



## From the President's Desk

September 2022 already – the time flies by and seems to get faster every year, the summer gets shorter and the winter seems longer. September is a month of new beginnings and preparations for the winter. Labour Day, the end of the farming year, the beginning of the school year, the Autumnal Equinox (September 22), and now the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation are markers for this month.

Rambling around BC in our RV in July and August we were camping in some lovely places. I must salute and thank those retirees who worked in BC Parks department over the years. Our provincial parks system is a gem; the affordable camping is great, in beautiful locations with simple but reliable amenities.

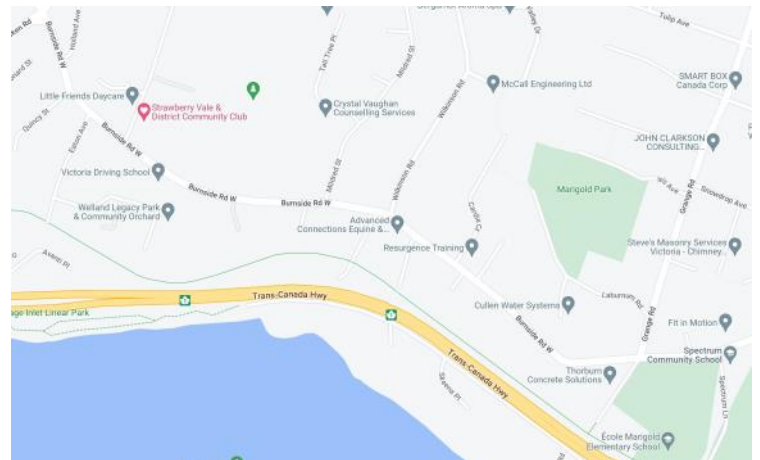
This summer I met a number of Europeans traveling on a RV vacation in BC. They marveled at the enormity of the province, the amazing scenery, the parks and friendliness of Canadian people. It is the first year of open travel into Canada after two years of Covid. Looking at Europe, China, and the US this year I felt their pain as the continents struggled with suffocating heat waves like the heat-dome and fires we experienced last year. Between the heat-waves, major rivers running almost dry, drought, failed crops, and the war in Ukraine I have a sense of deep appreciation for our life on the West Coast.

This September marks a change in our routine after the Covid shut down and we are opening our doors to the membership and encouraging you to attend our meetings. Currently we are unable to use the BCGEU building, as the Union still has a number of Covid restrictions in place. Therefore our meeting location has changed for the months of September, October and November 2022 to Strawberry Vale Community Club, 11 High St, Victoria (off Burnside Road West), V8V 1P8.

Light refreshments will be served, and mask wearing is optional.

Our in-person meetings are an opportunity to meet with other members, former colleagues and workmates around a cup of coffee and a treat after the meeting. We will also be making three gift certificate draws, two from those attending the meeting and one for the general membership. The schedule of speakers will be announced further in this e-Bulletin.

We are still looking for volunteers for the Executive and a couple of new functions. We particularly need help on the Finance Committee. So if you want to join a fun group then please send us an email.



Best Regards,

Barbara Golder,

President, BCGREA Victoria Branch 1200



# AGM



This year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on May 10, 2022 via Zoom. The new Board for 2022-2023 is composed of:

**Chair (President)** - Barbara Golder

**1st Vice President** - Sarfarez (Sarf) Ahmed

**Membership Chair** - Jane Rutherford

**Secretary** - Karin Heimlich

**Treasurer** - Ed Forbes

**Communications Chair** - Laura Lam

## Directors at Large

Gerry Buydens

Terry Prentice

Sonya Ruffell

Marilyn Spencer

Our many thanks to our outgoing Executive Members, Brian Green, Valeska Campbell, Tammy Welch and Vicki White for their dedication and service to our branch during their tenure.

Volunteers to help support our branch are always welcome so that we continue to have a healthy and strong Board now and into the future!



## Covid 19 Information

Questions regarding vaccination?

Island Health booking number is:

1-833-838-2323 (Provincial Call Centre)

Information on Covid booster vaccination can be found at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/booster>

Dear Members,

Seventy-five years ago this year, 50 retired civil servants formed the B.C. Retired Civil Servants Association. Nine years later the association was renamed the B.C. Government Retired Employees Association (BCGREA) to include retirees from government boards and commissions.

It's interesting to note the similarities they faced are ongoing concerns in our organization today. It also shows the determination to improve the welfare of our retirees. This remains the BCGREA purpose.

To celebrate our diamond jubilee, we want to share your branch history in the 2022 Spring and Fall editions of *The Pen*. Do you have a story about your branch? Its creation, struggles, past and/or present executive, or a poignant moment.

Email your story (**up to 500 words**) as an attachment in a Word document or typed in your email message to: [thepen@bcgre.ca](mailto:thepen@bcgre.ca).

Pictures are encouraged, but please provide high-quality scans of non-digital photographs and/or high resolution digital photographs in .jpeg or .jpg formats. Be sure to tell us *who* is in the photo, *when* and *where* it was taken (approximately), along with *what* happened to mark the occasion.

We look forward to receiving your submissions.

Many thanks,

Victoria Branch Communications Committee

## Branch Activities—Program



### 2022 Speaker Presentations

At long last after a lengthy few years, come see your fellow BCGREA members and socialize with light refreshments provided. Masks are optional.

#### Save these dates to your calendar for our Fall in person Speaker presentations!

They will be held at:

**Strawberry Vale Community Club, 11 High Street, Victoria, B.C.**

A reminder with the meeting details will be emailed to you during the second weekend of September. Also please check our website for current information:

<https://bcgre.ca/2022-speaker-presentation-series/>

**September 13, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. MJ Cousins, Saanich Volunteer Services Society** <https://www.saanichvolunteers.org/>

The meeting room will be open at 1:00pm should you wish to come early, informally chat with our Executive before the Speaker Presentation at 1:30 pm.

**October 11, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. Gary Perkins, Province of BC, Chief Information Security Officer**

For the month of October we have engaged Gary Perkins who as the Executive Director of the Information Security Branch, is responsible for providing cybersecurity services in support of the province.

The meeting room will be open at 1:00pm should you wish to come early, informally chat with our Executive before the Speaker Presentation at 1:30 pm.

**We look forward to seeing you there!**

## Members Corner



### Automatic Dues Deduction Policy - No Cheques!!!

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 contacts:

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

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

Note that this policy is applicable to those members in receipt of a Public Service Pension and **does not apply to Associate Members.**

Cosco Invites you to join in a conversation with David Eby via Zoom.  
<https://bit.ly/3K9rezW>



**JOIN US FOR AN  
EVENING WITH**

**David Eby**

**TO DISCUSS  
SENIORS' ISSUES**



- **MODERATOR: MLA RAVI KAHLON**
  - **HOSTED BY THE COUNCIL OF SENIOR CITIZENS' ORGANIZATIONS OF B.C**
- WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 7:00 - 8:00 PM**

You are invited to attend this one-hour virtual meeting with David Eby. After a brief presentation, David will answer questions on housing and health issues facing seniors in BC that were prepared by the COSCO Executive. He will then take questions from meeting participants. We look forward to welcoming you to this event and discussing the important issues facing older adults in our province.

**Registration required using Zoom link below:**

<https://bit.ly/3K9rezW>

**Government House Gardens Tour - June 14, 2022**

It was a perfect day for our members and guests to enjoy the gardens of Government House!  
Thanks to Valeska Campbell and Linda Foubister for taking photographs and our members for consenting to have these published. Also a very special thanks to Marilyn Spencer and the rest of the Board for organizing this event for our members!



## Sleeping Pill Use Survey

For those aged 65 and older and who are current or recent users of sleeping pills, please consider participating in this research survey.

Cosco (Council of Seniors Citizens' Organizations of BC) is supporting your participation in this survey for the following reasons:

1. Appropriate medication use is of interest to our members.
2. The research team at Dalhousie University is credible, and thus this project has undergone ethics review, and the survey responses will be handled in an anonymous manner to assure confidentiality is respected.
3. The research team includes an older adult representing seniors: Bill Berryman is Chair of the Seniors Council of Nova Scotia and is a Past President of ACER-CART (Canadian Association of Retired Teachers)
4. Last but by no means least, this survey is strongly recommended by our partner organization, the Canadian Deprescribing Network as follows:

" David Gardner and Andrea Murphy are respected researchers and executive members of CaDeN; they have been involved in a number of our activities, as speakers during our 2018 Summit and host/speakers for our Maritimes multistakeholder meeting (similar to the one we held in 2019 in Vancouver). They created **sleepwell.ca** and are currently rolling out a pan-provincial trial on sleeping pills in New Brunswick."

Thank you for your consideration in participating in this research and thereby helping all those relying on sleeping pills.

Take care

Leslie Gaudette

President, COSCO

604-630-4201

<https://coscobc.org/>

Please click on the survey link below:

<https://sleepstudy.ca/simoa/>

**Fall Offerings: Check out Silver Threads Programs at your closest centre**



**Silver Threads Service  
Try it Free Week  
September 6th to 9th, 2022**

We provide Programs and Services at two Centres for older adults, 55+.  
Annual membership is \$55 and is valid at both Centres.  
Try it Free Week is an opportunity to sample some of what we offer  
and sign up for a new activity.  
Tours and refreshments will be provided.

Saanich Centre		
Activity	Days Dates	Times
Table Tennis	Tues Sept 6 Fri Sept 9	9:30-11:30am
Silver Threads Singers	Tues Sept 6	9:30-11:00am
Victoria Computer Club	Tues Sept 6	9:30-11:30am
Painting Drop-in	Tues Sept 6	10:00-12:00pm
Functional Fitness	Tues Sept 6	1:00-2:00pm
Weaving	Tues Sept 6	1:00-3:00pm
Tai Chi Therapy	Wed Sept 7	10:00-11:00am
Carpet Bowling	Wed Sept 7 Fri Sept 9	9:30-11:30am
Snooker	Wed Sept 7	9:30-12:30pm
Outdoor Walking	Wed Sept 7	10:00-11:00am
Yoga & Meditation	Wed Sept 7	10:30-11:30am
Pickleball	Wed Sept 7 Fri Sept 9	1:00-3:00pm
Social Bridge	Wed Sept 7	12:30-3:00pm
Woodcarving	Thurs Sept 8	9:30-11:30am
Functional Fitness	Thurs Sept 8	10:00-11:00am
Seated Exercises	Thurs Sept 8	11:15-12:00pm
Foodshare	Thurs Sept 8	11:00-1:00pm
Floor Shuffleboard	Thurs Sept 8	1:00-2:30pm
Cribbage & Scrabble	Thurs Sept 8	1:00-3:00pm
Victoria Computer Club One to One	Fri Sept 9	9:30-12:30pm
Jubilee Clarinet Choir	Fri Sept 9	1:30-3:30pm
Zumba Gold	Fri Sept 9	2:00-3:00pm

Victoria Centre		
Activity	Days Dates	Times
Dance for Every Body	Tues Sept 6	9:30-10:00am
Tai Chi Therapy	Tues Sept 6	11:00-12:00pm
Chair Yoga & Meditation	Tues Sept 6	1:00-2:00pm
Indoor Walking	Wed Sept 7	9:00-10:00am
Music for Everyone	Wed Sept 7	10:00-11:00am
Art For Anyone	Wed Sept 7	1:30-3:00pm
Drama Club: Play Reading	Thurs Sept 8	10:00-11:00am
Memoir Writing	Thurs Sept 8	1:30-3:00pm
Function Fitness	Fri Sept 9	10:00-11:00am
Ukulele	Fri Sept 9	1:00-1:45pm

**Saanich Centre**

**Treasure Trove Thrift Store  
Sidewalk Sale**

You never know what you will find,  
Household goods, crafts, clothing, art work and  
so much more. Stop by during Try it Free Week  
for our half price sale.

**Silver Spoon Café**

Stop by the Café for lunch, baked goods and bev-  
erages. We will be open from  
9:30am to 1:00pm.

Visit [www.silverthreads.ca](http://www.silverthreads.ca) for more information.  
To try a class for free call the Centre to book your spot!

**Saanich Centre**  
286 Hampton Road  
Phone: 250 382-3151



**Victoria Centre**  
1911 Quadra Street  
Phone: 250 388-4268

## Tours from Old Cemeteries Society

For those looking to explore Victoria's cemetery heritage, the Old Cemeteries Society provides walking tours for members of the public for a small fee.

See their [website](#) for upcoming tours and further information.

## Gluu Technology Society

Want to learn how to use your new mobile device and/or become more confident online so that you can connect with your family and friends?

Gluu Technology Society provides **FREE** digital skills training for older Canadian adults.

See their [website](#) for more details on how to register for their many courses or for further information.



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

**Also, we want to know if you have moved, updated your email address or phone number.**

**You can let us know below:**

<https://bcgre.ca/contact/> or the e-mail above.

If you have enjoyed our e-mails, presentations and newsletters, tell your fellow retirees the benefits of joining the BCGREA and share our website

<https://bcgre.ca/category/victoria-branch1200/>

## Branch 1200 Contact Information

President: Barbara Golder

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1st Vice-Chair: Sarfaraz (Sarf) Ahmed

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Secretary: Karin Heimlich

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Treasurer: Ed Forbes

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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)

BCGREA Victoria Branch's Mailing address is:

PO Box 9017, STN PROV GOVT, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9L6

Take care and see you next time!