

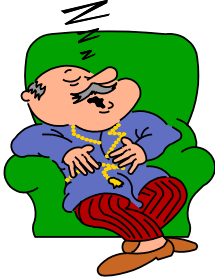


The PenGuIN

Newsletter of the Peninsula and Gulf Islands Branch #2500 of the BCGREA
April 2018



FROM THE CHAIR



We have been very active since my last report to you in our October newsletter. Our meetings continue to be both entertaining and informative. . . .

Our year started with the September meeting and a presentation by Sidney's Town Crier Kenny Podmore treating our members to an explanation of his life as a 'Crier' and the joys of volunteering.



October's meeting was well attended and had a presentation by Sharon Walker, the manager of the Sidney/North Saanich Library – how the Library has changed over the years.

At our November meeting we had a wonderful presentation by Graham Scholes – Artist (Japanese Wood Block Printing).



At the beginning of December we adopted a Salvation Army Christmas Kettle for a week. Our volunteers stood at the entrance to Thrifty Foods store in Sidney for four days (Wed. to Sat., Dec. 6th to 9th - 10 a.m. 'til 5 p.m.). We successfully raised **\$2,941**. Thank you to all our volunteers.



The Sidney Christmas Parade was held on December 3rd and we entered our decorated car for the celebration.



Our Christmas Lunch was held on Dec. 5th. Again we donated funds and non-perishable food items to the Sidney Lions' Food Bank. The lunch was fantastic and we enjoyed great entertainment from the "Dickens Carolers".





At our January meeting we were re-visited and enjoyed a re-cap of the “Vimy Flight – a Mission of Remembrance” project presented by Paul O’Reilly.

At the February meeting Pat Nichol gave a wonderful motivational talk for seniors.



On March 12th several of our members enjoyed a guided tour of the B.C. Air Museum, followed by a lunch at Mary’s Bleue Moon Café.



The March meeting presentation was introduced by our Vice-chair, Allen Coccola and included Nelson Dewey and Josh Kully on ‘Comics and Pop Culture’.

Allen & Colleen Coccola, on your behalf, attended the annual directors’ meeting of the BCGREA in Tsawwassen on April 18th. The highlights of the meeting were:

Claude Marchessault, Executive Director of Pension Board Secretariat, gave a talk on the health of the Public Service Pension Plan. Our pension plan is doing very well and is funded at 108%. There is a surplus of \$1.9B which led to some recent changes in the pension contribution formulas including a new flat rate contribution for all members regardless of their level of income. He also mentioned that the contract with Greenshield Canada is identical to the contract we had with Pacific Blue Cross. The difference in coverage relates to differences in administration.

Mark from Johnson Inc. reported that there will be a number of improvements to Medoc travel insurance in September including cancellation insurance for trips within B.C., accidental death and dismemberment insurance, and \$500 for replacement of a lost passport. You will be entered into a

draw for a 2018 BMW if you ask for an insurance quote. In addition, Johnson Inc. is offering fifty \$1000 scholarships for students pursuing post-secondary education.

Tom MacLean, formerly with Collette Travel has founded a new company called Travel Agency Tribe. The company provides websites, digital marketing and strategic content for travel agencies in Canada and the U.S. They promote vacation specials and group travel on a members-only web site and provide twice monthly newsletters to groups with more than 200 members. The Directors voted to endorse the company as a possible partner pending a review of a partnership agreement.

Estevan Gutiérrez, Vancouver liaison for Dr. Marco Munoz Cavallini International Dental Clinic, spoke about the opportunity to obtain affordable dental care in Costa Rica. In 35+ years of experience, they have placed over 30,000 dental implants. They offer a lifetime warranty on their work and a 5% - 10% discount to BCGREA members. Their website is www.dentalcostarica.com.

We received a report from the Recruitment and Retention Committee. They are in the process of identifying difficulties that the Branches are encountering and developing ways to support them. They are preparing generic Job Guidelines to assist branches with their job duties. These will include positions of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Chair. The committee recommended that training sessions for Membership Chair and Treasurer be set up to tie in with the 2018 Provincial AGM.

We anticipate continuing with exciting activities for our members and involvement in our community.

GET INVOLVED! Come to our meetings and hear all about it. . .

John MacLucas



OUR ELECTION FOR CHAPTER EXECUTIVE IS HAPPENING AT OUR MAY MEETING!

A couple of hours per month is all that is required to help with planning future activities, celebrations, speakers and monthly meetings.

BE PART OF THE DYNAMIC TEAM OF DECISION MAKERS . . . LET YOUR NAME STAND FOR POSITIONS ON OUR EXECUTIVE. NOMINATIONS MAY BE MADE THROUGH THE NOMINATING CHAIR – STEPHEN HIVES AT (250) 656-4586.

Get your tickets at our April & May meeting



To Celebrate our Year End!!

We're having a luncheon for our members at:

St. Andrew's Church Hall

Tuesday, June 26th, 2018

Doors open 11:45 Lunch – 12:00 noon

Tickets: \$5.00 per member pre-paid

Tickets for **Non-Members** \$10.00 each pre-paid

Tickets will not be available at the event

We will be presenting several "Life" member certificates

(and lots of "door prizes")



A timely message from our Director Mark Poire

Emergency Alert Systems

On January 23, 2018, a 7.9 magnitude earthquake occurred about 175 miles south of Kodiak Alaska, a prudent reminder to all of us that we live in an earthquake prone region of the world. Most municipalities in British Columbia have an emergency alert system and on January 23, 2018, if you had previously registered with the Town of Sidney Emergency Alert system (as an example), you would have received the following recorded messages on your landline or mobile phone:



- About 2:48 AM: To advise of tsunami warning for coastal areas of BC and also the Saanich Peninsula;
- About 4:44 AM: To advise that Environment Canada had lifted the tsunami and advisory warnings for all of BC.

For those BCGREA members that live on the Saanich Peninsula, you are encouraged to register with the following municipalities. Depending on the system and the information you provide on the registration form, messages can be delivered using a combination of landlines, mobile phones, text messages to mobile phones or even emails sent to a valid address as well as faxes in some cases. In addition, tune in to local radio or TV stations for further relevant information. Emergencies could also include natural gas leaks or explosions or other life threatening situations.

- **District of North Saanich:** <https://www.armsadvantage.com/register/districtnorthsaanich/residents> ;
- **Town of Sidney:** <https://www.armsadvantage.com/register/sidney/ToSResidents> ;
- **District of Central Saanich:** <https://www.centrialsaanich.ca/node/894> ;

In due course, the mass notification systems for the above three municipalities will be combined. If you had previously registered with your own municipality, there is no need to re-register for the new combined notification system for the entire Peninsula. For those members living in other areas of the Capital Region, please consult the appropriate municipal website.

In April 2018, a National Emergency Alert System was launched which will broadcast potential lifesaving alerts utilizing a variety of methods. A partnership has been developed between federal, provincial/territorial emergency management officials, Environment and Climate Change Canada, The Weather Network as well as the broadcasting industry (radio & television) and wireless service providers to ensure you immediately receive alerts and also how to keep yourself and your family safe.

A specific list of alert types that are considered a threat to life has been developed by government officials and includes; fire, natural disasters, biological threats, hazardous threats, environmental threats, terrorist threats and civil threats. For further information on the new alert system, please visit <https://www.alertready.ca/>.

It will be mandatory for all mobile carriers (Bell, Rogers, Telus, Fido, etc.) to participate in the delivery of this emergency alert program. Messages will be delivered to compatible cell phones and wireless devices. To determine if your cell phone or wireless device is compatible, please visit <https://www.alertready.ca/wireless/>.

On May 9, 2018 a test alert is scheduled at about 1:55 PM and will be sent to compatible wireless devices in British Columbia (as well as radio and TV stations) to assess system functionality. Starting in June and extending to December, test alerts will be broadcast to radio and TV stations in British Columbia on three separate dates. The schedule for British Columbia and other parts of Canada can be accessed at <https://www.alertready.ca/#alerts>.

RECIPES

From the kitchen of Ellen Woods



CRANBERRY SNOW DROP COOKIES

3 large egg whites
1/4 tsp. cream of tartar
1 tsp. vanilla extract
3/4 cup berry {extra fine} sugar
1/2 cup dried cranberries, finely chopped

Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. In a bowl, beat together the egg whites, cream of tartar and vanilla until soft peaks form. While still beating, slowly add the sugar until all is incorporated. Keep beating until mixture is thick and glossy and stiff peaks form. Fold in the dried cranberries. Drop heaping tablespoons of meringue mixture onto the prepared baking sheet, spacing each cookie about 2 inches apart. Bake for 20 minutes, or until very light golden. Turn the oven off and let the cookies sit in the oven for another 30 minutes. Cool the cookies on a baking rack. Store cookies, not touching, in an airtight container until ready to serve.

CARAMEL PECAN SQUARES

Base:

1 1/2 cups of all purpose flour
3/4 cup packed brown sugar
1/2 cup rolled oats
1/2 cup butter, cold
1 egg beaten 3/4 cup chopped pecans

Topping:

1 can Eagle Brand Regular or Low Fat Sweetened Condensed Milk
25 unwrapped caramels
1/4 cup butter

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and line a 9" x 13" baking dish with parchment paper, overlapping two sides for easy removal. Combine flour, brown sugar and oats in a large bowl. Cut in butter with a pastry blender or 2 knives until crumbly. Stir in egg and nuts. Mix well. Reserve 1 1/2 cups of crumb mixture in a small bowl. Press remainder firmly on bottom of prepared baking dish. Bake in preheated oven for 15 minutes. To Make Topping; heat sweetened condensed milk, caramel and butter in medium saucepan on low heat, stirring constantly until smoothly melted. Pour over crust. Sprinkle reserved crumbs evenly on top. Bake in preheated for 20 to 25 minutes, or until golden and bubbly. Cool completely on aware rack. Cut into 1" squares. Very rich, but so tasty!=