

**BCGREA BRANCH 900 MEETING MARCH 15, 2023
OUR REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH AUDITORIUM**

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 with Maurice Davidson in the chair and 23 members present.

The theme for the meeting was 'Opportunities to Volunteer'. We had 3 guest speakers and a summary of their presentations are at the end of this month's meeting minutes.

Treasurer's Report: Imre reported that he is waiting for some cheques to clear the bank, so did not have a formal report for this month's meeting. He estimates that there is roughly \$1,900.00 in the bank (after the said cheques clear). A formal report will be prepared for next month's meeting.

Membership Report: Frances reported that Branch 900 has 273 members. Linda Meyers is new to our branch this month—having transferred from Branch 2100 (Langley/Surrey). We lost longtime member, Sheena Suzukovich (Okanagan Falls) who passed away on January 21, 2023.

Retiree Bill Burke, who joined in 1996, was in attendance and given a welcome by all. Moved by Lou DiLorenzo and seconded by Judy Barillaro that the report be accepted. Carried.

New Business:

It's Income Tax Time!! Income tax services for lower income seniors is available at the Penticton Senior's Center. Call for further information 250-493-2111. As well at the Penticton Access Centre Society—further information at 250-493-6822.

Also see attached copy of an e-mail from CRA applicable to tenants with lower incomes.

Health and Wellness: Longtime member Sydney Boulton is currently in extended care after her fall a few months ago.

Good of the Order: A reminder that if you hear of a member who is ill or the passing of a member or spouse, please call or e-mail a member of the executive.

60/40 Draw: Frances Monro was the winner of \$34.80, and Sallie Dodd the winner of \$23.20.

Upcoming Events:

Thursday, March 23, 2023: Celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Summerland Trout Hatchery at the Open House (from 1:00-3:00). Address: 13405 Lakeshore Drive S, Summerland. (FREE!)

Next meeting: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 at 10:30 a.m. (Our Redeemer Lutheran Church). Guest speaker will speak on Nutrition for seniors on a budget.

The Annual spring director's meeting for the BCGREA will be held in Tsawwassen on April 25th and 26th. Maurice is planning to go.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

THINKING OF VOLUNTEERING?

First Speaker: Subrina Monteith (Executive Director of the South Okanagan Similkameen Volunteer Center.)

- One of 16 Volunteer Centers in B.C.
- The SOS Volunteer Center partners with events, festivals, schools and other organizations to find volunteers for various positions that are required for the smooth running of these events and organizations.
- The SOS Volunteer Center is active not only in Penticton, but north to Summerland, south to Osoyoos and west to Princeton—assisting with matching volunteers to various organizations in smaller communities as well.
- Volunteers are needed for one time events (festivals), and on-going opportunities such as walking dogs for seniors; assisting at the Soupateria and at the schools.
- Contact: 888-576-5661 or 250-460-0723; e-mail: subrina@volunteercentre.info

Second Speaker: Kari Purvis (Coordinator, Client Services Health Equipment Loan Program)

- The Red Cross operates 70 Equipment Loan Depots in the BC southern interior.
- In Penticton there were 24 volunteers pre-COVID. Currently there are 9 volunteers.
- Shifts in the Penticton depot are 4 hours, once per week. There are also opportunities to volunteer with depots in Oliver, Keremeos and Princeton.
- Volunteers connect with clients and facilitate the loaning and return of health equipment at the depot.
- The on-boarding process can be onerous. If interested please contact Kari at 250-491-8443, ext. 222 or Kari.purvis@redcross.ca.

Third Speaker: Kip Demmings—speaking on the Meals on Wheels Program in Penticton and the need for volunteer drivers for this program.

- MOW is operated by the Penticton Hospital Auxiliary and supported by Interior Health.
- Currently there are approximately 200 meals that are distributed 3 times/week by volunteer drivers.
- The deliveries are divided into 8 delivery routes with 10-20 meals on each route.
- Time commitment: Approximately 11:00 to 1:00 on your delivery date. With an optimum number of volunteer drivers, only one day per week commitment. (Drivers can volunteer for more days/week.)
- Volunteers work solo or in pairs.
- Further information: Annette.Zakall@interiorhealth.ca

Information on the Canada Housing Benefit for renters:

From: **Canada Revenue Agency / Agence du Revenu du Canada** <[do not reply-ne pas repondre@cra-arc.gc.ca](mailto:do_not_reply-ne_pas_repondre@cra-arc.gc.ca)>

There's still time for eligible Canadian renters to apply for the one-time top-up to the Canada Housing Benefit -- a one-time tax-free payment of \$500. If you are eligible, **you have until March 31, 2023 to submit an application**. Sign up for direct deposit to get your payment within 3 to 5 business days!

To be eligible, you must meet **each** of the following:

- have filed a 2021 tax return (or a statement of income for newcomers to Canada);
- be at least 15 years of age as of December 1, 2022;
- have an adjusted family net income of \$20,000 or less for individuals, or \$35,000 or less for families;
- be a resident of Canada in 2022 for tax purposes;
- have paid at least 30% of your 2021 adjusted family net income on rent for your principal residence in the 2022 calendar year; and
- be able to provide your landlord's contact information.

Here are several ways you can apply:

1. The **Canada Revenue Agency's My Account** is the quickest, easiest, and most secure way to apply for the one-time top-up to the Canada Housing Benefit. If you register now using one of our convenient sign-in options, you won't have to wait for your security code in the mail to apply.
2. **Employment and Social Development Canada's My Service Canada Account** will allow you to securely access CRA My Account without having to sign in or revalidate your identity.
3. An **online application form** is also available to submit applications without having to sign in to My Account or My Service Canada Account. Address and direct deposit changes will not be permitted using the web form.
4. If you are unable to apply for this new benefit online, call us at **1-800-282-8079** to complete your application with an agent.

For more information on the one-time top-up to the Canada Housing Benefit, including eligibility and how to apply, visit: [canada\[.ca\]/housing-top-up](https://canada.ca/housing-top-up).