



# The Steller's Quill

BCGREA New Westminster & District

Branch 800

“Spring 2026” Newsletter

## Contact info:

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Editor: **Andy McColl**



**Welcome New Members**

*David Lee-Young, Allison Luke*

## Branch 800 AGM 2026 Meeting Notice

**Tuesday June 16, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.** in Multipurpose Room 2A/2B B at the t̄m̄s̄w̄tx̄w Aquatic and Community Centre, 65 6<sup>th</sup> Ave East in New Westminster.

### Call for Nominations

Under the Branch 800 regulations, elections will be held at the AGM to fill the Executive board positions as follows:

**Chairperson**

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairperson**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairperson**

**Secretary**

**Treasurer**

**Membership Chairperson**

**Telephone Convener**

**Goodwill Convener**

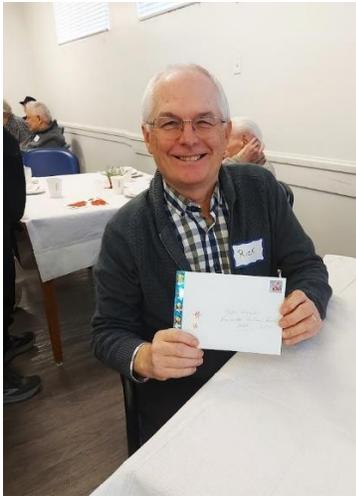
**Six Directors**

**Anyone interested in serving on the board, please contact Jodine Ducs, BCGREA**

**Administrative Support: [info@bcgrea.ca](mailto:info@bcgrea.ca)**

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*Christmas Lunch - Dec. 2, 2025  
Royal Canadian Legion in Port Coquitlam*



## CHAIR REPORT

### Branch Activities / Speaker Topics

**October 21, 2025: "Organizing Digital Photos" presentation by Liam Pozzolo & Kelena Lee.** They offered practical information, handouts and individual troubleshooting for members who brought their digital devices.

**November 19, 2025: "Recognizing, Preventing & Responding to Fraud" presented by a Community Engagement Officer and two volunteers from New Westminster Police Dept.** A few tips...

- Set up banking transaction alerts and sign up for the two major credit monitoring agencies (TransUnion and Equifax). Check your credit score & monitor regularly for fraud / identity theft.
- Take sensitive shredded paper documents to a secure disposal site vs curbside pickup.
- With the sophisticated A I technology now being used to impersonate (such as in grandparent scams), setting up a family code word is advised.

**December 2, 2025: Branch 800 Christmas Lunch** was held at the Port Coquitlam Legion; attended by 65 members and guests, with many participating in the gift exchange. Luncheon tickets were free for members this year and everyone attending received a free ticket for the door prizes. Special thanks to Canadian Tire, Austin Safeway, Ricky's Country Restaurant and the Real Canadian Superstore in Coquitlam for their generous door prize donations. In addition, a lovely Christmas planter was donated by our member **Jeannie Beattie**. **Mike Cresswell** was the happy winner of the gift basket created by **Jean Ing**. **Rick McDougall** won the cash draw. **Alix Going** drew the first door prize – a complete set of stainless steel cookware from Canadian Tire. A big THANK YOU to all the branch volunteers who helped with this event.

**January 20, 2026: "Retirement Income Planning" with Tami Lawrence, CFP and Jo Tong, Mutual Fund Manager from the Royal Bank.** Their presentation included the stages of retirement and proportional income needed for financial security and comfort.

**February 17, 2026: "Beekeeping" presented by Branch 800 member Janice Bobic.**

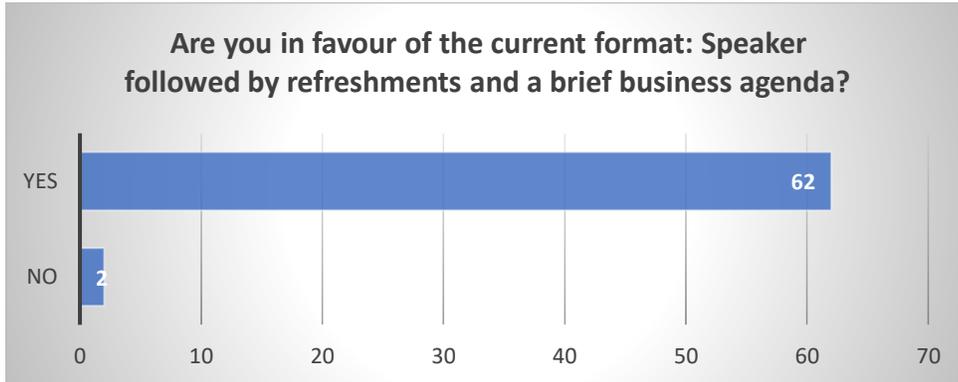


Janice shared her knowledge and experience in promoting and preserving *Apiculture* in the urban environment. She described some of their unique characteristics and the environmental challenges facing the bee population. To find out more on beekeeping, check out this website: [www.bchoneyproducers.ca](http://www.bchoneyproducers.ca)

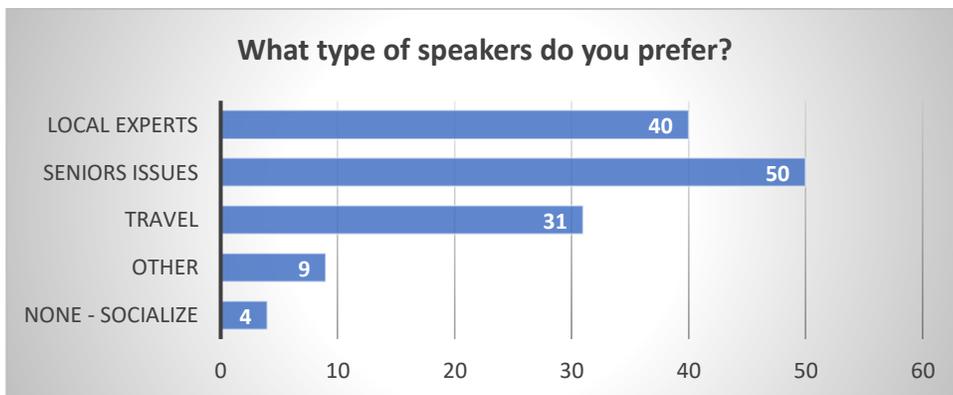
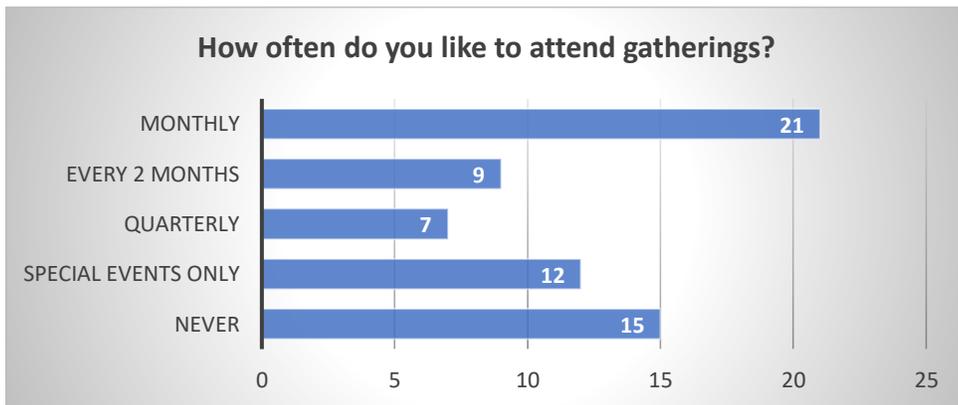


## New Westminster and District Member Poll Results

The following charts show the results of the survey conducted for the branch members between January 20, 2026 and February 10, 2026. 64 members responded to the poll. The volunteer information and text responses have been reviewed separately by the branch executive team. Those interested in helping will be contacted.



Note that 1 of the members who responded "No" suggested meetings closer to her home and she has now transferred to the Golden Ears Branch as she lives in Maple Ridge.



\*Note that respondents were asked to choose as many types as they wanted to.

*(Branch Member Poll.. cont'd)*

Our thanks to BCGREA Membership Secretary Al Barclay and Jodine Ducs, Administrative Support for their assistance in formatting and summarizing results. Al and Jodine will conduct the \$50 draw by random number generator, and the winner will be announced at the Branch Meeting on March 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Please note: Date and location change for the March Branch Meeting:**

**Monday March 16, 2026:** Branch Meeting 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion, 1025 Ridgeway Ave at Nelson St in Coquitlam.

**Speaker topic: "Estate Planning and You"** – a new presentation by Tanya Lyn Werk, CPCA, EPC, RRC

**Upcoming Branch Meetings:**

Multipurpose Room 2A/2B B at the t̄m̄s̄ēw̄tx̄w Aquatic and Community Centre, 65 6<sup>th</sup> Ave East in New Westminster. Meeting time: 1:00 -3:00 p.m.

**Tuesday April 21, 2026 – Speaker topic "Gardening"** (to be confirmed).

**Tuesday May 19, 2026 - Speaker topic "Canadian Dental Plan: Info Session"** to be presented by **Service Canada**

**Tuesday June 16, 2026 – BRANCH 800 AGM and Spring Social Food Event.**

**Announcements:**

**January 22, 2026: Branch 800 Financial Review** for January 1 - Dec 31, 2025 was held in keeping with Provincial BCGREA requirements. Attending: Ross Tremere, Al Pirani, Alex Dennison (Treasurer), and Bonnie Billington (Branch Chair). Our finances remain sound and the books were found in good order with thanks to our treasurer!

**The Provincial BCGREA AGM will be held April 23, 2026** at the Coast Tsawwassen Inn. Registration info will be forthcoming for branch members who wish to attend virtually. Branch 800 Voting Delegates are Bonnie Billington, (Chair) & Dennis Ishikawa (Director). On the agenda will be a motion to promote discussion on the concept of a *Preretirement Member* category in the BCGREA, namely reaching out to prospective members enrolled in the PSPP *before* they retire.

**If anyone is aware of members residing in Assisted or Long-Term Care facilities,** please notify Branch 800 Director Anna Tremere [bcgre800@gmail.com](mailto:bcgre800@gmail.com) As valued members of our branch it is important that we maintain contact, so they and their families do not feel forgotten.

### **Scam Alert**

Some of you may remember “demutualization” by life insurance companies in the late 1990s. Holders of 'endowment' life insurance policies were given the option of taking a cash payout; or converting that cash to a number of that company's shares.

There are a number of 'corporations' registered in the U.S. state of Delaware that exist to contact these shareholders and make them an “Offer” to buy the shares they hold in that insurance company. In the case we know of the shares are in Sunlife Financial.

*The danger lies in following through with the process outlined below with special caution about the request to provide bank account details as noted in the last paragraph.*

The “Offer” tells the recipient that they have established that the recipient owns a specific number of shares (not necessarily accurate) and offers to pay a discounted price of \$61.80 per share. The offer lists a total price they will pay if you take them up on the “Offer”. The Sunlife closing share price on the day the offer was received was \$86.85. You do the math.

The “Offer” goes on to advise the shareholder to exercise their 'due diligence' and consult their financial advisors. It also goes on to describe their rules for 'resolving' any dispute arising between the stockholder and Purchaser. Disputes are resolved by binding arbitration administered by the American Arbitration Association, heard before a single arbitrator in accordance with that organization's Commercial Arbitration Rules. “All claims shall be brought in a party's individual capacity and on an individual basis only. There shall be no right or authority for any claims to be arbitrated on a class action basis, in a representative action, private attorney general litigation or consolidated arbitration”. *Much thought appears to have gone into managing disputes. The “Offer” has to be signed before a Notary.*

Payment will be made by cheque. Any costs involved in replacing lost share certificates and any dividends paid by the company after you've sold your shares will be deducted from your cheque. “If for any reason the Purchaser is unable to issue a cheque to the stockholder, the stockholder will upon request provide details of a bank account to which payment may be made by electronic devices. **Beware!**”

Andy McColl

### **Thank You BCGEU!**

Services provided by the BCGEU print room staff are invaluable to our branch, and we appreciate their ongoing assistance with our copying needs and newsletter mailout.

### **In Memoriam**

We regret to announce the passing of the following members:  
**William Broyles, Judith Chambers, Lesley (Lee) Denis, Phillip Lee  
Kenneth (Wayne) McFarlane, Frances Milikic, Tissa Perera  
Ellen (Bernadette) Ramsden**

The Executive and members of the BCGREA, New Westminster & District Branch 800 express sincere condolences to these families and their friends.