gagnon](#).

## Coming Events

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>May</b>  | <b>Victoria Conference Weekend (May10-12)</b>                              |
| <b>June</b> | Farewell to Northern Hemisphere Exchangees                                 |
| <b>Sept</b> | Fraser Valley Day and BBQ  |
| <b>Oct</b>  | Information session – Lower Mainland                                       |
| <b>Nov</b>  | Information session – Vancouver Island                                     |
| <b>Dec</b>  | Traditional Christmas dinner/ farewell to our Southern Hemisphere teachers |
| <b>Jan</b>  | Welcome to Southern Hemisphere Exchangees/Welcome Back Canadians           |
| <b>Feb</b>  | 5 pin bowling<br>Curling<br>Skiing   |



Here are some recent articles from the BC Teachers' Federation:

[Acting together across North America for public education – Larry Kuehn, Director of the Research and Technology Division](#)

[B.C. teachers' union cites funding gap for students in NDP budget – Glen Hansman, President BCTF](#)

## Suggested Activities

- Visit the Fairmont Empress – One of the best known landmarks in Victoria. Their high tea is renowned. Prices vary by season, so you might plan a visit in the fall or winter months. [Tea at the Fairmont Empress](#)
- Stanley Park is the iconic outdoor destination in Vancouver. Explore the seawall on foot or cycle, the First Nations' totems are always a great photo-op and don't miss the Aquarium. [Download a self-guided tour here.](#)
- Check out the [Vancouver Food Truck Festival!](#)
- Visit a Farmer's Market or a Night Market held all over BC starting as early as May. [Find a market close to you.](#)
- Living on the island? [Consult this guide](#) for a list of festivals and events.
- Kelowna has some [amazing activities all year round.](#) It's not always about wine you know!
- Kamloops is a four-season adventure playground. Have a look at this [adventure guide.](#)
- Whale watching? March is the best time to see the whales on the Pacific Coast. It's a nice time to visit Tofino and Ucluelet too.



## BCETA Welcome Conference – January 2019

At the end of January, we were able to organize our first Welcome conference for our Southern Hemisphere arrivals. The constraints of our BC winter weather were overcome by having our central BC exchangees join us via teleconference. We were also joined by the President of the BCTF, Glen Hansman, and our CEEF coordinator, Kim Sturge.

The morning started with Timbits and Tim's coffee as we gathered to meet our new southern hemisphere arrivals and some of our returning teachers. After the teleconference, we had a chili lunch and went off to Fort Langley, the birthplace of British Columbia, where we were met by the local media. Please read the [story here](#). View the [video here \(scroll down\)](#).

Thank you to our guest speakers, Glen Hansman and Kim Sturge, as well as all our committee members who presented the various topics of interest to our new arrivals and their partners.

We hope to repeat this experience next winter!



We were on hand around Christmas this year as some Aussie exchange teachers arrived to start their year in Canada. Pictured are Nat Robinson and daughter Lua (Kamloops, BC) and Tracy MacDonald (Toronto, ON) with daughter Karina and son Ben. Leon and I had given Tracy and family a tour of downtown Vancouver. We all met for dinner afterwards. It was good to meet Natalie before she went off to her exchange in Kamloops.

## Victoria Spring Conference May 10-12, 2019

Here are the proposed conference activities.

We typically visit an elementary school and a middle school (depending on the participant's choice). If you have a contact who is able to host 2-3 exchange teachers in a secondary school in the Victoria area, please [contact me](#) immediately!! We need to finalize our plans before sending out the registration package.

Conference events will begin at 9am on May 10. A group dinner is planned on Saturday, May 11. Please keep this in mind when booking your accommodations.

### SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

#### Friday

9:00 – noon **School Visits** (for exchanges only)  
Elementary (Primary) School/Middle School or Secondary School:  
9:00 – noon – **List of activities for families will be provided to attendees with families**  
12:00 – 1:15 pm - **Lunch** (for everyone) – self pay  
1:30 – 4:00 – **Meet with a Ministry of Education representative and Tour of the Parliament Buildings** (for everyone)  
Rest of day – free to explore Victoria\*  
5:30pm – Pub night dinner (self pay)

#### Saturday

10:00 – 12:00 – **Walking tour of Downtown Victoria** (for everyone)  
12:00 - 2:00 – **Lunch** (for everyone) – self pay  
2:30 – 4:00 – **Walking Tour of Chinatown** (for everyone)  
6:00 – **Dinner at local restaurant (family friendly)** - self pay

#### Sunday

At your leisure: Depart for home  
**\*evening activities may be organized closer to the date depending on interests of the attendees**



I-r: Gayle, Sandra, Leon, Mel and June (our hosts)



## To CURL or not to CURL?

*Curling 101..*

As we approach the George Preston Recreation Centre I think why the name CURLING? Does it have to do with the CURLY moves or a CURLING motion or do things just get so CURLY?? So it's the move, when players project it toward the other end of the SHEET, it slightly spins, therefore giving it a slight CURLY movement. It's an OLYMPIC SPORT, a popular sport around much of the country where the temps can be slightly freezing...so why not!!

On Cable, it is the time when CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS are under way, such as the SCOTTIES TOURNAMENT OF HEARTS 2019, so there's your experienced athletes. A fairly cardio intensive workout, especially with all that SWEEPING taking place on the SHEET centered around helping to guide the ROCK or STONE towards an area where ultimately points are awarded. It can be compared to a game of LAWN BOWLS they say, only let's say...different.

Mel and June Caldwell, our experienced and enthusiastic CURLING hosts, guided us through the rules associated with the game. First, we were introduced to GRIPPERS, placed around the sole of the shoes to help 'GRIP' the ice as you move around it. SLIDERS, or one at least that you place on the sole of the shoe you choose to 'SLIDE' on as you release your STONE/ROCK from a kneeling position, yes..a KNEELING position. Also, some BROOMING, yes BROOMING! Were there some interesting moves?! I say that but I confess I did not partake as I was recovering from back soreness due to my clumsiness with the snowshoes, the week before, so the ice and I are still reacquainting...hehe..

And we are off...Sandra, Gayle, and Leon as well as Mel and June are CURLING AWAY..

I, the unofficial photographer, was given the pleasure of capturing the moments of DEBUTANT or BEGINNER CURLING...and what a spectacle! Everyone did great! All with their very unique style of CURLING IT AWAY! There was gliding, sliding, tumbling, laughing, groaning, side-sliding and at times frustrating moments however, all in all, fun times.

Thank you so much to everyone especially MEL and JUNE, our gracious hosts, who provided me with these memories that I take back with me to OZ even if the ice and me weren't quite friendly...

Yours in CURLING,

Annette Cau (currently teaching in Surrey, from NSW, AU)

## Overwhelmingly Ottawa..

Late last year, I was presented with the opportunity to attend a interprovincial conference along with Winterlude...by mistake however, I jumped at it. Although I wasn't able to attend the Toronto Conference for Ontarian teachers alone, understandably..I figured why not, here's a chance to attend a conference in Ottawa open to me followed by WINTERLUDE, a series of spectacles associated with all things icy, snowy and generally cold.

After paying for my flight \$\$\$, it came down to accommodation in Canada's charming capital. Billeting, they told me was an option, what's billeting you ask, well, very accommodating Ottawans, possibly past exchangees who open their warm homes to you for the duration of your stay. And where was I you ask? In the gentrified neighbourhood of Westboro, on the outskirts of the city or downtown,,.can't get used to that. A industrialised area turned charming neighbourhood consisting of numerous French inspired bakeries and boy,,.did I take advantage! Various boutiques and generally trendy eateries even a GASTRONOME! A French style diner...I guess...

The first night the lovely Siobhan Mc Comb, a Mathematics teacher from Ottawa working at Glebe Collegiate suggested we head out...sure why not? I'll brave this chillier than chilly temps! So, parked, we ventured over to the Ring of Dreams, a temporary skating rink set up outside Ottawa's City Hall. Here's where I was confronted by of Sydney's version of a flattened DONUT KING donut...the HUGE BEAVER TAIL!! YUM!! But ICY COLD 5 SECONDS LATER!☺



*CTF conference. Teachers from ON, our CEEF coordinator Kim Sturge and yours truly.*



*ByWard Market where many of the ice sculpture were located.*

Next, By Ward Market, here I come! Ice sculptures..WOW! AMAZING! Examples of very TIME CONSUMING craftsmanship but AMAZINGLY AMAZING! The precision in detail of these sculptures are something to marvel at! Dinner at a pub and as per usual, it never disappoints!! The warmth was a bonus...when temps drop down past -10 degrees.

Into Quebec we go, the following day was a visit to the Canadian Museum of History, the highlight for me the INDIGENOUS EXHIBITION, a collection of artefacts relating to differing clans around various areas of Canada. The Photography exhibit equally outstanding however, slightly eerie. Lunch at...BOSTON PIZZA followed by a visit to the CANADIAN TEACHER'S FEDERATION where teachers were invited to listen to a number of speakers representing various sectors of the union. Very informative. An interesting presentation on PROJECT OVERSEAS, part of the CTF's International Program. The Social Justice Union Representative, informed us about the opportunity for Canadian Teachers to spend their summer months, it might be 4 weeks teaching in a DEVELOPING COUNTRY. So, in essence, teachers experience instructing various subjects in the country allocated such as SIERRA LEONE, HAITI, and others. A wonderful professional development opportunity strengthening the global network of teachers and pedagogies. [\(Continued on next page\)](#)



## Overwhelmingly Ottawa...

[\(continued from previous page\)](#)



*The iconic Rideau Canal looking from the south towards the Parliament Buildings and the Fairmont Chateau Laurier*



*So many concession stands on the ice!*

FLAPJACK'S DINER, down in Ottawa's Little Italy Saturday morning. What a wonderful little place! PANCAKES, WAFFLES, LARGE SERVINGS, ENDLESS COFFEE, TEA, OJ, FRIED BACON, FRIED SAUSAGE..NEED I SAY MORE!!! Basically it is FOOD COMA CENTRAL!! A must for anyone visiting, so great for kiddies too!!

RIDEAU CANAL...a frozen spectacle as far as the eye can see!!! People skating, gliding...THAT WAS ME! ☺ and generally happiness all round!! As I attempted to be vertical for several hundreds of metres, there was skating all round leading me to the point of the DRAGON BOAT RACES ON ICE!! Basically, approximately 10 people in a boat equipped with a pole with spikes on one end. The buzzer sounds, and they are off! The competitors drive these poles into the ice and pull towards them so as to push the boat forward...OH BOY!!! Being so close to the start of the race, their facial expressions said it all!!!

Again, into Quebec and we are now off to Le Parc de la Gatineau or Gatineau Park and my reluctance in doing 10 km of Snowshoeing! My drive you ask...the CHEESE FONDUE at the halfway point in a warm CHALET-STYLE dwelling however, cramped...I was thankful! Saying that though, setting off at dusk through the woods was just mesmerizing!! The full moon on the journey back to the parking lot made for a glistening spectacle for all! Also, even though the snowshoes weren't for me and slight hesitation to walk over the frozen lake filled me with fright when looking around and witnessing certain areas where I could see the water and feel the ice slightly more mushy than I would have liked...I made it across...ALIVE!! Here is probably where I need to thank the wonderful world of MICHELLE AND DAVID for their superb hospitality and encouragement. Last day...again the lovely Siobhan invited me to take in all her lovely neighbourhood had to offer!! Great food! Great memories!! Costly...but no regrets!! I'll be back!! Ottawa, you have filled my heart with joy!!

Regards,  
Annette Cau (AU to Surrey)



Snowshoe moments captured by Louisa Batistelli.  
The Gatineau Park snowshoe event was organized by Michelle Richardson & David Farley (ON to UK 2014)

## Skiing at Mt. Seymour

On the last weekend of February, Martin Wheeler, our BCETA Vice-President, organized 2 ski outings with some of our exchange teachers. Being from Australia, it was a great opportunity for them to experience our winter fun.

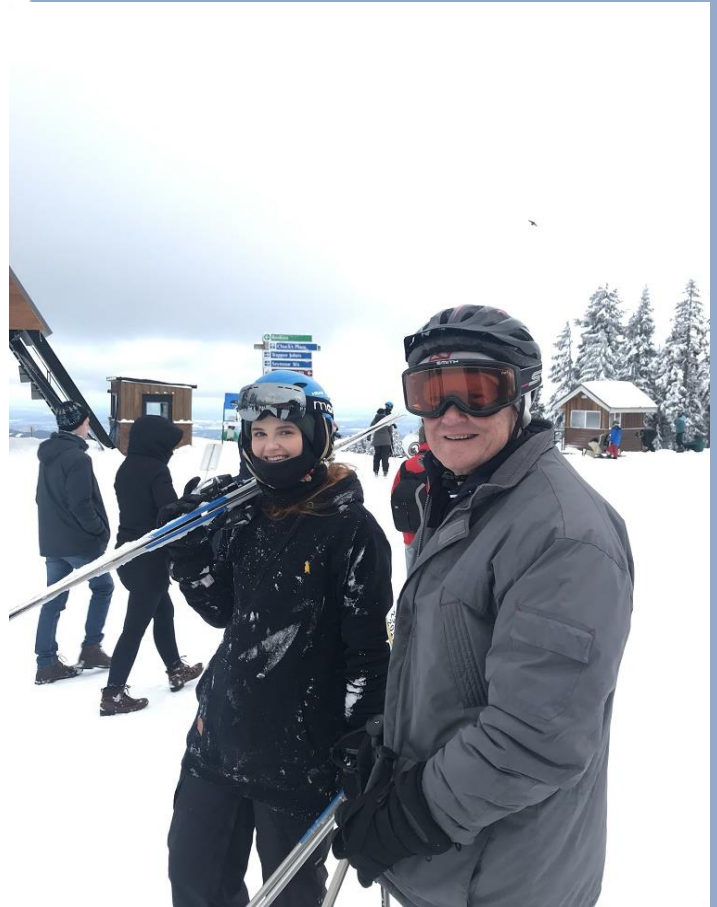
It turned out that the Moodys were well prepared to ski, bringing their own equipment on the Saturday ski event.

Martin also took the Mullers out on the Thursday night so they wouldn't miss the great ski conditions. No pictures. You'll have to take his word for it.

Thanks to Martin for organizing this. Maybe we can make it an annual affair?



*Martin, Erin Stevenson (AU) and Elizabeth Moody*



*Elizabeth and Paul Moody*



*Erin and Elizabeth at the bottom of a ski run just as the sun's coming out*

**INTERESTED IN TEACHING IN ANOTHER PART OF CANADA?  
INTERESTED IN SEEING MORE OF OUR GREAT COUNTRY?  
APPLY TO THE  
CANADIAN EDUCATION EXCHANGE FOUNDATION  
TO EXPERIENCE THIS FANTASTIC OPPORTUNITY!!  
GO TO [WWW.CEEF.CA](http://WWW.CEEF.CA) FOR MORE INFORMATION AND  
AN APPLICATION TODAY!**

### Five Pin Bowling Fun!

Did you know that 5-pin bowling is only in Canada? Jennifer Neff (Australia 2015) organized an afternoon of fun in early March. What better way to while away an afternoon on a dreary (and very rainy) winter Saturday? Well, actually, it was a lovely, sunny afternoon, but heck, we couldn't miss out on this annual tradition!

Annette (AU), ever the good sport, joined our host Jenn along with a few committee members (Martin, Kathleen, Leon and me). Martin brought along his very talented son, Nati, who showed the adults how it's really done! (Nati must attend a lot of bowling birthday parties.) Well I suppose we couldn't fault Martin too much as he had been very busy taking some exchangees up to Mt. Seymour the previous week ([see pictures](#)). And I suppose you could say the teachers were a bit distracted with report card season in full swing. Leon and I had no excuses except lack of practice. The group had time to bowl 2 games.

Afterwards, some of us went for a beer and a late lunch. As usual, the conversation flowed.

Thanks to Jenn for organizing this afternoon in spite of a busy academic and work schedule. Hopefully we can repeat this event every year!



*Leon, Kathleen, Annette, Jenn, Catherine, Martin and Nati*



Annette and Leon give it a go.

### There's more online!

If you follow Facebook, you'll find pages for some great groups and blogs –

[CEEF Discussion Group](#) – for Canadian exchange teachers and potential exchanges, this group was set up to allow interested parties to ask and answer questions about their exchange year and preparation leading up to it. Very rich in information. If you've been on exchange from Ontario, BC or the Maritimes, you have worked with the CEEF. Just ask to join.

[ITA](#) – for exchange teachers to Victoria, AU (past and present)

[Turning my world Upside Down](#) – read my own exchange adventures and find links to newsletters from other teaching exchange organizations.

[CLEECanada](#) has [website](#) and [blog](#) for exchange teachers in Ontario and BC. The blog also has stories and links for teachers currently exchanging to BC. Many new links have been added from teachers currently on exchange. Wonderful inspiration!

The CEEF now has its own newsletter. [Have a read at this month's huge issue!](#)