

BCRTA South Island Zone Meeting Report

Representatives from the Lower Vancouver Island (Victoria/Sooke), Cowichan, Gulf Islands, and Nanaimo-Ladysmith zones attended the South Island Zone meeting.

The Director's report summarized work in the BCRTA committee areas. Work being done by the committees is summarized below.

Advocacy: The committee is providing input on a survey of seniors in residential care for the Provincial Senior's advocate. The committee is working on promoting a national pharmacare plan and a national dental plan.

In addition, the committee lobbied to influence Senators to have private companies be required to do a first payout to pensions rather than other companies when a large private corporation goes bankrupt. This is now legislated.

Communication:

The committee encourages people to contribute to Postscript magazine. Currently it is working on expanding the scope of the magazine to cover more current issues of concern to seniors. Postscript has a reputation as a unique and impressive magazine for retired teachers across Canada. There is a great deal of local content of excellent quality.

"Connections", the link to all current and recent news from each of the BCRTA committees can be accessed by clicking on the "news" link at the top of the BCRTA Website Home page. Connections has information on issues of relevance to members including: recreation, workshops, Medical concerns, e.g. Doctor shortage, accessibility for health care for seniors, technology, risks to seniors as navigating new technology becomes more sophisticated and many are targeted as "clickbait". A workshop of interest to seniors concerned with How to be Secure On Line can be found on connections by searching for glusociety.org.

The summer issue of Postscript has more information on gluu and on "AI" of importance to seniors. The goal of the Canadian non-profit society called Gluu is to help older adults use technology to stay happy, healthy and connected. As well its goal is to assist seniors in staying secure and informed about the Internet and technology as it evolves. Workshops are on line and are free of charge.

Members can connect to "Connections" as new workshops arise by providing the BCRTA office with your email. This let's you know about workshops you can attend soon!

Excellence in Education: The committee is requesting input in provincial bargaining especially around sick leave costs in support of the BCTF push to have sick leave be covered by the province rather than depleting a School district's budget. There is an inequitable distribution of age and wellness from one district to another.

Finance: There is no risk taking with BCRTA funds. All BCRTA funds are in term deposits and are very secure.

Meetings with our insurance provider to renew our policy are underway. The Committee is seeking to use funds that would have been used for new glasses to be used for assisting with cataract surgery lens purchase expenses as that \$300 would no longer be used for glasses. Coverage for Shiatzu therapy is also under discussion.

The Website "Pharmacy Compass" will tell you the cost of a drug at all your local pharmacies if you type in the DIN number. There is a wide range in costs but not a wide range in how reimbursement by the insurance provider is determined.

Express Scripts is a service, which will deliver prescriptions right to your house without the mark up of many other pharmacies and with convenience of delivery to your home.

Heritage: The committee is currently working on cataloguing and digitizing BCRTA historical documents. The LVIRT and Cowichan locals both reported that they have huge amounts of historical documents and artifacts, which are not being supervised or housed safely. However, there is a shortage of individuals willing to take on the task of helping to archive these histories and supervise the collections.

Membership: All branches are working on ways to involve and include new members. There is a need to outline the many benefits of belonging to the BCRTA.