



# The Steller's Quill

## BCGREA New Westminster & District Branch 800

### "Fall 2015" Newsletter

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#### **Branch Christmas Luncheon: Venue Changes**

The Branch annual Christmas Luncheon is on Tuesday, December 1, 2015, 12:00 pm at the Best Western Hotel and Convention Centre on North Road, Coquitlam. There is ample parking at the hotel. If you turn onto Delestre Street (that is the traffic light on North Road almost underneath the freeway) the first exit left off Delestre takes you into the parking alongside the hotel. The bus from New Westminster Skytrain station stops in front of the hotel and the bus from Lougheed Town Centre stops across the street on North Road.

Tickets are \$25.00 each and are available at the November Branch meeting and from acting secretary **Pansy Wong** at 604-525-4922. Cut-off date for ticket sales is **Friday November 20<sup>th</sup>**, and **Pansy** must have the money before allocating tickets. The Luncheon will be the traditional style roast turkey with all the trimmings including dessert, coffee and tea. A departure from previous years is that we can no longer provide wine and soft drinks with the ticket price. However these beverages will be available for purchase from the serving staff.

Donations of gifts for door prizes and food bank donations of non-perishable food items are gratefully appreciated. Please remember, the catering staff begin serving **promptly at noon and remember to bring your ticket**. The numbered tickets are used for the door prizes.

#### **Rosa**

The Branch has lost long time member **Rosa Fun**. **Rosa** was a phoner for about 20 years, served on our Bursary Committee for 11 years and was one of our 'refreshment volunteers' for a number of years. She will be missed.

#### **Report from the Chair**

The branch has had a busy time since the last newsletter with some changes in meeting format. Our guest speakers and workshops are scheduled to start at 1:00 pm and are followed by our business meeting which is usually limited to 30 minutes. Refreshments are served at all meetings and our meetings typically conclude no later than 3:00 pm.

In the summer of 2015, our Finance Committee reviewed our expenses and revenue which resulted in recommendations to extend the suspension of a number of programs/expense items until June 2016. The Board and membership approved the changes in September, which resulted in continued suspension of payments for bursaries, honorariums, and delegate meeting/conference expenses. Payment of membership dues is down this year as some members have been tardy in dues payments which are due January 2 of each year. Our finances however are sound and were reviewed and approved by the Finance Review Committee in August 2015.

Membership is currently 851 with 29 Honored members, 160 Life members, and 5 Associate. The total includes both paid and unpaid members.

Our meetings since April have included:

- A Community Engagement and Prevention Specialist with the BC Responsible and Problem Gambling Program was entertaining, and had all members involved - speaking, laughing and participating in activities while learning about gaming as it pertains to many people including youth today.
- A workshop from COSCO Health and Wellness Institute on “Knowing your Bladder”. Most of us learned new “things” we usually don’t discuss at our meetings!
- A summer social in June was enjoyed by all with a lovely assortment of fruit, vegetables, sausage, cheese and crackers prepared and presented by our group of volunteers which included **Bonnie Billington, Chris and Harry Demchuk, Magda Moricz, Roberta Calderwood, Anna Tremere, and Marilyn Melville**. Thanks to you all.



Bonnie Billington, Chris Demchuk, Magda Moricz, and Roberta Calderwood

- A COSCO workshop on “Preventing Elder Abuse and Neglect”.
- “Oktoberfest” hosted by our Hospitality committee which followed our AGM business meeting. Thanks to our members who worked hard to make it a success: **Anna Tremere, Verna Cadwallader, Marilyn Melville, Joe Berger, Christine Demchuk, Roberta Calderwood, Marleine Wagner and Bonnie Billington (Chairperson)**. Special thanks to everyone who donated food, beverages, raffle and other items to keep our costs to a minimum and to Jean Ing who sold our raffle tickets again this year.

- The balance of 2015 will include a COSCO workshop on Healthy Eating planned for November 17, and our Christmas lunch at a new venue on December 1.

Our Annual General Meeting was October 20, 2015. The current officers and Directors of our Branch were re-elected by acclamation in the election, except for **Alan Davies, Rita Pollock and Anna Tremere**.

**Alan Davies**, our current Membership Secretary, steps down from this position on December 31, 2015. At our Annual General Meeting, the Branch membership and executive recognized and thanked him for his many years of service in this position. **Alan** was elected by acclamation to continue to serve as an active Director of the Branch in 2016.

**Rita Pollock** was elected as Membership Secretary; **Anna Tremere** was elected as Branch Secretary; and **Verna Cadwallader** was elected as a Director. These responsibilities start on January 1, 2016.

Thank you to our officers and directors for your service and congratulations to you all on your election.

In the new year, there are plans for more speakers and workshops, and continued food events at some of our meetings. We welcome members to join us at our meetings. The meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month, except July, August and December at the River Room in the Centennial Community Centre, 65 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue New Westminster (adjacent to the Canada Games Pool at E. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Cumberland). The meetings start at 1:00 pm sharp. Our best wishes to you all for a joyous holiday and a happy and healthy 2016.

**Myrna Cresswell**, Chair

### Welcome New Members

Welcome to the following new members who have joined Branch 800 since our last newsletter:  
**Victoria Ganner, Gloria Hamer, Karen Jacob, Larry Jacob, Heather Lawrence, John Lawrence, John Van Hove, and Lorelee Wilkin.**

In Memoriam		
<b>Gayle Bergenhus</b>	<b>Gordon Calderwood</b>	<b>Chee Chang</b>
<b>Mary Coggin</b>	<b>Lillian Crow</b>	<b>Joseph Dumas</b>
<b>Rosa Fun</b>	<b>Jean George</b>	<b>John Harder</b>
<b>Mary Hughes</b>	<b>Shirley Kenyon</b>	<b>Maxwell Skoreyko</b>
<b>Dorothy Tassonyi</b>		

## **Report from Provincial BCGREA Annual General Meeting to Branch 800**

The Provincial BCGREA AGM was October 21, 2015 in Tsawwassen. The meeting was chaired by outgoing President, Sarjit Manhas.

### **Meeting speakers included:**

**A representative of Collette**, a worldwide tour operator who has partnered with BCGREA and provides our members discounts on tours. See [www.gocollette.com](http://www.gocollette.com) or phone toll free to 800-770-6740

**BC Securities Commission Manager Investor /Educator** provided useful information on Investment Fraud/Smart investments. To check out the credentials of your financial adviser or check for disciplinary action against people who recommend investments to you, as well as report possible and actual frauds, contact the BC Securities Commission. Email [inquiries@bcsc.bc.ca](mailto:inquiries@bcsc.bc.ca) or telephone 604 899-6854 or toll free across Canada 1-800-373-6393 or view on internet at [www.investright.org](http://www.investright.org).

### **Alerts to possible fraud include:**

- “No risk..Profit like the pros!” Don’t be convinced by promises of access to inside information. The higher the returns on investments - the higher the risk involved.
- “Get it now!” – Scam artists use this tactic to get you to make quick decisions suggesting that they have secret information that you do not have.
- “Your friends and family can’t be wrong” – Scam artists work their way into a close knit community by befriending its members, including those in religious and ethnic groups. This tactic (Affinity Fraud) relies on the trust you place in the people you care about.
- “Off Shore, Tax free investments.” Off shore means anywhere outside our borders, including the USA and that means an *inaccessible* account to you.

**A representative of Johnson Inc.** on retiree dental and medical benefits and travel insurance. See: [www.johnson.ca/bcgrea](http://www.johnson.ca/bcgrea)

**A presentation by Lawrence Johnson**, our member and a Trustee of our Pension Plan, on the state of our pension plan. It is fully funded at 101% as of 2014. The next actuarial review will be in 2017. As at March 31, 2015 the return on investments of the plan was 14.5% against a benchmark of 12.8%. The last (paper) issue of the “After Work” newsletter will be mailed out in the spring of 2016. Lawrence has recently been reappointed by the Provincial BCGREA for a further 4 year term as Trustee

**Election:** The election of Executive for 2016 was conducted with the following members elected by acclamation and installed:

<b>President</b>	<b>- Ken Pendergast</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President</b>	<b>- Art Kaehn</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President</b>	<b>- Carrie Mulcahy</b>

### **Resolutions:**

- A resolution was passed by the delegates to urge our Pension Plan Partners, that is the Government of British Columbia and the BC Government Employees Union, to arrange for coverage of the shingles vaccine (both the cost of vaccine and fee for giving the shot) by our Pacific Blue Cross extended health plan.
- A resolution passed for changes in policy for Honorary membership which now requires 10 years membership in the association before becoming an “Honored Member”.
- A resolution was defeated which required new members to agree to payment of dues by annual deduction on their pension cheque.

The North Okanagan Branch dissolved in January 2015 as no members would step up to serve on the board.

Prepared by **Myrna Cresswell** and **Bonnie Billington**, two of the Branch 800 delegates at the Provincial AGM.

### **MEMBERSHIP DUES**

Membership dues are payable each year by January 2. Cheques should be made payable to BCGREA and mailed to the Membership Secretary for the branch.

Payments made before December 31 are sent to:

Alan Davies, 1402 Magnolia Pl, Coquitlam, BC V3H 4S8

Payments after December 31 should be sent to:

Rita Pollock, 302-1110 Howie Ave, Coquitlam, BC V3J 1V1

Please **consider** having your **dues deducted automatically** from your pension cheque each February. Not only will this relieve you of wondering if you have paid your dues each year but will provide the association with reliable funding. If you opt for automatic deduction, please provide the membership secretary with your social insurance number. **Thank you.**