



The Pen

Pensioned Employees' Newsletter

www.bcgrea.com

Fall 2010

Decision Appealed

The B.C. Government Retired Employees Association has filed an appeal of the B.C. Supreme Court decision that allows the B.C. government to claw back a portion of their benefit.

In 2003, the Province stopped paying MSP premiums for retired government workers, and the annual deductible was increased on the extended benefits plan.

The changes affected almost 30,000 retired employees, and have saved the government millions.

A year ago the B.C. Supreme Court ruled the historical payment of those benefits by government has always been discretionary, and the government was under no fiduciary duty to provide them,

Association lawyer Albert Peeling says he hopes the appeal will be heard next Spring.

Manhas elected new president



Returning officer Denis Carriere hands over the gavel to Sarjit Manhas who was elected BCGREA president by acclamation. Also sworn in was Vice-President Fred Bennett. — Charles La Vertu photo

B.C. Government Retired Employees' Association newsletter



**BC GOVERNMENT
RETIRED EMPLOYEES'
ASSOCIATION**

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Turner Road, Nanaimo, BC
V9T 6M4**

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Editor, The Pen:
clavertu@shaw.ca

Lapel pins Available for \$3 each

The association, to mark
its 60th anniversary, has
made up lapel pins.

These handsome pins
may be obtained from
branch executives at a
cost of \$3 each.

PENSION CORPORATION
1-866-876-6777 (Client
Services) Fax 1-250-953-4912

**EXTENDED HEALTH
BENEFITS**
Pacific Blue Cross 1-888-275-
4672

TRAVEL INSURANCE
Medoc/Johnson Inc. (Sandy) 1-
866-799-0000

HOUSE INSURANCE
Johnson Inc. (Lynn) 1-800-
563-0677

**LIFE INSURANCE
PREPAID LEGAL PLAN**
Manulife (Tom Martell) 1-877-
228-1501

Johnson Inc. Draw

1st Prize, Shirley
Bunyon, Cowichan
Valley (\$500)

2nd Prize, Roy Kendall,
Victoria (\$250)

3rd Prize, Sheila
Halvorsen, Port
Coquitlam (\$100)

In order to help us
cut costs, all
branches should
continue to send e-
mail addresses of
their members to
Louise Wright at
wrightplace@shaw.ca

Correction Page six
(Spring Issue 2010)
(photo), Fred Bennett
presented John Price
with an honorary life
membership

**Check out our
web site at [http://
www.bcgrea.com/](http://www.bcgrea.com/)**

The opinions expressed in
The Pen are those of the
contributors and not
necessarily those of the
BCGREA.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Johnson steps down as president

By Lawrence Johnson

This will be my last report in *The Pen* as president of the BCGREA.

I am proud to announce that Sarjit Manhas was successful in becoming president by acclamation at our Oct. 13 Annual General Meeting in Tsawwassen.

Welcome Sarjit, I know that your Provincial Executive is a great team and you will help them continue to keep this organization vibrant and responsive to the needs of all of its members.

I wish to thank the Association's Provincial Executive for their hard work and diligence in guiding this Association through some interesting and sometimes difficult times.

You have made my five years as president an eventful and rewarding experience.

At our Annual General Meeting our Legal Team made a presentation to all delegates that included the content of our appeal to the B.C. Court of Appeal which was filed with the court prior to the end of October 2010.

It was further stated that they felt more positive about our appeal than they did a year ago however there are no guarantees as to the outcome of the appeal.

It is expected that our appeal



Lawrence Johnson
will be heard in the spring of 2011.

The guest speaker at our Annual General Meeting was the Chief Executive Officer of the B.C. Pension Corporation Laura Nashman.

She spoke of a new computer



Laura Nashman

system presently being developed for retired members of the B.C. Public Service Pension Plan that will enhance the services provided to retired members of the pension plan.

The presentation included a question and answer period where delegates were asked to comment on the services provided to retired members and how these services could be improved upon.

Laura proved to be very approachable and joined delegates for "one on one" discussions during the lunch period.

The BCGREA has been approached by the Provincial Employees Community Services Fund to make our members aware that there is an opportunity for retirees to make charitable donations through the Provincial Employees Community Services Fund.

We encourage our members to visit their website at www.communityfund.gov.bc.ca for more information.

Your Branch delegates were also given information on how you can make a donation to your charity of choice through the Provincial Employees Community Services Fund.

We have also been approached by the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal of British Columbia.

(Continued on page 8)

Member Services

HOTELS/MOTELS
DISCOUNTS (Canada, USA
and International)

CHOICE HOTELS –
Corporate ID 00067265
Reservations – 1-800-424-6423
Includes: Quality, Comfort,
Sleep, Clarion, Econoline,
Friendship

WINGATE HOTELS/MOTELS
Corporate ID 50363
Reservations 1-800-831-3640
Includes: Ramada, Days Inn,
Howard Johnson, Travelodge,
Wingate. (Wingate by
Wyndham purchased Cendant
Hotels)

It's important that you have
your up-to-date membership
card available when you
check-in.

PRESTIGE INN –
No ID number.
An up-to-date membership
card is needed when checking
in.

Members must make advance
reservations prior to check-in
by calling the direct line of
each hotel/motel in which they
want to stay.

Pharmacare

Members wishing
information on Fair
Pharmacare may
do so at
[www.health.gov.bc.ca/
pharme](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharme)

Locations and telephone
numbers are as follows – all
have the 250 prefix.

Kelowna	860-7900
Vernon	598-5991
Golden	344-7990
Nelson	352-7222
Cranbrook	417-0444
Radium Hot Springs	347-2300
Salmon Arm	833-5800
Rossland	362-7375

Conditions: The discount rate
may not be available if hotel/
motel expects to be 80 per cent
full, especially during peak
season, long weekends and
conventions.

Remember, some hotels/motels
may not take part in providing
discounts AND **don't forget to
ask for a senior's rate since it
may be less.**

*With BCGREA Guaranteed-Issue Life Insurance,
you can offer your loved ones up to \$10,000
to help look after their needs!*

As a B.C. government retired employee, aged 50 to 85 and resident in Canada,
you are guaranteed eligible for this exclusive life insurance at low rates that
will never increase! Choose \$2,500, \$5,000, \$7,500 or \$10,000 coverage
and it's yours for life – your coverage will never be reduced or cancelled
as long as your premiums are paid. There are no medical exams and no health
questions to answer, so enroll today. As a B.C. government retired employee,
you've earned the right to this security!

For more information or to enroll, call toll-free **1 877 228-1501**
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Arranged by:
Martell Insurance Services
3161 Antrobus Crescent, Victoria, B.C. V9B 5M6

Underwritten by:

 **Manulife Financial**
The Manufacturers Life Insurance Company

<http://www.martellinsurance.com/bcgov.html>

Tips for planning a trip

Perhaps you are one of the more than 100,000 Canadians who travel south each year to escape the cold and snow of winter.

If so, here are some suggestions that can help you depart for your sunny destination well-organized and worry-free.

Home

Ask a family member or a friend to visit your home once a week to take care of your plants and to make certain that everything is okay.

Tell your neighbors that you will be away and that a reliable person will make regular visits to your home.

Install light timers to make your home look occupied and keep burglars away.

Hire a snow removal contractor to clear your driveway.

Ask Canada Post to hold your mail.

Empty and unplug your refrigerator.

Give a copy of your itinerary, addresses, and phone numbers where you can be reached to reliable friends and family members.

Health

Visit a clinic to get any required vaccinations for the country(s) that you expect to visit.

Renew your prescriptions to

make sure you have an extra supply in case you are delayed.

Purchase travel insurance and take note of all important toll-free numbers to use in case of emergency.

Finances

To eliminate unnecessary mail to your house, arrange pre-authorized billing for electricity, gas, and cable suppliers.

Many cable providers will allow you to place your account "on hold" for a period of up to six months.

Call your service provider to find out if this is available to you.

Set-up an online banking

account so that you can manage your finances via the Internet.

Check the expiration date and the coverage of your home insurance to make sure that you will be covered while away.

Ensure your driver's licence, passport, and vehicle registration are valid for your entire trip.

Check with your provincial health insurance plan to determine how long you can be absent from the province (or country) before your coverage will lapse.

Be aware that lengthy trips outside of Canada could also cause you to be subject to foreign laws (e.g. income tax) and may impact your eligibility for other government benefits.



Former past president Ed Bodner was sworn in by returning officer Denis Carriere as second vice-president, replacing Sarjit Manhas who was elected by acclamation as president. — Charles La Vertu photo

B. C. Government Retired Employees Association**Statement of Revenue and Expenditures****July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010****REVENUE**

Dues - Deducted from Pensions	125,960.00	
Dues Received at Branches	<u>31,755.00</u>	157,715.00
Exp. Reimbursement		34,453.60
Other Income	2,132.43	<u>7,356.91</u> 199,525.51

EXPENDITURES

Good & Welfare		1,240.51	
Bursaries & Donations	Bursaries	<u>3,563.00</u>	4,803.51
Socials	Luncheons & Sp. Events	12,249.24	
	Picnic	380.31	
	Presentations & Pins	<u>562.67</u>	13,192.22
Meetings	General	40,615.81	
	Directors	20,128.46	
	Branches	<u>6,343.47</u>	67,087.74
	Travel	12,129.42	<u>12,964.48</u> 80,052.22
Administration	Central Office	11,421.07	
	Advertising, Dues & Fees	5,624.42	
	Honorariums	8,200.00	
	Insurance	3,977.00	
	Legal Expenses	11,893.08	
	Newsletters	18,450.01	
	Office	7,683.54	
	P. O. Box Rent	540.75	
	Postage	3,843.20	4,383.95
	Printing		1,282.90
	Space Rentals		3,600.00
	Telephone	<u>722.15</u>	<u>77,238.12</u> 175,286.07

SURPLUS**24,239.44****Retained Surplus - June 30, 2009**

Surplus/ Deficit	Prov. Body	6,738.89	201,626.15
	Branches	<u>17,500.55</u>	<u>24,239.44</u>

Total**225,865.59****Balances as at June 30, 2010**

Bank and/or Credit Union	97,389.00
Term Deposits	115,075.29
Savings Accounts	5,780.59
Cash on Hand	2,009.11
Shares	547.92
Equipment	2,275.82
Inventories	1,887.86
Exp. Advances	<u>900.00</u>

TOTAL ASSETS**225,865.59**

**Your executive wishes you compliments of The Season
and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year**



Fred Bennett presented honorary memberships to Phil Erickson, left, and Ken and Erika Pleasance



Charles La Vertu photos

The legal team of former Justice Tom Berger, Gary Nelson and Albert Peeling reported to the AGM

The advertisement features a large white teacup on the left with a peace sign-shaped tea bag tag hanging from it. The background is a soft, cloudy sky. The text "enjoy peace of mind" is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Below it, in a smaller font, is "... with exceptional insurance products and services from Johnson Inc."

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- Exclusive Benefits for 50+ Policyholders
- Home Insurance Discount for MEDOC® Policyholders

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www.johnson.ca/bcgrea

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- Emergency Medical Coverage
- Single-Trip & Annual Plans
- Trip Cancellation / Interruption Insurance

1.866.606.3362

www.johnson.ca/bcgrea

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- Extensive personal & health care options
- Relieves the burden of caregiving on family members

1.800.461.4155

www.johnson.ca/LTC

Contact us today and put your mind at ease.

 **Johnson Inc.**

Home insurance is available through Johnson Inc., a licensed insurance agency. Policies are primarily underwritten by Unifund Assurance Company. Unifund and Johnson Inc. share common ownership. MEDOC® is a Registered Trademark of Johnson Inc. MEDOC® is underwritten by Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Company of Canada and administered by Johnson Inc. Johnson Inc. and Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Company of Canada share common ownership. A 90-day Health Stability Clause applies to pre-existing medical conditions. For Trip Cancellation insurance to be in effect, the MEDOC® Plan must be purchased within 5 business days of booking your trip or prior to any cancellation penalties being charged for that trip. A complete summary of conditions, limitations and exclusions is available from Johnson Inc. and is outlined in your MEDOC® Travel Insurance Policy. Long Term Care is underwritten by Manulife Financial and is administered by Johnson Inc. Certain conditions may apply. CAT.03.2010

**B.C. Government Retired
Employees Association
PO Box 209
1 — 5765 Turner Road
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6M4**



President's report

(Continued from page 3)

This tribunal hears appeals of decisions made by the Ministry of Children and Family Development under the child care subsidy program.

This tribunal is looking to recruit new members especially from areas outside Vancouver and Victoria.

For more information on this organization please visit their website www.gov.bc.ca/eaat.

We encourage you to apply to become a panel member if you are interested, after all we know BCGREA members have the skills and work ethics that are sought by various organizations and this is an opportunity to make a positive impact to your communities.

Our Provincial Treasurer reported that our financial

position continues to improve with the implementation of various money saving strategies including having reduced delegates attend the 2010 Annual General Meeting.

He also pointed out that future expenses, especially those involving our Class Action Lawsuit are difficult to predict thus the need to continue with cost saving measures into the future.

The Table Officers made a recommendation to AGM delegates that the number of delegates to next year's Annual General Meeting use the same formula that was used to determine the reduced number of delegates to the 2010 Annual General Meeting.

This recommendation was accepted by delegates.

Congratulations to our newest "Honorary Members" Tucker Forsyth of the Sunshine Coast Branch #1800, to Phil Erickson

of the Cariboo Branch #1700, to Herb Steele of the Cariboo Branch #1700, to Pat Wheatley of the North Okanagan Branch #1300, to Lorraine Logan of the New Westminster and District Branch #800, to Erika Pleasance of the Peninsula & Gulf Islands Branch #2500, and to Ken Pleasance of the Peninsula & Gulf Islands Branch #2500, who received certificates and pins to acknowledge their hard work and dedication to the BCGREA.

I want to thank the Provincial Executive, the Association Directors, to all the Branch Executive and to Association members for your support over the past 5 years; you have indeed made my experience as your President both enjoyable and memorable.

I will continue to be active in the Association as Chair of the Nanaimo Midland Branch #600 and wherever our new president thinks that I can make a positive contribution.