



Prime Time

Association of British Columbia
College Pension Plan Retirees'
Newsletter



2015
January
Edition

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Here is our first *Prime Time* under the banner of our new name. A lot has happened since I wrote my report last summer, and, as you will see, this issue of *Prime Time* is devoted primarily to keeping you up to date with our evolution as a group. In September 2014, our secretary Norah Andrew and I attended the RTA's AGM, where delegates amended the RTA bylaws to write Branch 95 and all College Pension Plan retirees out of the RTA constitution and transferring those members to the independent organization, the Association of British Columbia College Pension Plan Retirees.

Since then, the executive has been very busy ensuring that the ABC CPPR will run smoothly. Finalizing the arrangements for transfer of membership lists and of this year's dues took somewhat longer than we had hoped, but that has now been done. Norah and I met with Anita Bleik of the Post Secondary Employers' Association and have been assured of their support. Of real importance, I think, to a lot of us is the fact that we have now have access to Medoc and other Johnson products through our own organization. We will pay the same premiums as members of the RTA pay. More details are on page 2.

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Norah, Dennis Anderson, Al Valleau and I had a long teleconference with representatives from the Pension Corporation about how the change over would occur and about how they could help us. The Pension Corporation had several requirements of us including having a web site, phone number, and email all functioning prior to the distribution of *After Work*. We were not sure we'd get it done, but we did, and those of you who have already received your *After Work* will have noticed our new ad in that publication. More details about our website and how to stay in touch with the CPPR can be found at the bottom of this page and on page 5.



Mary at
RTA AGM

As I said, the last few months have been and continue to be extremely busy with all the legal and housekeeping tasks required in starting something new, and I want to thank all members of the executive for their input and feedback as we've been getting the organization going. I also want to thank Angela Kenyon, Administrative Co-ordinator at FPSE, who helped with getting our membership form print-ready.

The next item on my Agenda on our behalf is to attend with Maureen Shaw a forum "System Change for seniors care" with BC's Ombudsperson and new Seniors Advocate. The forum is sponsored by the

Find Us at Our New Website www.bccollegepensionplanretirees.ca

Contact us at our Toll Free Number 1-844-655-6565

Email us at info@bccollegepensionplanretirees.ca

Write to us at Association of British Columbia College Pension Plan Retirees
c/o FPSE, 400-550 West Sixth Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V5Z 1A1

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives in Burnaby in February and should be very interesting.

You'll notice that *Prime Time*'s usual section **Notes From:** is missing from this issue. Unfortunately, because of the holiday season and other administrative constraints on your executive with the start up of the organization, we could not include this section in this issue. Next issue, we hope to see the section back again.
Mary and Al, editors

I'll sign off with a couple of important notes about the delivery of *Prime Time*. If you are reading an emailed copy of this newsletter, you will shortly receive in the mail a new membership card and forms asking you to confirm your membership in the Association of British Columbia College Pension Plan Retirees. **This confirmation is required by the Pension Corporation** to allow them to continue deducting our membership fees from our September pension cheques.

If you are reading a printed copy of *Prime Time* that accompanied your new card, it means we do not have your email. Please ensure that you let us have your email address. Sending *Prime Time* via email saves us a considerable amount of postage and allows you to see *Prime Time* in colour. You will also be able to access *Prime Time* via our website. Check it out.

Mary L. Griffin

GROUP TRAVEL (MEDOC), HOME AND PET INSURANCE WITH JOHNSON

Al Valteau

We are happy to report that we have arranged access for our members to the Medoc travel insurance plan through Johnson as well as group home and pet insurance plans. The plans have the same discounts as the plans those of you who were members of BCRTA enjoyed. Johnson has also told us that if you buy their Medoc plan, you will be eligible for a 5% reduction on house insurance with them.

If you do sign up for the Medoc travel insurance, you should be aware of the fact that it includes a clause that overrides the validity of the travel insurance if you have any recorded changes in your medical health within 90 days of your planned departure. Members of your executive were concerned about this clause and that has led to us to talks with Johnson about an extended health plan that would eliminate the

For more than 130 years, Johnson Inc. has been providing access to high quality home insurance and group benefits for Canadians. Today Johnson is one of the country's leading and fastest growing providers of insurance products and benefits. ABCCPPR members have access to as well as discounts on home, travel insurance and pet insurance. For more information visit www.johnson.ca/abccppr

When you request a quote on your home or MEDOC® travel insurance through Johnson you'll be automatically entered into a draw to win a BMW 3 Series, a trip for two to the Bahamas and \$5,000 cash. Visit www.johnson.ca/MORE for details.



problem of the 90 clause in the Medoc travel insurance plan. As well, we are looking into the possibility of dental plans. We hope to be able to provide you with insurance plans that will have comparable or better value than the Blue Cross college retirees and teachers' retirees plans. Once we have the details of these offerings, we will post them on our association web site.

SPECIAL NOTE: If you already have insurance with Johnson, whether it be the Medoc travel insurance, the house insurance or the pet insurance, be certain to renew your insurance with Johnson under your new association's name, ABC CPPR, to ensure continued coverage. You can access our association's page at Johnson from January 20th on through this link: www.johnson.ca/abccppr

OUR HISTORY: How We Became the CPPR.

2000	College Pension Plan partners set up a task group to explore the possibility of establishing a retirees' association similar to those associated with the other (and more mature) public sector pension plans in BC. They determine the College Pension Plan did not have the numbers at that juncture to form its own viable association.
2001	The BCRTA is approached about the possibility of incorporating College Pension Plan members into its association. The BCRTA changes its bylaws to allow for the establishing of RTA Branch 95 for members of the College Pension Plan to join it as Affiliate Members. Both the RTA Provincial Leadership and the Executive of Branch 95 envision this temporary arrangement will work until College Plan Members have sufficient numbers to form an independent organization.
2012	Branch 95 members begin to feel their numbers are sufficient to initiate discussion with the RTA about moving towards independence.
2013-14	Amicable discussions begin with RTA, particularly with their membership committee who make recommendations to the RTA Board, on the growth and evolution of Branch 95 of the RTA- Post Secondary Educators. Members of Branch 95 feel that since they belong to a different pension plan and have a different optional benefit package through Blue Cross, the RTA is not able to represent their interests fully.
April 2014	Branch 95 President and Treasurer meet with VP RTA and discuss possible scenarios for change. Branch 95 invites all post-secondary members to attend their AGM to discuss the future.
May 2014	Members in attendance at Branch 95's AGM vote unanimously to form their own association, and the executive is directed to begin the process of registration under the society act. The Secretary begins the process of registering the new organization.
June 2014	Branch 95 Secretary and Treasurer meet with the RTA Membership Committee and VP to report on decisions taken at the branch AGM. VP RTA shares a draft Bylaw amendment to the RTA constitution that will write post-secondary members out of the RTA. It is agreed that if the bylaw change is accepted by the RTA AGM in September, then the RTA will forward to the new organization the dues collected from September pension cheques prior to the AGM and a current list of all post-secondary members.
July 2014	Branch 95 sends its newsletter <i>Prime Time</i> to all post-secondary members of the RTA updating them on the negotiations and plans for independence.
August 2014	The Association of British Columbia College Pension Plan Retirees receives registration under the Society Act.
September 2014	The RTA AGM approves the bylaw changes removing Post Secondary members from membership in the RTA.
October to December 2014	Liaison between RTA and CPPR over Membership Lists Dues Collected for 2014-2015 are given to the CPPR Liaison with the Pension Corporation Arranging for Administrative Support where necessary The CPPR's phone number becomes active.
Winter/ Spring 2015	The CPPR's Website becomes fully functional. The CPPR affiliates with the Council Of Senior Citizens Organizations, National Pensioners Federation, and 2015the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Current Members are sent their new Membership Cards and are asked to reconfirm their consent to have their dues deducted from their pension cheques. The New Organization is fully functioning.



The Bike

Can you remember your first new bicycle? Mine was a blue/grey Raleigh 3 speed that was purchased with the hard earned cash saved from my first job as a carrier for the *Star Weekly*.

Bikes have slowly changed over the years, but there will probably be more changes over the next decade than there have been in the last century – with electric and other specialty machines on the horizon.

Over the years I have travelled quite a bit by bicycle; I commuted to work a couple of days each week before I retired, took a number of cycling holidays in Europe (road trips in Holland and England, and a multi-day ride along the Danube in Austria), peddled various day outings in Canada and have done trips on the rails to trails networks of the Kettle Valley in BC, the Petite du Nord in Quebec, the rail trail in PEI, and of course the Galloping Goose here in Victoria. Most recently, I have been using the "hop-on hop-off" short term rentals in major cities that we have visited on our travels. I have used the systems in Copenhagen, Brisbane, and Milan and recently noted that they were available in Washington, DC, Lecco and Como in Northern Italy, Lugano in Switzerland, and even in Beijing, China – although we didn't ever see anyone using them in China!



For most systems, you can sign up on-line, pay with your credit card, and receive the necessary codes to release a bike. In Milan and Brisbane you could sign up for a day or a week. The week in Milan cost €6, and there was an additional fee only if I used the bike for more than 30 minutes. In Brisbane it was 20 minutes; however, there was no required wait period between rentals (10 minutes in Milan). Coming from a family of 4 competitive boys, of course, I had to make a game out of the Brisbane rental. While my wife was visiting a Botanical Garden, could I do the entire 25KM Bridges Route (up one side and down the other of the beautiful Brisbane River) that bisects the city and is bookended by a spectacular bridge at either end, without incurring an extra charge - other than the A\$2 which was the cost for the day of using the bike?

In all cases, the bikes came equipped with twist shift 3 speeds, head and tail lights, a basket, disc brakes, and easily adjusted comfortable seats. The "bikeMI" units even had shaft drives (not chains); in Lugano, folks have the choice of a mountain or coaster bike; and in Lecco a regular bike or an E-bike!

Milan bills itself as biking friendly; however, with its tram rails and cobble stone roads, I would say that this is a stretch. Copenhagen and the Netherlands have dedicated bicycle paths/roads. In Washington you share the roads with cars but in marked bicycle lanes. In Italy vehicle drivers tolerate motorcyclists driving between lanes to the front of the line at stop lights, and pedestrians tolerate folks on bikes using the sidewalks - in ways that we would be ticketed for here in Canada. When in Rome you do as the Romans do - as funny as it feels, and especially without a helmet!!! In Brisbane where helmets are the law, the bikes are equipped with helmets. Would anyone in their right mind want to try to ride a bike in Beijing traffic???

In Milan there are 3000 bicycles and nearly 200 tethering locations all within a 5 mile circumference of the Duomo (Cathedral Square) and hub of the city. Ninety percent of the things that visitors want to see in Milan are located within this circle. It is an interesting way to go that keeps you above ground (vs the subway); allows you to plan the route (vs using a tram that is on fixed rails) and attempting to figure out how a transit system is imposed upon a street network.

And, oh yes, I did complete the Brisbane circuit without an additional charge on my MasterCard! It involved changing bicycles about 10 times – and was actually quite a bit of fun, planning my next spot to change, timing my photo ops, and engaging myself in a little bit of a game. Having just returned from an exploratory vacation in the Cariboo I can imagine that it might have felt a little bit like what the gold miners of the 1870's must have experienced as they used the Road House system and changed horses every 10 to 15 miles in order to get from Yale to Barkerville.

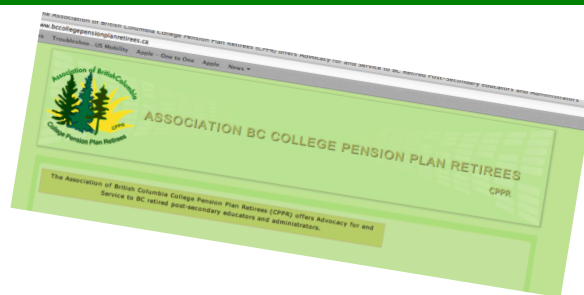
Dennis Anderson

Keeping Up to Date: Where to Find Us New Website

We now have a website

www.bccollegepensionplanretirees.ca where you will find information about our pensions, about the CPPR, membership forms, back issues of *Prime Time*, and useful links to other information. We hope our website will enable members to feel a little more connected to each other than has been possible with only the two issues of *Prime Time*; the website will enable us to post information we think may interest you in a timely manner, so be sure to check regularly for updates on issues of interest to us as retired post-secondary educators and of import to all seniors.

If you think something should be posted on our website, please send it to norah_andrew@telus.net or to marylgriffin@telus.net.



Toll Free Association Phone Number and email access

As well as opening an association web site, we have arranged for a toll free number for our association. The toll free number, which you should be able to access anywhere in Canada, is **1 844 655 6565**. There have been a few problems with access to the new number and Al, who set up the number, is just now able to reach it using his Telus land line. If you try the number and are unable to access it, please send us an email as we want to make sure communication with our membership is fool proofed. The association email address is info@bccollegepensionplanretirees.ca

We still need contributors from all over the province. Just what is happening in your part of the Province that you know should be brought to our attention. Please consider writing for *Prime Time*. Have you taken a course that you think others would enjoy? Read a book you think will change our lives? Let your fellow members know.

PRIME TIME is published twice a year. If you would like to contribute an article or images, please contact Mary L. Griffin marylgriffin@telus.net or Al Valteau al.valleau@shaw.ca.

USEFUL LINKS

OAS and CPP <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/home.shtml>

BC Pension <http://www.pensionsbc.ca>

BC Forum (Retired Unionists) www.bc.forum.ca

BC Ombudsman <http://www.ombudsman.bc.ca/seniors>

Council of Senior Citizens of BC <http://www.coscobic.ca>

National Pensioners Federation <http://www.nationalpensionersfederation.ca>

Federation of Post Secondary Educators <http://www.fpse.ca>

Post Secondary Employers' Association <http://www.psea.bc.ca>

BCGEU <http://www.bcgau.ca>

Seniors' Advocate <http://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca>

Nidus Personal Planning Resource Centre and Registry <http://www.nidus.ca>

Pacific Blue Cross <http://www.pac.bluecross.ca/Corp/client/pensionbc/cpp.aspx>

Book the date of our
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 20 TH MAY

*Exact Time and Location will be Announced on our Website at
www.BCCollegePensionPlanRetirees.ca*

Bring a retired colleague with you. Memberships will be available at the door and new members will be entitled to vote.

Formal notice will be posted on our website and emailed to members in accordance with the Association's Constitution and Bylaws.



Please, don't Forget to return your

Confirmation of Membership form to us in the Stamped Addressed Envelope sent to you either with your hard copy of *Prime Time* or with your new membership card.



We need your emails so you may receive *Prime Time* via email and so keep our costs and fees down.