



Victoria Branch Newsletter

B.C. Government Retired Employees Association

Editor: Carol Cullimore

November 2011

CHAIR'S REPORT

It is my honour, of behalf of Branch Chair Sarjit Manhas, to provide you with the Chair's Report from the Annual General Meeting. Before I do that, however, I would like to comment that October is the time of the year when we recognize and make a presentation to Life Members. This year we had 14 individuals attaining Life Member status. Regrettably none of them was able to attend the October 11th meeting to receive the recognition they deserve. To keep them fit and healthy we ate their cake. The Victoria Delegation has just returned from its annual pilgrimage to Tsawwassen for the BCGREA AGM held at the Coast Tsawwassen Inn. It was a delight this year to see that all Branches in the Province were able to send delegates. The day, October 19th had a full agenda preceded by a two hour session the night before for Chair and Membership Directors led by the Provincial Membership Secretary Mary Foster. Every Branch, whether rural or urban, is facing membership challenges and it was good to be able to share ideas together to help overcome them. Our Branch Chair, Sarjit Manhas, officiated at her inaugural AGM with the same efficiency and authority as she does at our Branch meetings. The meeting was opened with the traditional and respectful two minutes of silence for deceased members. Guest speaker Tom Berger Q.C. spoke to us about the status of the Appeal hearing although the decision has not yet been made. A brief outline of what next steps would have to be considered was provided. There are a number of things that will have to be done dependent upon the Appellate Court decision. The second speaker was delayed so other routine matters were dealt with off the agenda and then Paul Martin, former BCGEU Staff Representative and former Trustee, Pension Board of Trustees, spoke to us regarding post retirement benefits.

He gave an excellent overview of the events leading up to the decision to make the changes to Post-Retirement Group Benefits that have been announced effective April 1st, 2012. Whilst Paul acknowledged that his presentation was a difficult one to deliver because it deals with a bad news topic the one good thing that he was able to share was that a decision had just been made to continue the Group Life Insurance subsidies. This is a change from the February 2011 Communique.

Three Resolutions were moved and discussed. The Branches are asked to take certain action and the Executive will discuss to see how we can do this. The second resolution dealt with the matter of seniors over 80 and the Medical Assessment of Driver Fitness required to retain a driver's licence. One and two were passed with some "friendly amendments". The third resolution was the 2009 "delegate formula". It was carried in 2010 and once again passed at this AGM. For another year, Branch delegations to the AGM will be reduced by one. Mary Foster gave her final report as Provincial Membership Secretary since she is stepping down after eleven years of service. She was recognized by the President and all others present for her contributions over the years. Her successor is Nancy Stewart from Nanaimo Branch.

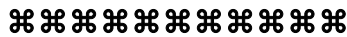
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Johnson Inc. representatives did the draws for the membership campaign and the Victoria Branch was the recipient of the first prize draw of \$500; second prize of \$250 went to Jennie Adair of Branch 100 and third prize of \$100 to Mark Cheung of Branch 800. The door prize was drawn by the President and Maureen Hedin of Branch 1500 won the 32" Toshiba flat screen TV.

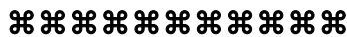
The Election of officers was held and the following were elected Table Officers – Sarjit Manhas (President); Fred Bennett (1st Vice President) and Carrie Mulcahy (2nd Vice President). Carrie has also taken over responsibility for The Pen from the President. Congratulations to all especially our own Sarjit Manhas on her re-election.

Ken Cruickshank
First Vice Chair and
A/Chair, Victoria Delegation.



BCGREA TREASURER'S REPORT

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|------------------------------|-----------------|
| September 30, 2011 | |
| Bank Balance Current account | \$ 1,109 |
| Term Deposits | \$25,232 |
| TOTAL | \$26,341 |



TELEPHONE AND EMAIL REPORT

I would like to thank the following people who phone advising members of our monthly meetings: Vera Blazenko, Carol Cullimore, John Evans, Kathleen Hadley, Noreen Hutchinson, Alexandra Innes, Beth Jasper, Jean Kucy, Maureen Lundquist, Al McKenzie, Shirley Mollberg, Kirby Rimer, Irene Standal, Erika Veerkamp, Jocelyn Wanless and J R Wright. I would also like to thank all the members who have provided me with their e-mail address. If you have been missed being advised of our meetings, please contact me at 250-384-3481 or at djasper@shaw.ca and I will add your name to our listings.

Thank you – Dale Jasper



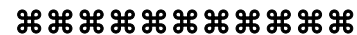
LUNCHEONS

The June luncheon was held at Kitty's Hideaway Restaurant Banquet Room with a smaller than usual number of members attending but as at previous luncheons at Kitty's the food was very good and the staff was very friendly and helpful. Thank you to all who contributed to the collection of funds for Our Place. The organization was very appreciative of our donation.

The Christmas luncheon will be held at Kitty's on December 13, 2011. The doors will be open at 11:30, lunch is buffet style and there will be a cash bar if you wish to have a glass of wine or other liquid refreshment with your lunch. Tea and coffee are included with lunch. Kitty's is located in the Vacation Inn, 3020 Douglas Street. Tickets are \$22 per person and can be purchased at the General Meeting in November. A cheque made payable to BCGREA for the number of tickets required could also be mailed to: Carol Cullimore, 1906 San Pedro Avenue, Victoria, BC, V8N 2G8.

Please remember to enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope if you send a cheque. December 6 is the deadline for buying tickets for the luncheon.

We will once again take up a collection for "Our Place". Cash works the best for Our Place as they have more buying power with cash.



UPCOMING MEETINGS with GUEST SPEAKERS and EVENTS

Location and time of regular meetings is 2 p.m. at the BCGEU Hall, 2994 Douglas Street. We normally have a short (less than half hour) meeting followed by a guest speaker. At the end there is always time to talk to the speakers during coffee and tea and really nice "goodies". We would like to thank our guest speakers Shirley Connor from the CRD Regional Parks, Brenda Dixon, Pacific Blue Cross and Rosalind Scott of the Vancouver Island Better Business Bureau. Their talks were very interesting and informative.

Tuesday, November 8, 2011 – Note Change of Speaker. Our guest speaker will be Paul Martin who will bring us up to date on “post retirement benefits – April 2012” Paul is a former BCGEU Staff Representative and Trustee on the Pension Corporation Board of Trustees. Website: www.pensionsbc.ca .

Tuesday, December 13, 2011 – Christmas Luncheon – see details elsewhere in this newsletter.

Tuesday, January 10, 2012 – This year is the 100th Anniversary of the B.C. Forest Service. Our guest speaker will be Mike Apey, President of the B.C. Forest Service Centenary Society (and a former Deputy Minister). Website: www.BCFS100.ca .

Tuesday, February 14, 2012 – Our guest speaker is Andy Poon from the B.C. Securities Commission who will speak on their services including investor education and investor scams. Website: www.investright.org .

Tuesday, March 13, 2012 – Our yearly visit from the folks at CRA Income Tax Time!

Tuesday, April 10, 2012 – Guest speaker TBA.

Tuesday, May 8, 2012 – Annual General Meeting and election of officers. Guest speaker TBA.

Tuesday, June 12, 2012 – Luncheon details TBA.

If you know of a nice speaker on just about any topic that you think other members like yourself would like to hear, please contact the Program Committee, Vic Marshall at 250-384-7812 or vicmarshall@shaw.ca .

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GOODWILL COMMITTEE

If you know of any member who is hospitalized, sick, ill or injured, please let Archie know at 250-477-3191 or mahwoo@shaw.ca .

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MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Membership is gradually diminishing so, as you hear about colleagues retiring, don't forget to encourage them to join the BCGREA. There is strength in numbers. Applications continue to come in but not in sufficient numbers to ensure growth. As of September 27, 2011 membership stands at 2032 down from 2070 one year ago. One of the reasons that membership is declining is because members are passing away. We honour our fallen members at each of the General Meetings and want to take a moment here, once again, to recognize the memory of those BCGREA members that have passed away.

Questions and Answers:

- 1. One of the most common things I am asked for is a “Membership Number” to apply for Johnson Inc/Medoc Travel Insurance.** Whilst their application form has a space for it, the BCGREA does not issue membership numbers. They know this so just leave that space blank on the application form.
- 2. How do I report a change of address?** If your address, telephone number and/or email contact address has changed please ensure that you forward the changes to my attention at 250-744-4275 or kccruickshank@gmail.com . It is also very important for you to notify the Pension Corporation of any changes.
- 3. Can I arrange to have my dues paid other than by writing a cheque each year?** You may want to consider having your dues deducted annually from your February pension cheque. Please contact me at 250-744-4275 or kccruickshank@gmail.com to arrange to make the conversion starting in the year 2012. Changes must be made before December 31, 2011. If you choose not to go with the pension deduction option please remember to keep your dues current by mailing in a cheque or paying at a meeting. Thank you for your consideration.
Ken Cruickshank
Membership Chair