

RETIREMENTS THAT WORK



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Carol and Enise are the creators of a series of pre-retirement and post-retirement planning workshops: *Transition to Retirement: The Uncharted Course*®, *Recently Retired: Charting a New Course*® and *Ideas ... Enhanced and Advanced*®, and authors of *Transition to Retirement: The Uncharted Course*. Previous articles on retirement may be viewed in back issues at www.CanadianTeacherMagazine.com.

by Enise Olding and Carol Baird-Krul

In the four previous articles we featured educators who have found different ways to meet the challenges that retirement brings. These ventures were as varied as the people themselves and each one made a successful transition from a full time career in education to new endeavours that interested and challenged them. In these articles they shared many aspects of their choices including their individual fears and hopes and their thoughts on how the skills gained as educators helped or hindered them. Of the questions asked in our follow-up questionnaire, two in particular have relevance to you as you plan for your retirement. In this, the final article in the series “Retirements That Work,” some of our respondents share their perspective on what personal changes they foresee in their lives as they progress with their venture and beyond, as well as what they think they would have missed out on if they had not decided to take on a new endeavour. The following perspectives on what lies ahead will, we hope, help provide more important information as you plan for your own retirement.

What personal changes in your life do you see happening as you progress in your venture?

- My gardening service venture depends on my being fit, and being positive about making the effort to do something that I really don't need to do. It is easy to spend the time on my business because I have no other pressing demands. It is great to be in the situation that if I lose a day's work to poor weather, I can enjoy the time off and change of pace because over the time I've been doing this, my clients have learned that I will make up the time as soon as I can. Changes to this carefree state and new career will happen if I have to care for a family member who is in need of assistance or if I can't handle the physical demands of the job.
- My sailing instructional charters will possibly carry on for another few years, but I will be required to upgrade my qualifications every three years in order to continue with teaching sailing.
- As time has passed I find I have become much more laissez faire in my approach to my business, far less fretting about things such as meeting my own expectations and trying to be all things to all customers. I think this change in attitude will continue into the future, however, there will be a big personal change when my spouse retires in three years. At the moment I am not sure I will want to carry on or if the venture can, or will evolve, into something we both can enjoy. I'm also not sure at this point about being in business with my husband; it doesn't really appeal to me and so this could mean a total change in what I'm going to be doing in the future. I'm beginning to specialize in dwarf trees and shrubs and this change will help me, if I choose to continue to be involved with my business, because I will still be able to lift the pots. I also think the specialization of the business is going to make things less chaotic and easier for me to train help and maintain standards. Thinking about further into the future, I have done some volunteer work at the library and I hope to stay useful in the community even if I no longer have a business.
- I don't see my involvement in the Mental Health area changing too much in the future as I intend to continue working with the organization and know I can continue to volunteer until I'm not physically capable.
- I think as I progress with my venture the biggest personal change will mean learning to manage my time more effectively so I can balance work with my clients and travelling.

- In part because I appreciate being able to travel three times a year, working 40% of the time seems to work well for me, so I'll probably continue to work in the design business for at least five more years. With an eye to the future I am considering doing some course work to supplement my skills, such as graphic design.
- As a supervisor of education practicum students as well as working at an electronics store and doing woodworking, I can basically set my own hours, therefore I will continue to work each one as long as it remains fun, so I don't think there should be any personal changes for me for some time.

If you had not embarked on this venture what would you have missed out on?

- Hmm, good question. I suppose I would not have known the sense of excitement and pride that goes along with starting a new gardening business; neither would I have met so many wonderful people both in the industry as well as the customers. I have also had the opportunity to learn a new “language” – the scientific nomenclature of plants, pests, birds and soils, not to mention the language of business: GST/PST, HST, ROE, T4s, losses, etc! I would have missed out on self-directed expression and extending myself beyond my comfort zone.
- If I hadn't decided to work as a sailing instructor after my retirement I wouldn't have had the opportunity to be paid to spend many days (months, actually) and hundreds of hours of time sailing and cruising on some of the most beautiful waters in the world. Neither would I have met dozens of wonderful people who are as keen to be out on the water as I am. Finally, the additional income has been a positive way to support my less than full teaching pension.
- So many things! If I had not set up the nursery I would have missed out on an incredible adventure! I hadn't realized how narrow my world was when I was teaching, so this whole enterprise has widened my horizons. I don't think I ever really appreciated the value and expertise of people who have to drum up and satisfy the customers and make a living at it. I have enjoyed the challenge of being someone who doesn't come to the job with a special title or university credentials, but someone who has to prove myself with each new client. I have made friends with people who are in a totally different world and have even had to learn to listen to their views on teachers and education!! Each and every client has taught me something new and I've learned a lot. I've learned what it is like to be old and lonely, to not be able to make good judgment calls due to poor health and advancing age; but I have also seen people who, with the help of friends and family, have handled advancing age very well. I have shared in clients' grief and enjoyed the camaraderie of people who have the same passion for gardening as I do. I have also enjoyed the vast spectrum of clients I've had, from a minister in the provincial cabinet to two truckers who collect antiques and have restored a house to its Victorian glory, and all the many wonderful people in between. I've also got to know my community better and come to enjoy the pleasure of stopping to chat. The last point would be that I have gained many new skills, and have the confidence to perform them for people. I guess really last and not least is the fact that I have worked with my husband on this venture. We are with each other 24 hours a day and basically I realize our different personalities complement each other. I appreciate how kind he is with the clients as he is always willing to do a little extra something for them. And I have to admit he has saved me in the past from a melt

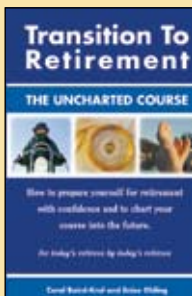
down quite a few times with humour and common sense. We have proven to be quite a team!

- AND.....PS! I guess I should mention that the money I have earned with this venture has definitely allowed us to budget for some extras that we would not have been able to have if we had just been relying on our pensions.
- If I hadn't become involved with the Canadian Mental Health Association I wouldn't have had the opportunity to help vulnerable people, travel across the country and meet some wonderful people.
- Without taking up this new venture after retirement I would not have experienced the personal growth that comes with the interaction I have with clients on a regular basis. I also have had to keep mentally active and up to date with new ideas to present to my clients.
- I know now that I would have felt a great loss of empowerment and self-esteem if I had not continued to contribute in some creative fashion after having a career in teaching, so my design business has served me well.
- If I hadn't taken on working with education students I wouldn't have been able to keep in touch with former colleagues and the profession where I spent my working life. Working at an electronics store has let me keep up with the latest in that area and my wood turning has let me explore another aspect of myself.

In this, the last article in our series on Retirements that Work, we have had some final thoughts on where our respondents think they will be in the future and what they have gained from the various paths they have chosen to take after retirement. The varied skills you have garnered through your own education and subsequent career in the field, along with the ideas and thoughts our respondents have shared with you in these five articles, will help you make your retirement work and be exactly what you want it to be.

If you have any questions please contact us through our website – www.drassociates.ca. 🍁

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Understanding Media Literacy: Inside Plato's Cave

This new online 3-credit media education course was written and field tested by Canadian media educators. The course is especially designed for grades 7 – 12 teachers who want to help their students develop an informed and critical understanding of the nature, impact and techniques of the mass media. The course and the interactive discussion forums that accompany the units will help teachers to understand media theory and then transform theory into practice as they develop lessons for their own students and teaching situations.

This course recognizes that, although mass media has come to dominate many aspects of our society, children have few opportunities to develop media literacy skills in formal settings. A basic assumption of the course is that media literacy helps children to an informed understanding of the nature of the mass media, its techniques and effects. More specifically, media literacy increases their understanding and enjoyment of how the media works: how it is organized, how it produces meaning, and how it constructs reality. The course aims to provide the means by which teachers and others can foster media literacy in children so that they can critically analyze and evaluate the form and content of media, create media, communicate using media, and understand its use and purpose.

The course is provided by Athabasca University, a recognized Canadian public university with 30,000 online students. Teachers can take this 13 unit course as a six week summer session or study at their own pace during the year. The course is offered as EDUC 115 and CMNS 315 and is endorsed by the British Columbia Teacher Qualification service. Course fees are average for online courses. The summer session runs July 5 – August 15. Registration June 1 – 10. Registration for studying at your own pace opens August 10.

For more information: salsa.athabascau.ca/cmns/mediaLiteracy.php

Or use search terms: Athabasca University Plato's Cave

New Exhibition at the Museum of Civilization: Horses and Humans

A major exhibition that provides an in-depth look at the majestic horse and its close bond with humans opens at the Canadian Museum of Civilization on May 28, 2010 and will remain open until January 2, 2011.

"*The Horse* explores the extraordinary influence of equines on human history," says Victor Rabinovitch, President and CEO of the Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation. "In the 6,000 years since we domesticated them, horses have changed the way we travel, hunt, fight and farm. Collectively, horses have had a more profound impact on more societies worldwide than any other animal, from ancient to modern times. You could say that we are chomping at the bit to open this show."

The exhibition will look at the evolution of horses and the many ways in which humans have literally harnessed their power. Today, there are some 200 breeds varying in strength, speed and temperament. Some are suited to recreational riding or racing, others to hauling heavy loads or driving cattle. Horses have also figured

prominently in the spiritual beliefs and rituals of diverse cultures.

The Horse will feature fossils, skeletons, models, prehistoric and modern art, dioramas showing life-like prehistoric horses and an archaeological dig, as well as many cultural objects that illustrate the complex interaction between our two species. Among the most striking artifacts are a full suit of horse armour from 15th-century Germany, a painting of the Canadian cavalry in action during the First World War, and an ornate Samurai saddle from Japan.

This will be the Museum of Civilization's first exhibition devoted to this subject. Because the emphasis will be on cultural and historical aspects as well as scientific ones, *The Horse* is expected to appeal to a wide range of visitors. Adults and teenagers will especially enjoy the spectacular visual elements, videos, interactive stations and hands-on activities. The Museum is planning a series of special events and other programming that will further enhance the visitor experience.

www.civilization.ca

New "Rapid Reads" for Adults from Orca Book Publishers

Orca Book Publishers has launched the first four titles in their new Rapid Reads series of short novels for adult readers. The Rapid Reads series features titles from some of Canada's well-known authors with the aim of providing great writing and storytelling that can be read in one sitting. With titles from Gail Bowen, Zoe Whittall, William Kowalski and Medora Sale, there is something for everyone in the first releases of the series.



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