



The Pen

Pensioned Employees Newsletter

www.bcgrea.ca

Fall 2018



President's report

New travel opportunities for members

By Ken Pendergast
President

Season's Greetings fellow members of the BCGREA.

Halloween is upon us and just around the corner is winter and the Christmas Season.

The 2018 AGM of the BCGREA was held in Tsawwassen on October 17th and the President, First and Second Vice-President positions were confirmed by acclamation.

I regret to report that our

friend and member, as well as our long time Provincial Treasurer for the BCGREA has stepped down as Treasurer for health reasons. David is currently in hospital.

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B.C. Government Retired Employees Association newsletter



Returning office Terry Burgess, left, swore into office President Ken Pendergast, Second Vice-President Carrie Mulcahy and First Vice-President Art Kaehn who were re-elected by acclamation.

President's Report

(Continued from page 1)

David Adams has been looking after our financial matters for many years and I will miss his sage advise and assistance with the Table Officers.

Thank you David for an excellent job done.

However, I'm very pleased to announce that Allen Coccola, retired CPA in Branch 2500, has volunteered to take the position of Provincial Treasurer.

Allen is very qualified to assume this role and is a welcome addition to the Provincial Table Officers.



Treasurer David Adams resigned due to ill health

I'm also pleased to announce that Al Barclay has agreed to assume the role of Provincial Membership Secretary, replacing Nancy Stewart. Nancy held the role for many years and resigned recently.

Al Barclay is also working as the Secretary of the

Recruitment & Retention Committee.

Al is adding his own R&R report for *The Pen*. Some great work is being done by this committee of dedicated volunteers.

Some exciting things are happening within the BCGREA during this 2018 year.

We have just entered into a new contract with Collette Travel, where Collette is creating a brand new landing page in our Website, specific to the membership with a large variety of travel opportunities at preferred prices.

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President's Report

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Collette has chosen to also send out quarterly eblasts through the website to our members identifying travel opportunities and discounts, along with advertising in each issue of *The Pen*.

Collette has a new representative: John Goranson, Business Development Manager in BC to help serve our membership needs. jgoranson@collette.com 403-318-3742.

John Goranson will attend our future Directors Meetings as he was in the Corporate office during this fall's AGM.

We have also entered into a contract with Tom MacLean and his new company, Trip Merchant.

Trip Merchant will become active within the next week or so, with a specific website linked to the BCGREA website.

Members interested in Trip Merchant will sign up to become registered with Trip Merchant. The site will be password protected and only those registered will have

access to the travel information.

Trip Merchant currently has about 16 travel companies in their agreement, covering air, sea and land travel opportunities with impressive fares and savings to the members as well as subsidies that can accrue to the BCGREA, such as percentage of fares and one free trip for every 16 members that sign up for a group trip.

Trip Merchant expects to increase the number of companies to 23 during the next few months.

www.tripmerchant.com
tom@tripmerchant.com



Sally Thompson
of Hearing Life Canada

Hearing Life Canada also attended the AGM in Tsawwassen and advised that their head office is moving to Toronto, Ontario but we in BC will still have

our local representation with Sally Thompson and her assistant Cheryl Anderson.

These partnerships help to finance some of the costs of producing our website, as well as benefits for our membership which we hope will further the growth of our Association.

Bill Myers, our Provincial Electronic Messaging volunteer responsible for the distribution of our Newsletter *The Pen*, as well as the eblasts on behalf of some of our partners, is currently test driving a brand new mail server, "Campaigner."

To have a successful mail server, we require all members who have agreed to electronic messaging, to have current and correct email addresses.

Bill is currently testing all those email addresses through Campaigner, and will be asking for assistance from all branches to verify correct emails for any of the ones which might "bounce" during the test.

Bill Myers has been doing the Electronic Messaging for a number of years for the BCGREA. Bill is also an avid

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President's Report

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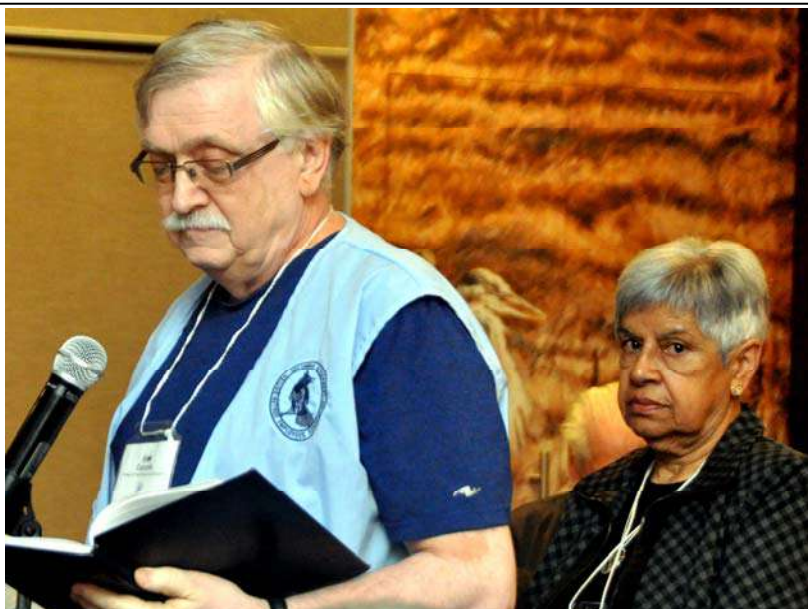
and active traveler and would like to have some volunteer back-up to ensure both the succession of his position, as well as to ensure that we can meet the contractual requirements of our members and partners in the distribution of *The Pen* and eblasts.

We would like to hear from any member who might have an interest in becoming involved with Bill Myers as a volunteer for Electronic Messaging. Bill has completed a short job description that outlines the duties he performs in this function.

Bill said that with the new mail server "*Campaigner*" the process only takes minutes, where previously it involved hours and lots of coffee.

Thank you, Bill, for your many hours of work to get *The Pen* out over the past number of years.

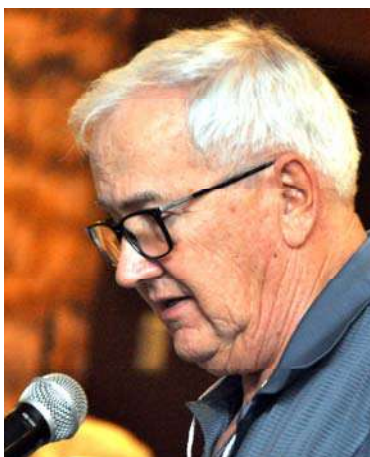
Terry Burgess, his wife Joeleen and Vincent Sherry have taken on the daunting task of contacting each and every member in the former Kelowna Branch, either by



New treasurer Al Coccola and past president Sarjit Manhas

phone or in person, to re-establish the Kelowna Branch 1500.

There are approximately 300 members in that Branch. The phone numbers, emails and addresses have many errors from our data files, making the road rough and challenging for these volunteers.



Terry Burgess

We are waiting with anticipation for the Kelowna Branch to be resurrected again.

The Victoria Branch 1200 is having serious difficulty with the recruitment of volunteers to take the leadership roles for the Branch. This Branch passed a motion during their last meeting to dissolve the Branch. The date chosen to dissolve the Branch unless a new Executive is chosen is March 31st, 2019.

Victoria Branch has over 2,000 members, roughly ¼ of our entire membership in the BCGREA.

Surely we can find a few new retirees in the Victoria membership who are willing

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President's Report

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to step up and take the reins to keep this Branch viable. The BCGREA started in the Victoria area and grew to where we still have 23 Branches.

We as an Association cannot continue to sit back and watch our membership

shrink and our Branches fold.

The Provincial Table Officers attended a regular meeting in Victoria on September 11th, 2018 with the sole purpose of getting volunteers to lead this Branch forward.

I remain optimistic that a new slate of officers will come forward before March 31st.

Many of our Branches continue to have recruitment problems despite the good relationships being built with the Pre-Retirement Seminars.

Many new retirees do not seem to recognize the value of joining the BCGREA upon retirement from Government.

As stated earlier, the Association is trying to do a good job of providing benefits for our membership through representation and partnership agreements.

Potential members often ask "What is in it for me?" "Why should I become a member of the Association?"

One response I can offer is this: "If you think that Government has your best interests at heart as a retiree, you may not need to become a member.

"If, on the other hand, you do not think the Government has your best interests at heart, now and in the longer term, your probably should become a member!!"

Have a great Festive Season and a safe winter.

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Report by the Seniors Advocate

Seniors at privately run B.C. care homes more likely to be hospitalized

VICTORIA – B.C. Seniors Advocate, Isobel Mackenzie, released a report Aug. 1 that compared hospitalization rates for residents of contracted long term care facilities (both not-for-profits and private companies) with residents from publicly operated care facilities.

“After careful review of multi-year data, a consistent pattern emerges that shows a demonstrably greater use of the emergency department and hospital beds by residents from contracted long term care facilities versus residents from publicly run facilities and a stunning 54 per cent greater likelihood that you will die in the hospital if you live in a contracted care facility versus a publicly operated facility,” stated Mackenzie.

The report draws on data from Canadian Institute for Health Information’s (CIHI) National Ambulatory Care Reporting System (NACRS)



Isobel Mackenzie

from 24 hospitals in BC linked to 212 residential care facilities and their interRAI MDS 2.0 data for emergency department transfers, and the Discharge Abstract Database (DAD) for all hospitals and facilities.

The data demonstrate that, compared to care homes operated directly by the health authority, residents who live in a care home that is operated by a contracted provider are:

- 32 per cent more likely

to be sent to the emergency department

- 34 per cent more likely to be hospitalized
- their length of stay in hospital is 32 per cent longer
- their chance of not returning to the care home but reverting to an alternative level of care (ALC) is 47 per cent higher and the average length of stay as ALC is nine per cent longer
- the likelihood of dying in hospital is 54 per cent higher if they live in a contracted care facility versus a public care facility.

The Seniors Advocate advances the case that the numbers in the report require attention and raise a number of questions that need to be answered.

“At every turn whether it is

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Seniors Advocate

(Continued from page 6)

the decision to call the ambulance, the decision to admit the resident as in-patient, the decision on when or if to discharge the resident back to the care facility we see the contracted care facilities persistently failing relative to the health authority operated facilities," continued Mackenzie.

The report highlights a financial impact of \$16 million saved annually, if contracted facilities were

able to match the performance of the public facilities and it would also create an additional 15,481 bed days for an already congested system.

However, perhaps most importantly to the Seniors Advocate, it would reduce the risk of hospital acquired infections or delirium, which combine to affect an estimated 50 per cent of frail elderly patients.

"Hospitals are not the best place for the frail elderly.

Issues related to deconditioning and the anxiety of unfamiliar places

and interrupted routines can have a significant impact on the health and well-being of the frail elderly population.

"We also know that most people want to die at home and for many of our frail and elderly seniors, "home" is the residential care facility.

"With a rate more than double the public facilities we really need to ask why contracted care facilities are seeing their residents die in the hospital," said Mackenzie, who commenced the study in response to findings from working shifts in six hospitals throughout B.C.

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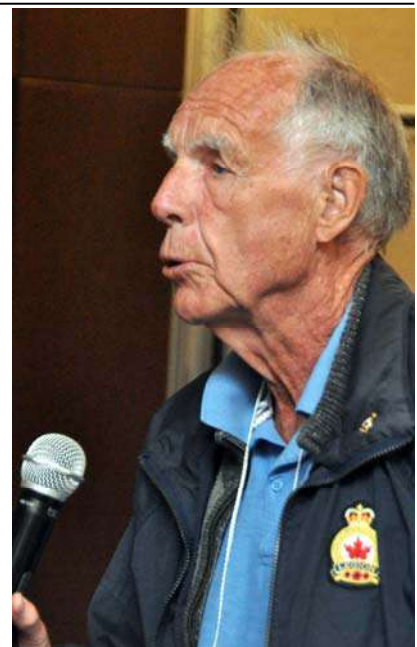
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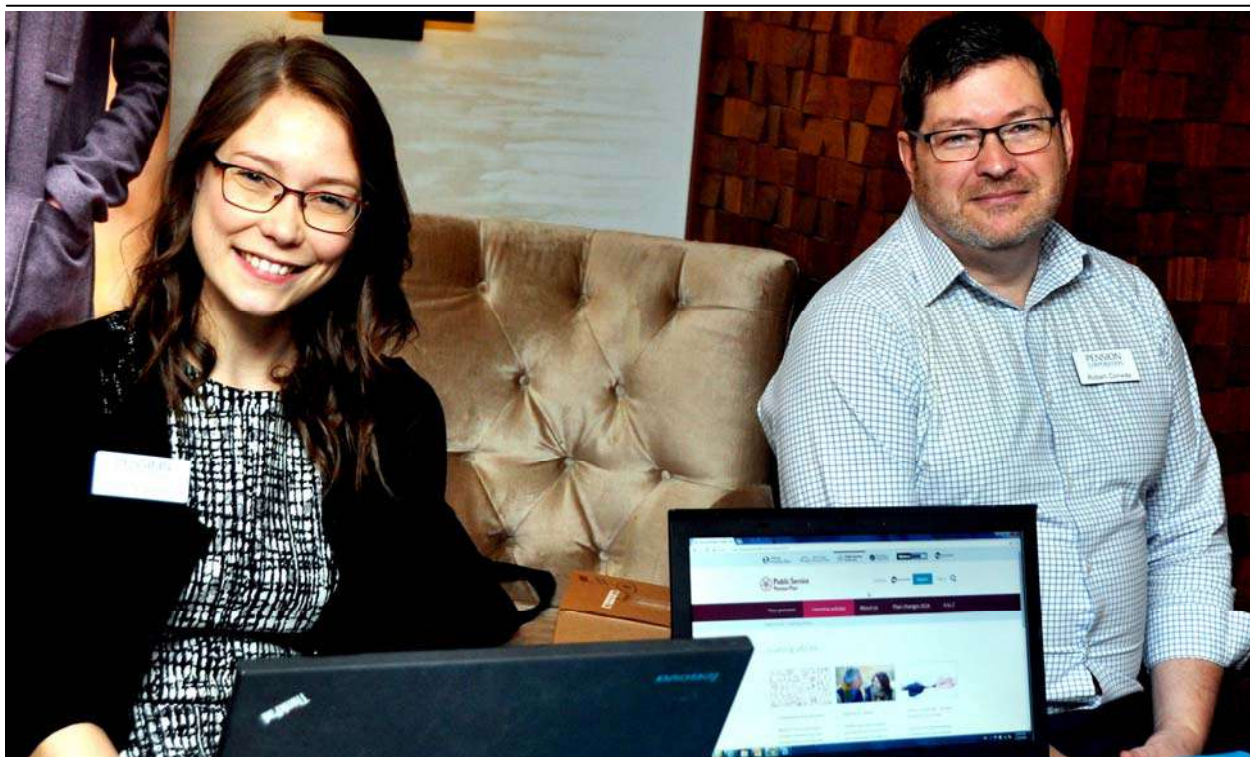
Mark Costales reported on Johnson Inc.'s new trip cancellation and trip interruption coverage, and outlined improvements to MEDOC Travel and Prestige Travel. He also presented Carol Armstrong with a new tablet that she won in a draw.



Wayne Dermody provided an update on the activities of the Council of Senior Citizens ' Organizations of BC (COSCO). The BCGREA is a member of COSCO of which Wayne is a general vice-president.



Reiner Augustin and Lorraine Ibbotson, foreground, worked on the Recruitment and Retention strategy. See report on pp. 11-13



Emily Jones and Robert Conway of the Pension Corporation were on hand to answer questions

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BCGREA table officers from left, Provincial Membership Secretary Al Barclay, Second Vice-President Carrie Mulcahy, Secretary Kathy Torhjelm, President Ken Pendergast, Retiring Treasurer David Adams, First Vice-President Art Kaehn and Association Counsel Albert Peeling

Delegates from around the province attended the Annual General Meeting



Wanted: more members Retain: current members

Recruitment and Retention Committee Meeting - October 16, 2018

By Al Barclay

By the time this appears in The Pen, I hope that many of the action items that we decided upon at our meeting will be well underway.

Our meeting was productive we had 110 per cent attendance as every committee member was there and President Ken Pendergast also attended the entire meeting.

The presence of three Table Officers at the meeting is an indication of how important the current executive feels the issue of decreasing membership has become.

I am not going to repeat the entire meeting in this article. If you would like a copy of the minutes, send me an email at albarc12@gmail.com or check with your Branch Chair for a copy of the AGM minutes.

Some of the main topics addressed include:

- The Terms of Reference for the committee were



reviewed and the finalized version should be available by mid-November.

- The names and contact information for committee members has been posted on the BCGREA website under the Membership R&R Tab.

If you or your Branch would like support, please contact one of the committee members. Check back at this Tab for more additions as we move forward.

- In addition to the two slides highlighting the BCGREA that were added to the Pension Corporation's Approaching Retirement workshop PowerPoint

presentation this summer, we recently became aware of a promotional video that the Municipal Pension Retirees Association produced for their website and showing at their workshops.

- If you are interested, you can view it at <https://www.mpra.ca/>. Myrna Cresswell will be following up to see if a similar video highlighting the BCGREA is feasible.

- Reiner Augustin, Wilf Brodrick and Kathy Torhjem will be working as a sub-committee to investigate opportunities to set up secure data storage for our organization and standardize data collection and storage, with specific attention to:

1. Membership information
2. Financial data

If any BCGREA member reading this article has a background or interest in IT and is willing to work with the sub-committee, please contact one of the sub-committee members

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Members wanted

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to get more information about this initiative.

- A poll to measure the status of our Branches will be sent out to each Branch for completion by their executive members. Responses to this poll should give a snapshot of the status of the

organization at the present time and hopefully will allow the R&R Committee and Directors to focus on assisting and supporting the Branches who are most at risk. A high return rate for this poll with detailed responses is important to get an accurate assessment.

- Reiner Augustin and Allen Coccola will

develop a work plan for objectives and measurable outputs to serve as a basis for budget development. Once the plan is developed, the budget will be prepared for submission to and approval by the Directors at the April, 2019 meeting.

- We will approach the BCGEU to see if we will be able to submit articles that highlight our Association for publication in their newsletter *The Provincial*.
- Terry Burgess is continuing to work with Vince Sherry in their attempt to restart the Kelowna Branch that closed last winter. After our meeting, the Table Officers made a decision that the April, 2019 Directors meeting will be held in Kelowna to demonstrate support and raise our profile in the area.



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Members wanted

(Continued from page 12)

has retired and is eligible to join, contact him or her directly and invite them to a meeting so they can see what we are doing.

If they say that they've been to enough meetings in their career and don't want to tie themselves down to regular meetings or they are just too busy with other activities, say that is not a problem and just by becoming a member, they add their voice to our organization when we are representing them on the Board of Trustees.

If you go to a retirement party for a former colleague, take some "Join the BCGREA" pamphlets to hand out to any eligible attendees who are at the party.

If you think of somebody but don't want to make the phone call, pass the information along to your Branch Chair or Membership Chair so they can follow up.

If every member brings in one new member next year, we will double our membership.

The BCGREA makes no warranties, express or implied, with respect to the goods and services advertised in The Pen and accepts no liability for the advertisements in The Pen.

"If every member brings in one new member next year, we will double our membership."

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE BC GOVERNMENT RETIRED
EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION**

I Am: My Spouse is:

BRANCH _____

☐ ☐ Applying as an Active Member (Those who receive a pension under the Public Service Pension Plan, or their spouse)



General Information – Please Print Clearly

First Name – Member Middle Name Last Name
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

First Name – Spouse (if applying) Middle Name Last Name
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

Address – Apt/Street City/Province & Country if not Canada Postal Code
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

Area Code & Telephone # Fax Number E-mail Address
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

Former Branch, Ministry or Government Employer – Active Former Government Employer - Associate
| _____ | _____ |

☐ Please deduct my (and my spouse's if applicable) annual dues from my Public Service pension payment each February.
(Available to Active Members only) SIN must be provided to take advantage of this provision (see below).

By signing this application I agree to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Association and consent to the sharing of my personal information between the BCGREA and the Public Service Pension Plan. I agree to the Association using this information internally for administrative purposes.

Applicant's Signature Spouses signature (if applicable)
Date signed _____ Date signed _____

This information is required to maintain contact with you and with the Pension Corporation. It will be used for administrative purposes only and will not be shared with outsiders.

Social Insurance Number – Member Social Insurance Number - Spouse
| _____ | _____ |

(Branch Mailing Addresses are on the website – www.bcgrea.com) OR Call 1-866-729-9299
or mail to B.C. Government Retired Employees Association
P.O. Box 791, Station A, Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 5M2

05/2017

**APPLICATION FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP IN THE BC GOVERNMENT
RETIRED EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION**

I Am: My Spouse is:

BRANCH _____

☐ ☐ Applying as an Associate Member (Government Pension annuitant, OTHER THAN the Public Service Pension Plan)

Spouse is one who resides with an Associate member or one who is in receipt of a deceased member's pension.



General Information – Please Print Clearly

First Name – Member	Middle Name	Last Name
_____	_____	_____

First Name – Spouse (if applying)	Middle Name	Last Name
_____	_____	_____

Address – Apt/Street	City/Province & Country if not Canada	Postal Code
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Area Code & Telephone #	Fax Number	E-mail Address
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Former Branch, Ministry or Government Employer – Active	Former Government Employer - Associate
_____	_____

☐ I have enclosed a cheque or money order payable to BCGREA for \$20.00 or \$40.00 for Member and Spouse for the current calendar year's membership.

By signing this application I agree to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Association and consent to the sharing of my personal information between the BCGREA and the Public Service Pension Plan. I agree to the Association using this information internally for administrative purposes.

Applicant's Signature _____	Spouses signature (if applicable) _____
Date signed _____	Date signed _____

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05/2017

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