

# Cowichan Valley Branch 2600

## SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER



### CHRISTMAS LUNCH

We had our Christmas luncheon on December 5, 2025 at the Crofton Community Centre. There was a great turnout, so thanks to everyone who attended. [Crofton Community Centre](#) volunteers provided a wonderful meal – home cooked hot turkey and desserts. Many thanks!

Our guest speaker was Travis Melnychuk from [Belairdirect](#) (previously Johnson Insurance/Medoc). Travis gave an overview of all the services provided by them to BCGREA members

### PRIZES

Thanks go out to all folks who donated door prizes for our luncheon:

Belairdirect – a home safety kit

Hearing Life – a basket of Canadian products

SpecSavers – a pair of glasses

Dinter Nursery – a gift certificate

Malcolm Crockett – his new book “No Backup”

And the Cowichan Valley Branch – 5 gift certificates and 6 poinsettias

### LIFETIME MEMBERS

Twenty-year pins were given out to 5 members who attended the Christmas luncheon. We have 49 twenty-year members in our Branch!

We have yet to figure out how all these pins will be awarded.



## FINANCIAL

We plan to have door prizes at all upcoming meetings, which will include gift certificates to a number of different businesses in the valley. Although the thought behind it is that it's a bit of an incentive to come to meetings, it's mainly to add some fun to our gatherings. We all pay dues and each separate branch receives ten dollars per member. Our budget is approximately \$2700 per year. Out of that we pay for meeting venues, coffee and refreshments, guest speakers who charge to present, door prizes, honorariums for guests who volunteer their time and expertise and contribute the remaining to an upcoming Summer BBQ and the Christmas Luncheon.

## POST RETIREMENT SEMINAR

Two members of the planning committee attended a post-retirement seminar at the Western Community branch of BCGREA. It was an excellent workshop and 26 members shared their experience with retirement. Along with the positives, there were many challenges identified. I think it is fair to say it was a cathartic experience that provided many insights into the challenges of retirement and of aging. The two presenters have volunteered to facilitate a workshop for the Cowichan Branch. Stay tuned for more details!

## EXTENDED HEALTH BENEFITS

We have not forgotten the need to review and assess benefits. It appears there is a move afoot to look at the five different collectives under the Pension Branch. There is a lack of consistency of benefits across these five groups. We are looking for some equity; however in saying that, different components bargained for different benefit priorities. We have one volunteer who is willing to help our Branch and more volunteers would be appreciated.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

There will be a field trip to the [Duncan Trout Hatchery on March 10/26](#). You've received a notice already about the event. It has been arranged by Dave Rife, a former trout hatchery employee. Please confirm with Dave your attendance at [drife@telus.net](mailto:drife@telus.net). It sounds like a good day to be there as personnel are loading and shipping hatchery fish for stocking.

We had hoped to have a presentation from Bernie Dinter, of Dinter Nursery on spring gardening, however that will have to be postponed to a later time. We've recently had contact from a former Saanich police officer who has specialized in fraud prevention, so we're hoping that she'll be able to present at our next general meeting in March/ April.

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There will be an upcoming BCGREA AGM in Tsawwassen in April. Three members from the planning committee will be attending and you will receive a report

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***We all wish you well! Please do not hesitate to communicate with us. You can do so by emailing [membership.branch2600@bcgre.ca](mailto:membership.branch2600@bcgre.ca)***