



## Season's Greetings!



## From the President's Desk

My most important message today is welcome to over five hundred new members to the BCGREA Branch 1200 (27% increase). The Provincial branch recently ran a 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Campaign to invite recipients of the BC Government Pension Plan to join BCGREA, and they responded enthusiastically and signed up. We are processing the applications and will send out a personalized welcome letter in the New Year.

In the meantime let me offer a warm welcome to all those who are joining us, and a big thank you to our almost two thousand existing members for sticking with us through Covid and beyond. We also send our best wishes to the newly formed Western Communities BCGREA Branch 2700.

In 2022, while still living with Covid, we saw the continuing impact of climate change, witnessed the horrors of the war in Ukraine and mourned the loss of our Head of State Queen Elizabeth II, who was succeeded by King Charles III. It was a momentous year. Recently we witnessed a change in the leadership of the BC Government as (now former) Premier John Horgan retired from his role and is succeeded by the Honourable David Eby MLA.

I want to thank John Horgan for his calm, thoughtful, and dedicated service over almost twenty years as a local MLA and Premier (the first from the Victoria area in 41 years). We may not always agree with his politics but being Premier is a tough job, especially when dealing with multiple crises like a pandemic, climate change, floods, fires, and a deadly heat dome. We wish him well and good health for his retirement. He may now be eligible to join the BCGREA – we will certainly invite him!

Lastly my deepest appreciation goes to the Board of Branch 1200 whose commitment in 2022 has meant that we can continue to provide information, and programs to all our members. We still need volunteers so please consider joining a fun team to continue this important work in the New Year.

Wishing you and your families the very best Holiday season and a Merry Christmas to all who celebrate. May New Year 2023 bring us all hope for a brighter future.

Barbara Golder

President, BCGREA Victoria Branch 1200

## Ask Your Board

In this new section the board will entertain questions from our member community but first:

Here's your chance to get to know the people on your board.

We'll start off with a seasonal question to get things rolling.

### Question:

It's the time of year when we get together with friends and family.

What's the one favourite memory or tradition that you have that you don't mind sharing with us?

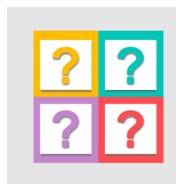
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I remember going over to Vancouver at a young age to visit my mother's large extended family. On Christmas Day there were skits and performances by various family members- my mother also got into the act and dressed up as a frog one year!

- Laura Lam

My late husband's family also likes to play games after Christmas dinner, and charades was a favourite. Forever sealed in my memory is the image of my father-in-law on his back on the floor with his arms and legs in the air. No need to go that far anymore since the movie came out. Which one, you ask? Titanic.

- Sonja Ruffell



Growing up in England in the 1950s we lived through an era of shortages, rationing, and limited resources, so Christmas Day was very very special. My parents were a young couple just starting out and I was their only child. On Christmas Eve I went to bed and like most four-five year old children. I found it hard to sleep for excitement at the prospect of a visit from Father Christmas. I remember waking early (at 4:00 am) and was excited to find a pillowcase full of gifts at the bottom of my bed. Of course I had to let my parents know immediately that Father Christmas had been to visit. Further evidence was that the milk and cookies and carrots had been eaten.

My mother told me to go back to sleep and wait until we could all get up at a reasonable hour to open gifts. So I climbed into bed with them and fell back to sleep.

Fast-forward about eight years when we went to Midnight Mass together and arrived home around 1:30am on Christmas morning. We had a cup of tea and sat around the Christmas tree with the promise of opening one present each before we went to bed – after all it was Christmas morning! My mother got quite excited after opening one gift and went to open a second. At this point my father stepped in and tongue-in-cheek told my mum that we had to wait until the morning. She laughed as she realized that life had come full circle and now she was the excited one.

Christmas morning did not lose its magic as we all opened our gifts together at a reasonable hour!

- Barbara Golder



## Joan Wallace Driving School Follow-up



Photo from Pexels.com, jeshoots.com

Joan provided us with excellent information we need to know to keep our driver's license and avoid getting an ERA (Enhanced Road Assessment). Here are things to bring to your doctor's appointment.

- 1) Ask for a Driver's abstract from ICBC, call: 250-978-8300 or **online:** <https://onlinebusiness.icbc.com/cliio/>
- 2) Make a copy of your Road Star safe driver insurance discount (40%)
- 3) Get a written driver assessment from a driving school
- 4) Bring a Lifelong Driver certificate, <https://www.adeptdriver.com/lifelong-driver/>

### Resources:

<https://www.joanwallacedrivingschool.com/>

Joan offers a monthly driving zoom presentation for Seniors the last Wednesday of the month.

Here's your chance to do some driving exercises:

<https://www.adeptdriver.com/test-drive/>

See our [website](#) for more information on other items like The MOCA Test and the ERA policy document.

And don't forget those shoulder checks!



Image by Harryarts on Freepik.com

## Speaker Presentations

**January 10, 2023** - Mark your calendar for **Mark Costales of Johnson Insurance**. Johnson Insurance is one of our affinity partners. Mark will be doing a **Zoom** only presentation on Travel insurance. Or, as Johnson says "Have peace of mind when your trip takes a little detour".

**February 14, 2023** - Stay tuned for an in-person presentation on one of our favourite hobbies-gardening. Our speaker will be Carolyn Herriot who promises a lively, entertaining time!

Further details on these presentations will be announced in the new year.

## Members Corner

Looking forward to 2023 and modernizing branch dues collection, the Victoria Branch has amended our policy regarding manual cheques. The Branch has decided to implement the automatic dues deduction (DCO) as required for all members beginning in 2023.

This is common practice in many other branches and assists the executive greatly in streamlining notifications, manual logging, and cheque processing.

It's very simple to convert over to the *"once a year in February"* automatic deduction from your pension payment. There is no need for banking information - we just need your 8 digit Pension Person ID (PID) number which can be found on any correspondence you receive from the Pension Corporation.

You can email this to our branch contact:

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

## Looking back at 2022:

### Government House Garden Tours-

Here's some additional photos from our Members visit on June 14, 2022. Thanks to Valeska Campbell and Linda Foubister for their magic behind the camera! Printed with permission.

Photos- Upper Left: Sarf Ahmed and his guest, Kay      Upper Right: Liz Owen (Right) with guest Barbara



## CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

We are excited to be able to host our Christmas Luncheon this year at:

Vista 18, Chateau Victoria Hotel

Any cancellations due to health or other unavoidable circumstances are requested as soon as possible but **before December 9, 2022** to allow us to offer the space to other members due to limited seating.

Thanks to our members for embracing this event and Marilyn Spencer for organizing it and the board for their generous support!



Here are some photos taken from last year's memorable visit to Butchart Gardens courtesy of Barbara Dolding and Fiona Sudbury. Thank you both for these beautiful photos!





## November 2022 Membership Draw Winners

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

Josephine Bergman, Pierino Chicorelli , Diane Marguerite Davies, Cindy Fristoe, Cecil Morrow

Congratulations to all!



## Good Will Notice

If you know of any member who is hospitalized, sick, or injured please contact Sonja Ruffell at:

[victoriabranch@bcgre.ca](mailto:victoriabranch@bcgre.ca) with the information.

## Branch Members Contact Update

Keeping track of all our members is no easy task!

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!

In order to keep the branch strong and growing, please remember to share our website,

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

and tell your retired friends and family who receive a Public Service pension of the benefits of joining the BCGREA.

<https://bcgre.ca/join/>

**WINTER SOLSTICE WORD  
SEARCH**

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

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

Solution will be posted in the January 2023 e-Bulletin!

Daylight  
 Dongzhi - (meaning extreme of winter or shortest day)  
 Hemisphere  
 Hibernial  
 Midwinter  
 Newgrange - (monument aligned with the solstice)  
 Northern  
 Pole  
 Solstice  
 Southern  
 Stonehenge - (monument aligned with the solstice)  
 Winter



## How to Reach Us

**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)**

**Treasurer: Ed Forbes**

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

**Secretary: Karin Heimlich**

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

**Membership Chair: Jane Rutherford**

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

**Communications Chair: Laura Lam**

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

## Directors:

**Gerry Buydens, Terry Prentice, Sonja Ruffell,  
Marilyn Spencer**

**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](tel:250-751-8814)**

## Mailing Address:

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

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

**Take care and see you next time!**

## NOTES