



To Council
January 23, 2012

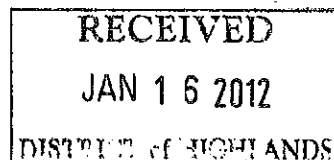
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B.C. RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION
100 - 550 West 6th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2

January 10, 2012

District of Highlands
1980 Millstream Rd.
Victoria, BC, V9B 6H1



Dear Mayor Jane Mendum and Council:

Congratulations on your recent election and your decision to serve your community. May your term in office be fruitful and rewarding.

We are sending you a summary of a report on a research project we completed last September. It reveals the results of a survey we conducted to assess the volunteer role of retired teachers in British Columbia and the impact of the range and extent of that volunteerism on communities throughout our province.

We found the results to be amazing and heartwarming. We were surprised by how many teachers, after they retire, remain in the areas where they taught. Our study shows that they continue to serve their communities with enthusiasm and diligence.

We hope that if you find the summary interesting, you will go to our website for the complete report: bcrtta.ca.

If you have questions or comments, please contact the Chair of our Volunteerism Committee, JoAnn Lauber: jlauber@shaw.ca.

Yours sincerely,

Douglas Edgar

Douglas Edgar, President
British Columbia Retired Teachers' Association

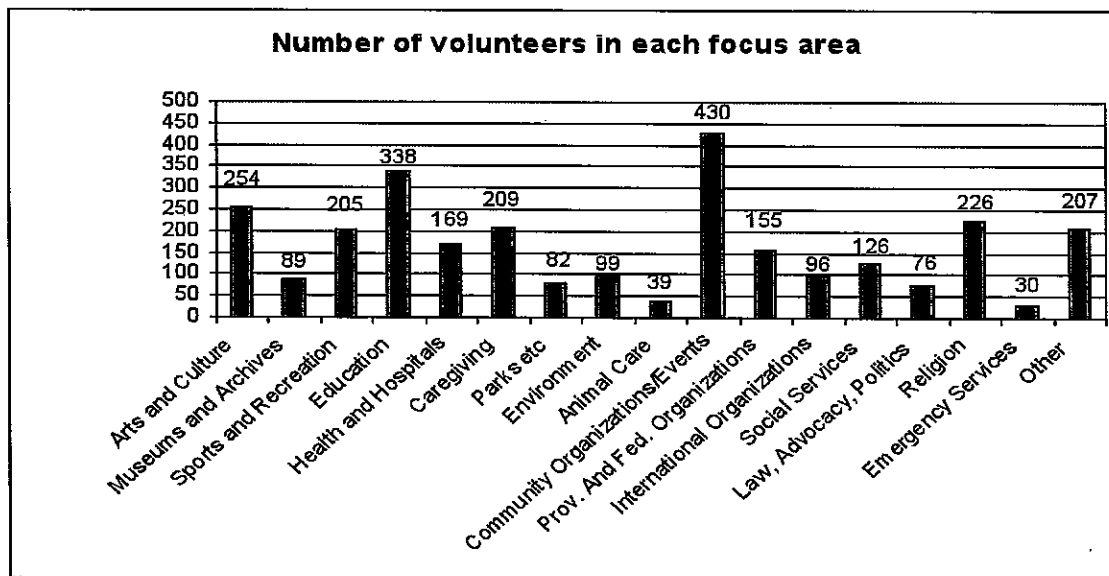


In March and April 2011, the British Columbia Retired Teachers' Association (BCRTA) conducted a survey to investigate both the volunteer role of educators who had retired and the impact of their work on communities in the province.

Based on the number of responses to the survey (1036), the professional staff of the Research and Technology Division of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, who assisted the BCRTA, declared the results statistically valid. Respondents, in addition, made 1282 written comments.

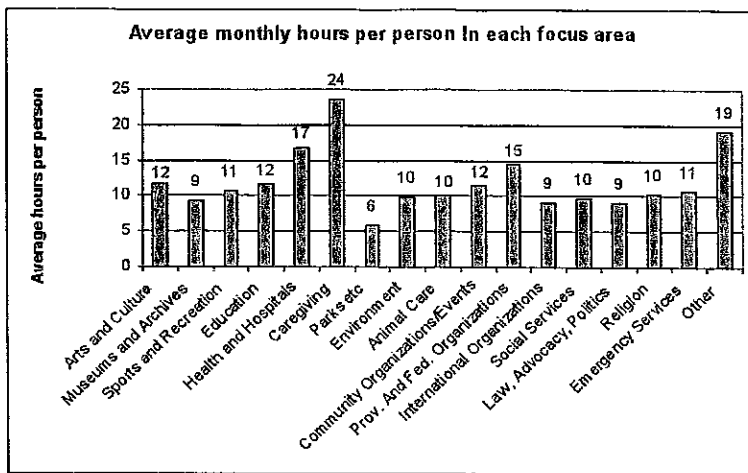
The survey found that thousands of retired teachers are actively contributing to society by volunteering in communities all across the province where they taught and built connections, and where they still reside. Their volunteer work is rich in scope and diversity, and significant in terms of contribution.

In volunteering, retired teachers, even into their 80's and beyond, touch the lives of people in all age groups from children to the elderly. The graph below illustrates that in their volunteer work, they engage in a variety of activities, in fact, an average of four different activities by each volunteer.



The largest number of BCRTA volunteers work in community, provincial, and international organizations and events -- more than half (681) of the survey respondents thus indicating active participation in social and civic affairs.

One survey respondent remarked, "Retired teachers are significant in the leadership and organization skills in our town in almost every area"; and another, in support of this finding, wrote, "In my experience, retired teachers are highly valued as volunteers by organizations because of the skills developed over a teaching career—planning, organizing, implementing plans, and working well with others—and are often actively recruited."



The results, illustrated by the graph on the left, show that largest number of hours of volunteering per person per month, far greater than for any other category was found to be in caregiving. In addition to the data shown in the graph, many respondents commented that they were also administering necessary caregiving in their homes; thus, many hours in addition to those cited on the survey, are devoted to caregiving. This contribution --in

the form of caregiving assistance --constitutes a huge social and financial benefit to our health and childcare systems.

The study revealed that each BC retired educator devotes an average of 31 hours of volunteer time each month to a multiple endeavours in a broad range of community and people-centred activities. This amount of time is more than double that donated by “top volunteers”, as described in a 2009 survey on volunteering by all Canadians.

If the volunteer work of BCRTA survey respondents is extrapolated to the entire population of retired educators in the province (29,831 retirees at the time of the survey), and calculated at only a minimum wage of \$10 per hour, the economic benefit is valued at about \$111 million annually. A phenomenal contribution to the welfare of society in British Columbia!

Retired educators contribute in diverse and significant ways to the well-being and sustainability of the communities of our province. During their lives as educators, BC teachers were devoted to their charges—the school children in their communities; perhaps it is not surprising that their altruistic and compassionate spirit of involvement and caring carries on to become their passionate preoccupation in retirement.

This spirit of caring and giving pervaded the comments of the survey respondents. Wrote one retired educator, “Volunteering is wonderful, keeps us young, keeps brain cells dancing, and makes us realize just how many skills have been attained throughout a teaching career. Volunteering not only fills the hours but provides an opportunity to serve others in a meaningful way, to make community stronger, to give back to society the benefit we get from living in a democratic country.”

The authors of this report wish to thank all those retired teacher volunteers from every region of this province who shared their experiences and reflections. Their work as volunteers makes our world a better place. We hope that the results of this study will enable informed discussion about retiree volunteering in British Columbia and encourage the provincial and federal governments to consider what they might do to support the selfless work of volunteers.

The full report is posted on the website: bcrt.ca.

Ad hoc Volunteerism Committee: Cliff Boldt, Judy deVries, Dale Lauber, JoAnn Lauber (Chair), Sheila Pither, Howard Spence