



Victoria Branch Newsletter

B.C. Government Retired Employees Association

Editor: Carol Cullimore

April 2014

CHAIR'S REPORT

It is my honour, on behalf of Branch Chair Sarjit Manhas, to provide you with the Chair's Report from the Spring Directors' Meeting.

Sarjit, as President, wouldn't be able to represent our Branch and vote on matters so it was my honour to fulfill those duties. The day, March 19th had a full agenda. Our branch Chair, Sarjit Manhas, officiated at this meeting with the same efficiency and authority as she does at our Branch meetings. The meeting was opened with the traditional and respectful two minutes of silence for deceased members.

It was noted that there had been a letter sent to Prime Minister Stephen Harper in support of BC Forum's Health Accord position.

Acknowledgement was given of receipt of two Fact Sheets from Johnson Inc. Efficient use of time allowed the Executive members to give their reports before our Guest Speakers arrived.

Bruce Kennedy, Executive Director at BC Pension Corporation gave a very interesting presentation about Public Service Pension Plans. It is popularly considered that BC's plans are some of the best not just in Canada but North America. The next speakers were from Pets+Us, an affiliate company to Johnson Inc., and they gave a brief 10 minute presentation about Pet Insurance.

The next presentation, using Powerpoint, was given by Reiner Augustin the Membership Chair for Branch 1000 Shuswap/Salmon Arm. This presentation was an overview of the history of the Recruitment and Retention initiative of the BCGREA and the 28 page report submitted to the Provincial Executive. After a break for lunch and to recharge our batteries, the Directors continued the presentation and discussion where

everyone contributed. Every Branch, whether rural or urban, is facing membership challenges and it was good to be able to share ideas together to help, overcome them.

It was recognized that this is only the beginning and lots more work will have to be done. The next step will be to have the report sent to Branch Chairs to determine the next steps and formation of sub-committees to do the work. It was the opinion of one Director that the next step was the Provincial Executive's. This opinion was not shared by all. We, the membership, all have a role to play.

There will be a picnic in the Lower Mainland on June 26th at Williams Park in Langley starting at noon.

The Annual General Meeting will be October 15, 2014 at the Coast Tsawwassen Inn.

Motions were MSC that the Provincial Executive write letters to BC Ferries regarding service cuts and fare increases and also to Canada Post Corporation regarding their recently announced cuts to service, i.e. elimination of door to door delivery and the closure of Post Offices.

The meeting adjourned about 2:15 p.m.

Ken Cruickshank
First Vice Chair and
A/Chair, Victoria Branch

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Hello Members

We had several responses to the last note sent out by Dale, our email coordinator, regarding the vacant position of Program Director. However, since the Cowichan Valley Branch dissolved last summer, we were obligated and gratefully gave the position to a former member who transferred to Victoria. Unfortunately, she had a family emergency and suggested we look for someone else who could carry out the duties.

We have speakers until the end of April and the previous Program Director left us with a list that can be used in the future. If we do not fill this position, we will have no choice but to revisit "Branch meetings". I highly doubt members will turn out on a monthly basis to simply attend a 20 minute meeting.

Executive meets on the last Tuesday of the month at 10:00 a.m. and the general meetings are scheduled for the second Tuesday of the month at 2:00 p.m.

PLEASE - If you have some time you can give us, we would be grateful. The position is not onerous and involves very few hours of your time, I will be happy to discuss this with you and I can be reached at 250-384-9278 or by email - sarjit@telus.net.

Sarjit Manhas
Chair, Victoria Branch & President, BCGREA

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TELEPHONE AND EMAIL REPORT

I would like to thank and provide recognition to the following people who phoned advising members of our monthly meetings:

Sandra Barker
Vera Blazenko
Carol Cullimore

Nadine Derrick
John Evans
Anne Harrison
Noreen Hutchinson
Beth Jasper
Jean Kucy
Maureen Lundquist
Linda McPhee
Shirley Mollberg
Elaine Ross
Kirby Rimer
Irene Standal
Erika Veerkamp
J.R. Wright

Thanks to all the members who have provided me with their email address. If you have been missed being advised of our meetings, please contact me at 250-384-3481 or at djasper@shaw.ca and I will add your name to our listings.

Thank you – Dale Jasper - Director

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LUNCHEONS

The Christmas Luncheon was on December 10, 2013 at the Chateau Victoria Vista 18 roof-top restaurant. The food and staff were outstanding and the panoramic city views were amazing. We sold 106 tickets, so thank you to our members and guests who came out and supported this event. The cost for the buffet lunch was again \$20 with the Branch covering tip and taxes. Thanks to the generosity of those attending and a top-up from the Branch, we sent a cheque to Our Place Society for \$300.

The large door prize basket donated by Tom Martell (Martell Insurance Services) was won by L. Dickson. The other 27 door prize winners were: S. MacLaren, A. Doidge, G. Curren, P. Knapik, S. Manhas, V. Barrett, S. Kubisheski, B. Westhaver, S. Kerr, V. Blazenko, B. Krull, M. Csordas, J. Lofting, J. Jasper, J. Paterson, T. Knight, J. Wanless, V. White, S. Cinar, D. Wallinger, S. Zalanfy, B. Dillon, A. Cinar, B. Blazenko, L. Dickson, G. Tyler and G. Honoud.

Plans are underway for the summer luncheon to be held on Tuesday, June 10, 2014 at 12:00 p.m., the location to be determined very shortly.

The cost will be \$20. There will be a limited number of tickets available on a first come first serve basis. Tickets will be available for sale at the April 8th and May 13th General Meetings with the price/detail announced at that time.

After April 8th, you may also get tickets by mail by mailing a cheque payable to BCGREA for the number of tickets required with a self addressed stamped return envelope to Vicki White, 11-118 Aldersmith Place, Victoria, BC, V9A 7M9.

Friday, May 30th is the deadline for buying tickets for the luncheon, unless all tickets are sold before that date.

We will take up a collection for Our Place charity at the summer luncheon and your Branch has again agreed to match donations made.

Thank you - Vicki White - Director

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MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

It has been another busy year as the Membership Director. Our membership remains strong but the numbers continue to waiver. Last year at this time our membership was 2,023 and currently we are 2,066 strong. Although these numbers are up that is only because we gained 59 members when Cowichan Valley Branch disbanded. If you know of a colleague or former co-worker who has or is soon to retire why not mention to them the benefits of joining the BCGREA or directing them to the website.

While too numerous to list here we have had many members pass away in the last 12 months. Just as we take a minute at each meeting to remember those who have passed, let's take a moment here to do the same Rest in Peace!

Address or Personal information changes?

Has your address, telephone number and/or email address changed? Please ensure that you forward the changes to my attention at 250-744-4275 or kccruickshank@gmail.com.

It is also very important for you to remember to notify the Pension Corporation of any changes.

Are you presently paying your annual membership dues by cheque? Renewals for 2014 are well underway. If you don't currently pay your dues by having them deducted annually from your February pension cheque you should have received a renewal notification either by email or conventional Canada Post. Contact me if you haven't been notified and/or if you wish to change over to automatic deduction for 2015. Thank you for your consideration.

Ken Cruickshank - Membership Committee

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UPCOMING MEETINGS with GUEST SPEAKERS and EVENTS

Location and time of regular meetings is 2 p.m. at the BCGEU Hall, 2994 Douglas Street.

April 8, 2014 – Police Victim Services –
Antoinette Warren, Program Director.

May 14, 2014 - Annual General Meeting - Elections.

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BCGREA TREASURER'S REPORT

Bank balance	\$ 1,677
High Interest Savings	2,780
Term Deposits	<u>\$20,768</u>

TOTAL	\$25,225
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Income - July, /13 - Feb./14	\$5,470
From Dues, Refreshment donations, Interest, Luncheons, Donations	

Expense - July,/13 - Feb. /14	\$11,348
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Expenses for Postage, Catering, Newsletter, Honorarium, Goodwill, Luncheons, Donations, Bursary Fund and miscellaneous.

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VOLUNTEERS WANTED

In May we will be holding the elections for next year's executive and we do need to have more support from the general membership to serve

on the executive. Most positions do not require a lot of time but are necessary to have the branch run smoothly. Please consider volunteering your time to the executive and if you have any questions regarding what is involved you may speak to any of the current executive or contact Sarjit Manhas, our chairperson.

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GOODWILL COMMITTEE

If you know of any member who is hospitalized, sick, ill or injured, please let May Morrison know at 250-465-2780 or mamamo@shaw.ca .