

# British Columbia Exchange Teachers' Association

April 2017

BCExchangeTeachers.ca

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to say our Victoria Spring Conference is growing in numbers this year. So far we have 8 exchange teachers from all over the province joining us for the professional development activities on Friday, May 12. A few other former exchange teachers will be attending the social events planned for Saturday, May 13.

Please see the [invitation and information here](#).

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.

## UK Applications have arrived!

CEEF coordinator Mariana has a few posting that need to be filled. Contact her if you are interested.

U.K applications are here! The next three are still looking for potential applicants:

1. elementary French/Spanish
2. secondary French/Spanish
3. secondary Biology

The rest are already in the works 😊;) please spread the word out or email me if interested  
teachers@ceef.ca

## 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.  
<http://BCExchangeTeachers.ca>

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 [cteachr@hotmail.com](mailto:cteachr@hotmail.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](#).

## The current executive for the BCETA is:

President/Communications Chair:

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

Past President:

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

Vice-President

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

Treasurer

Pearl Wong – [pearlw576@gmail.com](mailto:pearlw576@gmail.com)

Secretary

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

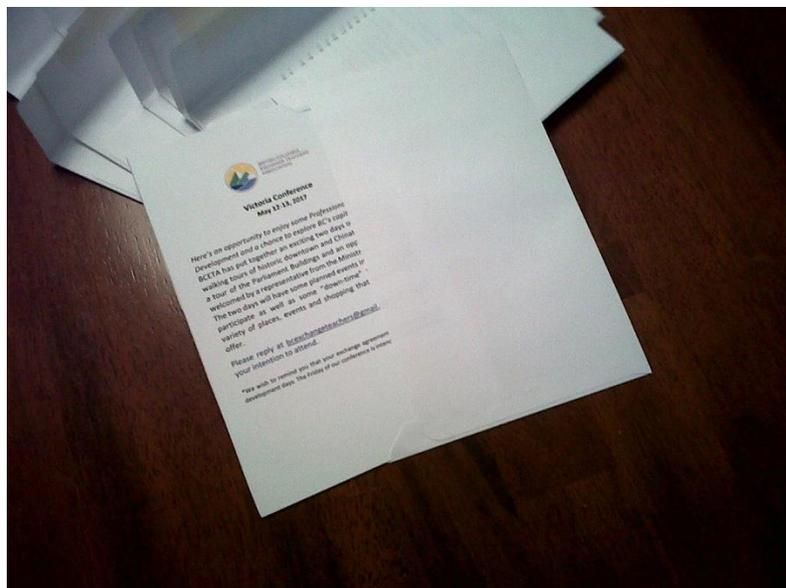
Members at large - Mel and June Caldwell

## Coming Events

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>May</b>   | <b>Victoria Conference Weekend</b><br>Info session Surrey School District  |
| <b>June</b>  | Farewell to Northern Hemisphere Exchangees                                 |
| <b>Sept</b>  | Fraser Valley Day and BBQ  |
| <b>Oct</b>   | Information session – Lower Mainland Halloween celebration                 |
| <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>April</b> | Potluck dinner Lower Mainland Ski Whistler                                 |

## 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.](#)
- BC is well known for its wildlife and outdoor adventures. [Here is a list of ideas to help you plan.](#)
- Check out a Farmer's Market or a Night Market held all over BC starting as early as May. Find a market close to you [in this directory.](#)
- 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!
- Are you into ComicCon? How about Powerlifting? [Prince George has a variety of events happening this spring and summer.](#)
- Kayaking, Surfing, White Water Rafting? [Nelson](#) has all the watersports for you.
- Don't forget that Canada is celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year! [Parks Canada passes are free!](#)
- This year is the YEAR to celebrate Canada Day! Celebrations occur all over the country. [The party starts early in Victoria.](#)



## BCETA VICTORIA SPRING CONFERENCE Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017

BCETA would like to invite you to participate in the annual Victoria Spring Conference. This will be an opportunity for current and former exchange teachers to spend a weekend in our province's capital city. The main purpose of this conference is to provide teachers with a chance for professional development through observation of a local school.

Partners and children of the exchange teachers are very welcome to attend all activities with the exception of Friday's school visits. A list of family friendly activities is attached for those who will be attending with their families.

\*We wish to remind you that your exchange agreement includes professional development days. The Friday of our conference is intended to be one of them.

It's not too late to register and join us for the conference. Simply get permission from your principal to attend this ProD event and let us know your intention.

This conference weekend is open to all BC Exchange Teachers, past and present! [Click here to register.](#)

### ACCOMMODATION

Unfortunately, we have no opportunities for billeting at this time. However, accommodation can be found at a variety of hotels in the downtown area. Tourism Victoria <http://www.tourismvictoria.com/> can assist you in locating appropriate accommodation. A recent check on [Booking.com](http://www.booking.com) shows hotels ranging from \$375-\$800 for 2 adults staying 3 nights. These hotels are all within a short walking distance of the Inner Harbour which is a central point for our conference events. From last year's experience, some teachers found their accommodations through [Airbnb](http://www.airbnb.com) and were delighted at the opportunity to explore other parts of the Victoria region.

*Remember, as a school board employee, you may qualify for a government rate at some hotels.*

If you are taking the ferry as a walk-on passenger, there is a bus that will take you from the ferry terminal to downtown Victoria. Some hotels include the shuttle in their price. Inquire when you are booking.

Conference events begin at 9am on May 12. A group dinner is planned on Saturday, May 13. Please keep this in mind when booking your accommodations.

### SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

#### Friday May 12

9:00 – noon **School Visits** (for exchanges only)  
Elementary (Primary) 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\*

#### Saturday May 13

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 Old Spaghetti Factory** - self pay

#### Sunday May 14

At your leisure: Depart for home

**\*evening activities may be organized closer to the date depending on interests of the attendees**



I-r: Leon, Catherine, Marie, Kulwant and Martin



On February 20, Leon and I met with the International Solidarity Committee of the BC Teachers Federation.

The BC Exchange Teachers Association would like to thank the committee for their continued support. It was a great opportunity for us to explain our current activities and future plans to the committee.

## Meet and Greet January 2017

At the end of January, Kulwant Toor, former BCETA President held an informal evening for current and previous exchange teachers. Although we were a small group, the conversation was lively!

Marie from France finally got a chance to attend a BCETA event and we were so happy to make her acquaintance. Kulwant was thrilled to have his own daughter finally speak French in front of him after years of French lessons. Marie is currently on exchange in Mission with her partner and their 2 daughters. One of the big subjects of conversation was the differences between lunch breaks and meals served in Canada and France. Marie confirmed that students are given over an hour for socializing while they share nutritious meals. She told us her own daughters had trouble adjusting to our Canadian ways. She also told us how she loved feeling so safe here, whether working in the school or supervising in the school yard. Yes, we are pretty proud of our BC schools. Marie told us she has felt very well supported at her school by her Canadian colleagues.

The evening ended with plans to get together at the upcoming Victoria conference.

*On a eu le plaisir de rencontrer Marie qui fait présentement son échange à Mission. Kulwant était ravi d'entendre sa propre fille parler en français pour la première fois après de nombreuses années d'immersion. Quel plaisir!*

*Pour le comité, on s'occupe d'organiser la conférence qui prendra place à Victoria les 12 et 13 mai 2017.*

*Catherine Gagnon  
President BCETA*

### Five Pin Bowling Fun!

Did you know that 5-pin bowling is only in Canada? Jennifer Neff (Australia 2015) organized an evening of fun in early February. What better way to while away an afternoon on a dreary winter Saturday?

Clem (France), Emma and Johan (France) and Mardi (Australia) attended.

Jennifer reports that “it was very relaxed; we had fun; and Emma bowled the best.”

Afterwards, the group went and had a beer. Bowling is thirsty work!

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



I-r: Clem (France), Mardi (Australia), Emma & Johan (France) and Jenn Neff



Clem watches her shot.



Emma prepares for her shot. No pressure Emma!

#### 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!

And coming very soon – [BCExchangeTeachers.ca](#), our own blog about all things relating to BC teaching exchanges.