



**Season's Greetings!**



## **BCGREA Victoria Branch December 2021 Newsletter**

### **From the President's Desk**

The holiday season is a time of joy and hope for our collective futures in 2022, after the second grueling grim year of the Covid 19 pandemic. In this season of appreciation I want to thank our former colleagues in government who dedicated themselves to the well-being of the Province this year. They showed the general public the importance and value of our strong public service, especially in times of crisis. The mostly seamless vaccination program ensured that 87% of the eligible population has received both vaccinations and are now gearing up to provide booster shots to support our return to normal life.

As borders open and transportation systems rebound, restaurants, theatres, stadiums and events return to our lives, we can look forward to a better year in 2022. Personally, I am looking forward to traveling again, there is still so much of our beautiful world I want to see.

I also want to thank all members of Branch 1200 executive who have doggedly continued to meet throughout 2021, albeit over Zoom, and provide some programming. They all worked hard on our newsletters, online presence, programs, membership, financial services and the membership survey, which has proven invaluable for our future program planning. We look forward to welcoming you in-person starting in January 2022 when we all can have a fresh start and confidence in the future.

Wishing you, our members and your families, all the very best for the holiday season and a Merry Christmas to all those who celebrate. Have a healthy and happy New Year 2022.

Barbara Golder, Chair

BCGREA Victoria Branch 1200

<https://bcgre.ca/branches/victoria-branch-1200/>

## Correspondence Conundrum



Our Victoria Branch had a puzzling and frustrating Mail experience this Spring/Summer 2021. You may have been one of the members that corresponded with us then experienced a lengthy silent delay without a response or receipt for dues.



**THE REASON:** Apparently there was a delivery procedure mix up with our PO Box number, resulting in a large batch of our mail sitting down at the Legislature Mailroom! (they have similar PO Box numbers as us). We thank those members who were affected for your patience and understanding. There are checks in place to prevent this from happening again.



### 2022 Membership Dues

### Communications Update

Another year has flown by so it's time to talk about annual Membership Dues.

For the vast majority of members, this is a 'no action required' event, as over 80% of our Branch members take advantage of the February automatic dues deduction (DCO) process.

However, for those of you that continue to pay manually, your \$20 cheque can be mailed in anytime now for 2022 dues.

Cheque payable to:

**BCGREA Victoria Branch.**

(Some of you have already prepaid your 2022 dues, so feel free to check with us if you need confirmation).

Our Treasurer will be happy to accept any post dated cheques for January 2 if that works for you. Thank you all for keeping your membership active.

We have been busy this year since we migrated our communications to Campaigner software. We are pleased with the move as this has modernized our e-bulletin and will help inform our readership with Branch news and updates!

Our Branch's newly designed website this year is a continual source of information for our membership and we encourage you to check it regularly with the latest happenings and events.

If you have any suggestions or things you'd like to see, please contact us at our generic email:

[victoriabranch@bcgre.ca](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca)

Thank You!

<https://bcgre.ca/branches/victoria-branch-1200/>

## Branch Members Contact Update

As of Fall 2021, we are pleased to report that our Membership database currently has only approximately 30 “invalid” Email addresses on file, due to rejected or undeliverable notices.

So, if you are one of the members that has recently changed carriers or obtained a brand new Email, please help us by checking in with your new or updated email address - drop us a line to:

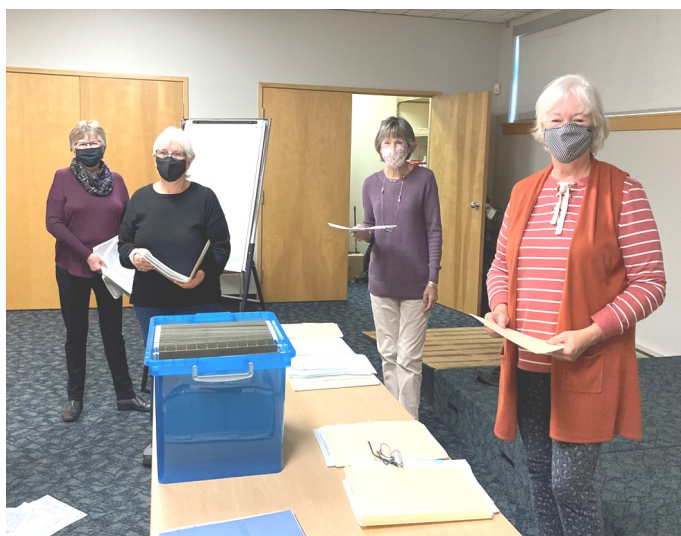
[victoriabranch@bcgre.ca](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca)

**Mailing Address and Phone number updates** are welcome too and can be emailed above or sent to our mailing address. See How to Reach Us at the end of this newsletter.

We want to stay in touch with you! Thanks!



## Paper, Paper, Paper everywhere.....!



A big thank you to the BCGEU building staff who allowed us to come in for a filing / cleanup day on October 13. Our filing 'crew' removed a large amount of old obsolete BCGREA records, filed new applications from the last year and a half, and pulled out transferred member's files for forwarding onto other branches.

The team left to right: Jane Rutherford, Cindy Fristoe, Valeska Campbell, Marilyn Spencer



## Upcoming Speakers Presentations for 2022

**January 11, 2022-** Mark your calendars for **Isobel Mackenzie**, BC Seniors Advocate who will be speaking on Supports for Seniors.

**February 8, 2022– John Adams**, foremost authority on Victoria’s past, will discuss the history of Chinese immigration in Victoria, just in time for Chinese New Year’s!

## COSCO\* Conference 2021

The Board subsidized three of our Members' entry for the Cosco 2021 conference.

In return, here are their thoughts and reflections on their experience:

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First of all, thank you for sponsoring me to attend this event. I have officially joined COSCO because of this opportunity.

Even though the conference delegates didn't meet in person, I found the Zoom format worked well. I appreciated the wide variety of topics covered by the various keynote and panel discussions.

As a person who worked in the "older adult" sector for several years, I found the speakers to be well informed about the various topics they addressed. I was most concerned, and I might add disturbed by the information given to us by both David Eby and Jim Sinclair. WHERE will people live if they need assistance as they age and WHO will look after them are two BIG questions that we need to find answers for as the "boomers" age. The situation and challenges that our current socially minded government faces in terms of HOUSING for older adults is catastrophic. It is a very difficult task to quickly build the kind of housing needed in both urban and rural areas. I would strongly suggest that any organizations working on behalf of seniors push for the "campus of care" model so that people can truly "AGE IN PLACE".

The situation and challenges our LABOUR FORCE faces is also a huge concern.

How can we "age in place" if there are no workers available to do the jobs to help us?

Unfortunately, the work done by people at all levels of care in the sector is not valued by the public in general. We need to pay higher wages and offer better working conditions to anyone working in this field to ensure quality care.

Many of my late 60-and 70-year-old friends do not want to go into care if their health fails (even before COVID) as they were aware of how lacking the care situation is presently. They also don't know if they can manage on their own if their health declines and seem a little "head in the sandish" and think the government will take care of them.

I wish this conference had been more widely advertised to the public-at-large so that more "boomers" could get educated about how they will have to take a lot more responsibility for many aspects of their own care going forward. I have successfully navigated two different health authorities with 3 different family members over the past 10 years. It required that I dedicate hours of my own time to ensure good care for my family members. I'm not sure many of my peers could do the same. They so badly need information such as was provided by this COSCO conference.

**Bridey Morrison Morgan**

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I attended the Sept 27th-28/2021 COSCO Conference on Seniors.

The information & details I learned about the various services for Seniors was invaluable! I had no idea there were so many different government offices, groups and other companies providing such a broad range of information,

and advice specific to Seniors.

Housing was a prominent theme at the conference: Statistics show that 93% of Seniors (64+) live independently, so good housing and a supportive lifestyle will enable them to age in their own homes successfully.

The Nordic countries of Sweden, Denmark, and Norway demonstrate how Senior housing designs and supportive services allow older adults to live independently and build/integrate community in all levels and aspects of their lives. For example, care homes feature facilities that they can access, including movie theatres, shopping centres and child care.

Social isolation due to the pandemic affects Seniors in a significant way so I am very pleased to learn about Gluu Society, founded by Linda Fawcus. They help Seniors see the value in building virtual relationships alongside physical ones.

Their website is <https://gluusociety.org/>. They receive funding to help Seniors learn how to use technology, through repetition. She said fear is a real factor among older adults using technology, so her group offers tools that are easy to use and free!

This was one of the best conferences I've attended, due to the variety of excellent presenters and the broad scope of Senior related issues they discussed.

I very much appreciate the Victoria BCGREA covering the cost of my conference fee.

**Vicki White**

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I really enjoyed the conference, my first COSCO conference. I intend to participate in such conferences in future.

On the first day, I attended the BC Public Guardian and Trustee presentation and subsequent workshop. This topic is particularly relevant and timely for Diane and me, as we are facing a situation with a family member. I also followed Peggy Edwards' workshop on health aging. The two workshops were excellent.

On the second day, I was impressed with the keynote speaker, Shirley Bond. I missed the conference summary provided by Peggy Edwards but will follow up with the video recording soon.

I plan to register as an Associate Member to receive regular COSCO mailings. Keep up the great work!

**Dale Broemeling**

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**\*COSCO-Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC**



## CHRISTMAS LUNCH

One of the traditions of our Branch has been to host an annual Christmas Lunch for our members. It is with a great deal of disappointment that for this year we have decided not to proceed with the in-person lunch. The logistic challenges and general concerns about COVID are just too great for us to fully address. We have a number of other initiatives available to members to celebrate the holiday season and we invite your participation. They are as follows:



### BCGREA Christmas Gathering via Zoom

The Executive would like to invite all members to join them on Zoom, **Dec 14 from 1:30-2:30 pm** for a free Christmas Music Bingo game. Those wishing to play are requested to send their email address by **December 12** to [victoriabranch@bcgre.ca](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca) with "**Christmas Zoom Bingo**" in the subject line so that we can email you a bingo sheet ahead of time. Prizes will be won! We will also be doing our Christmas raffles at that time, so feel free to join in with your favourite Christmas beverage, and enjoy some good music. Please note: Bingo game participation is limited to the **first 50** players to sign up!

### Butchart Gardens

We are once again offering a \$15 subsidy to those members in good standing that would like to visit Butchart Gardens from **Nov 15, 2021 thru Jan 15, 2022**. Please submit your receipt with your name and address to [victoriabranch@bcgre.ca](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca) with "**Butchart Subsidy**" in the subject line by Jan 30, 2022. Please note if you would like a cheque or an Electronic Funds Transfer-(EFT).

### Royal BC Museum

We are also offering a \$10 subsidy to those members in good standing that would like to visit The Royal BC Museum from **Nov 15, 2021 thru Jan 15, 2022**. Please submit your receipt with your name and address to [victoriabranch@bcgre.ca](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca) with "**Museum Subsidy**" in the subject line by Jan 30, 2022. Please note if you would like a cheque or an EFT.

## November 2021 Membership Draw Winners

The lucky winners for the 5 x \$25 gift certificates are as follows:

Dannie Carsen, Elizabeth Copeland, Michael Mueller, Russell Raine, Joan Riecken

Congratulations to all!

### Good Will Notice

If you know of any member who is hospitalized, sick, ill or injured, please contact us at: [victoriabranch@bcgre.ca](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca) with the information.



### Provincial AGM October 26, 2021

Congratulations to our own Brian Green who was elected as Provincial BCGREA President! More information can be found at: <https://bcgre.ca/bcgre-updates-october-2021/>



## Member Profile

### Haji Charania

Haji Charania retired February, 2003 from British Columbia Buildings Corporation (BCBC) after almost 35 years of service with the Province of BC. He joined the BCGREA, Victoria Branch, the same year.

He started as a Structural Design Engineer with the Dept. of Public Works in 1968 after completing a Master of Applied Science Degree from UBC. In 1977, he became a Project Manager with BCBC. In 1992, he became the Director of Project Management and Development.

During his working life he also spent considerable time in serving the community and continued with the same interest and passion after retirement. He served on the Saanich Police Board as an Order-in-Council Appointment, on the Victoria Airport Authority Board as a Saanich Nominee, on the Saanich Board of Variance, Saanich Volunteer Services Society, Junior Achievement of BC, North Quadra Community Association, just to name some organizations!

Continuing education and community services became a 'way of life' along with professional work and career as a Structural Engineer and a Project Manager. He received a Diploma in Public Administration in 1977 and a Certificate in Business Administration in 2001, both from the University of Victoria.

Hobbies included Tennis and Badminton with friends and his children. After retirement he took up lawn bowling and walking with a few friends. He became an active member of Lake Hill Lawn Bowling Club, managing its promotion and publicity for 10 years.

He has received recognition from organizations, such as Professional Engineers and Geoscientists Association of BC (2005), Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal from our MLA Ms. Lana Popham (2012), BC Community Achievement Award from BC Achievement Foundation (2016) and a Special Canada 150 Sesquicentennial Pin from the MP, Ms. Elizabeth May (2017) to name a few.

A well-deserved retirement time, Haji!

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## Member Profile

### Judy Huff



Retired in 2003. Originally from Winnipeg Manitoba. An army brat having lived in Vedder Crossing, Werl Germany, Camp Petawawa, Vancouver and Nanaimo. Lived in Victoria since 1980 when I started employment with the Provincial Government.

Started with the Ministry of Labour, Youth Referral Program, followed by a position in the Executive Offices. Also worked in the Ministry of Intergovernmental Relations, Provincial Secretary and Government Services, Ministry of Regional Development, Ministry of International Business & Immigration, Ministry of Crown Lands & Parks, and lastly, Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. Worked for two Cabinet Ministers, four Deputy Ministers and two Assistant Deputy Ministers.

Since retirement have been doing volunteer work - Heart & Stroke, Santa's Anonymous, organizing tennis events with the three tennis clubs I belong to and coaching junior tennis for many years. Like to spend January & February in Mexico with my retired husband.

Photo is with adorable Callum from this year's junior program

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X	Y	G	V	Z	D	W	W	P	S	E	S	D	F
T	D	I	N	C	A	T	S	O	R	F	H	J	E
R	H	D	W	F	P	D	L	Q	P	Q	V	F	P
C	Q	A	M	I	T	P	Y	A	T	C	B	B	Y
A	P	E	R	R	N	I	F	L	O	V	E	O	W
Q	Y	R	C	E	H	T	V	R	D	E	D	P	O
C	V	B	A	P	F	Y	E	S	V	C	L	S	N
H	D	R	J	L	D	K	D	R	D	K	W	C	S
O	J	E	B	A	D	D	V	F	B	P	O	A	F
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P	X	Y	D	E	C	O	R	A	T	I	O	N	S
I	R	U	C	E	D	V	F	F	C	N	Z	K	N
N	P	M	T	K	Y	C	N	O	C	T	C	N	H
S	N	E	H	D	O	D	C	Q	P	G	R	X	M
L	L	R	A	V	M	C	H	A	R	M	O	N	Y
W	V	S	K	C	B	G	J	T	U	A	K	D	K
R	A	H	E	F	E	S	T	I	V	A	L	V	H

## WORDS OF WINTER

Find these words: **Horizontally, Vertically, Backwards, Diagonally**

Winter  
 Peppermint  
 Chocolate  
 Snow  
 Frost  
 Fireplace  
 Decorations  
 Joy  
 Harmony  
 Love  
 Peace  
 Festival  
 Scarf  
 Gingerbread



Solution will be posted in the January 2022 e-Bulletin!

## **How to Reach Us**

### **Board of Directors Contact Information**

**President: Barbara Golder**

**Email: [chair.branch1200@bcgre.ca](mailto:chair.branch1200@bcgre.ca)**

**1st Vice-Chair: Sarfaraz (Sarf) Ahmed**

**Email: [vicechair.branch1200@bcgre.ca](mailto:vicechair.branch1200@bcgre.ca)**

**2nd Vice-Chair: Brian Green**

**Email: [vicechair.branch1200@bcgre.ca](mailto:vicechair.branch1200@bcgre.ca)**

**Secretary: Karin Heimlich**

**Email: [secretary.branch1200@bcgre.ca](mailto:secretary.branch1200@bcgre.ca)**

**Treasurer: Tammy Welch**

**Email: [treasurer.branch1200@bcgre.ca](mailto:treasurer.branch1200@bcgre.ca)**

**Membership Chair: Valeska Campbell**

**Email: [membership.branch1200@bcgre.ca](mailto:membership.branch1200@bcgre.ca)**

### **Directors:**

**Gerry Buydens, Laura Lam, Terry Prentice,  
Sonja Ruffell, Marilyn Spencer,  
Kathy Weisgarber, Vicki White**

**To message our team directly please visit our  
Contact Information on our website:**

**<https://bcgre.ca/branches/victoria-branch-1200/>**

**Our general branch email is:**

**[victoriabranch@bcgre.ca](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca)**

**Contact Phone: 250-751-8814**

### **Mailing Address:**

**BCGRE Victoria Branch 1200, PO Box 9017,  
STN PROV GOVT, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9L6**

**Or: <https://bcgre.ca/contact/>**

## **NOTES**