

# *Prime Time*

## Summer 2025



Paul, The Minister of Health  
c. 1993



Paul, The Trustee  
Photo: Jesse Holland

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Protecting our College Pension Plan and other related pension benefits for the benefit of  
current and future retirees.

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## From the Editor

I'm taking this space to add my own thanks to Paul for all his enthusiastic support of CPPR from its early days as a branch of the RTA, through the year of achieving our status as an independent group, and his ongoing support through his nine years as a trustee of our pension plan. Without his advocacy on our behalf we would not enjoy the relationships we now have with the Board of Trustees and with the Pension Corporation.

CPPR is not alone in owing Paul a debt of gratitude for all his work over a lifetime of service to the people of BC. Thank you, Paul. CPPR will miss you. May that "highway" you mention in your article "rise up to meet you" (Traditional Irish Blessing) and your journey be long and fruitful.

*Mary L. Griffin, Past-President  
Editor*

Members of the CPPR are grateful to live, work, and be in relation with First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples from across many traditional and unceded territories, covering all regions of British Columbia.

We are honoured to live on this land and are committed to reconciliation, decolonization, and building relationships in our communities.

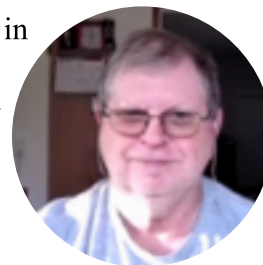
## President's Greeting

Since my last column in December, winter has turned into spring and spring into summer. We finished off last year and started the year of with several strategic planning sessions under the leadership of Adrienne Chan. By January's Board meeting, we'd come up with a plan, breaking down issues CPPR needs to deal with in three areas: internal, external and administration matters. Our priority is to increase the number of members we have, and thus the influence we have over decisions about retiree issues. There are several ways to do so: face to face recruitment, offering no cost memberships to actives, working with our former institutions or faculty (and staff) associations, working with and improving relations with existing retiree associations, some of whom are affiliates of CPPR. The details were worked on at April's face-to-face meeting and June's Zoom Board meeting.

We have created a generic version of the PowerPoint Danny gave to the BCGEU Component 7 bargaining team in March and presented to our Board in April – it's a great history of the College Pension Plan and how bargaining has improved the plan. Board members will be able to use this with their old unions and institutions in the fall as we take it on the road.

The Constitution & Bylaws Committee is working on ways to get actives to join CPPR at no cost. Once they see what we do to promote their future pension and benefits, they may become fee-paying members on retirement.

We've brought two new affiliates on board: Camosun College Retiree Association joined



in January and UFVRA joined in April when their new association was constituted. We've also reconnected with Langara and Simon Fraser RAs, and are benefiting from Alan Cooper, Nancy Sly and Carl Schwarz's attendance at our Board meetings. We also have representation on CURAC, the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada: Gordon Lee has stepped up to be our liaison and has joined their finance committee. Thanks Gordon! I attended their AGM onZoom in late May.

We've been working with the other public sector retiree associations, branding ourselves the Public Sector Retiree Group, and we interviewed 6 recent retirees about *What PenCorp doesn't tell you about retirement*. That 1-hour video is on our website. Thanks to Kate Ross and Ken Shaw for participating in what I hope is the first of many videos to recruit and provide value for retirees on topics that will interest them. I met with the other three retiree associations at the April BC Public Sector Pension Conference in Victoria and attended the BCGREA AGM; John Wilson attended the MPRA AGM in Abbotsford for us.

We've lobbied the union partners about the new retiree rep, though we don't know yet who will be replacing Paul Ramsey. We've been invited to the reception in Victoria as both Paul and Weldon Cowan are stepping down from many years on the Board of Trustees. Congratulations to both and well wishes for life beyond pension board meetings!

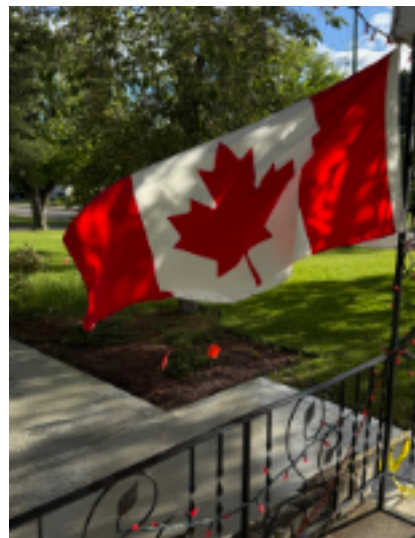
FPSE, one of the union partners in our plan would like us to present to their fall multi-committee virtual conference and work with them in promoting public education, something we've been doing our entire careers!

On the benefits front, after consultation with us late last year, enhanced benefits will kick in next January 1: annual deductibles will fall to \$200, prescription drug coverage will change to 80% reimbursement up to an annual max of \$20,000, vision and hearing coverage will improve, and paraprofessional services will change from \$250 per practitioner to \$750 for all practitioners. More details are on the CPP's are in *Pension Life*, on our website and tabulated on page 4.

Finally, we've reconnected with COSCO BC after presentations by Terri Van Steinburg and Linda Forsythe, who will now come to our Board meetings and liaise with COSCO. It's COSCO's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and they're hosting a conference in Richmond on October 3-5, titled *Human Rights and Ageing: Advocating for an Equitable Future*. We've donated \$1000 to their fall conference and will send two delegates. Email me if you'd like to go.

Best wishes to Mary Griffin and Danny Bradford as they meet health challenges with equanimity and pluck! Enjoy summer!

*George Davison*



Canada Strong in Prince George  
Photo: George Davison

## UPDATES FROM THE TRUSTEES ABOUT CHANGES TO THE GREENSHIELD PLAN.

For more information: see Board Communique dated 29 May available at <https://college.pensionsbc.ca/board-communique-may-29-2025>

“ After a full review of the plan’s extended health coverage for retired members, the College Pension Board of Trustees is taking action to ensure your health coverage in retirement remains valuable and sustainable. Making retirement health coverage available to members is a board priority, but the benefits are not guaranteed (*Board Communique 29 May 2025*). ”

Effective January 1, 2026	Current
<b>Prescription Drug Coverage</b> <b>Eligible Prescriptions:</b>  80% reimbursement Annual Maximum \$20,000.00 per claimant *see note below \$200 Deductible	80% reimbursement of first \$1,000 100% thereafter  \$250 Deductible
<b>Vision Care</b> \$300 every two years for eye exams and glasses/contact lenses (every year for children)	\$150 every two years for glasses/contact lenses only, eye exams not included
<b>Hearing Aids</b> \$2,000.00 total every four years (every two years for a dependent child)	\$700 per ear every four years
<b>Paramedical Services</b> \$750 for all practitioners combined	\$250.00 per practitioner per year
* "To support members who may reach their \$20,000 annual maximum due to high-cost specialty drugs, GreenShield will proactively and confidentially contact members and offer guidance in securing alternative funding sources, such as BC PharmaCare, the BCCancer Agency or the drug manufacturers. By coordinating benefits with these sources, members can continue receiving their high-cost medications while also slowing the accumulation of claims toward their \$150,000 overall lifetime health maximum under the plan" ( <i>Board Communique 29 May 2025</i> ).	

“ As part of our extended health care plan changes, we also reviewed GreenShield's reasonable and customary limits. These limits help ensure that health service charges are fair and in line with market rates. GreenShield checks these limits every year to keep up with inflation and market changes. The limits protect our plan from providers charging too much for services. Some of these limits haven't been updated in a while, so we're adjusting them to match GreenShield's standards. This means **you might see slight changes in how much you are reimbursed for certain items or services** (*Board Communique 29 May 2025*). ”

*Thanks to Bita Jenab and Melissa Moberg of the Pension Board of Trustees Board Secretariat for assistance preparing this summary. Ed.*



## It's Retirement Time!!

All photos in this article and on cover page supplied by Paul

Well, I knew it was coming, but like many inevitable things, it has still been a shock. On August 31, my time as a trustee of our College Pension Plan will end. I've been the retiree trustee for nine years, and I've been a Director of our Association of College Pension Plan Retirees for longer than that.

You've all been there. Retirement is arriving. You look back at the years of contribution to the life of your institution—with satisfaction, I hope. You look forward to new activities, a new configuration of time and effort. At least this isn't my first retirement rodeo: I stepped down as President of FPSE (CIEA as it was then) way back in 1989. I said goodbye to ten years as an MLA and cabinet minister in 2001. And I retired from decades of post-secondary teaching at the College of New Caledonia and the University of Northern B.C. in 2005.

This one is a bit different. Getting involved in pension issues was itself a retirement activity!! And it was a lot of activity. Between my work on FPSE's Pension Advisory Committee, acting as a PAC liaison to our retiree association, my nine years as a trustee, and over a decade as a director for the CCPR, I figure it added up to about a quarter-time position. My wife was very aware of the time I spent on "pension issues"; it has been an important part of my life in retirement from politics and education.

Sometimes I wonder why I didn't decide to do more traveling, read more books that had stacked up by my bedside, train for running or biking events—when my body was still

capable of such activities—or just take my dog for longer walks, pick oysters off the beach, and watch the waves.

Becoming a pension trustee was not a goal I had when I retired from UNBC. Like most pensioners, I was just pleased to see the payments arriving monthly in my bank account; and I was pretty confident that our plan was being well managed. It was the loss of inflation protection and subsidized extended health benefits—a local result of the global financial crisis of the late "oughts"—that got my attention.

And then a good friend said that I should use my experiences in the union movement and in government to benefit our pension plan. So that led to seeking appointment as a retiree member of PAC, and then to liaison with our retiree association, and then to election to the CCPR executive, and then FPSE appointment as a trustee.

Walking into my first meeting of the board of trustees, I was very curious. I had been the Minister of Finance when B.C.'s joint-trusteeship model of pension governance was implemented in 2000/01. How well had it worked out?

The answer was, and is, pretty damned well! One of the first things I noticed was that the trustees—half union appointees, half government/management appointees—were not acting like opposing sides in a bargaining session. They were focused on



Delivering the Budget, 2000

### It's Retirement Time!! continued

their fiduciary duty to us, the pension plan members. If I closed my eyes and just listened to the discussion, I wouldn't be able to tell if a speaker was a union or management appointee. That is the way it is supposed to work!!

And the agencies I had helped set up to manage our pensions were working well too. The old Superannuation Commission, which too often demonstrated that "government efficiency" could be an oxymoron, was gone, and the Pension Corporation of B.C. had developed into an efficient and cost-effective administrator of the province's public sector pensions.

And the B.C. Investment Management Corporation, which grew out of a minor branch of the Ministry of Finance that invested in little more than government bonds and Canadian equities, had become one of the "Maple 8"—Canada's major investment managers of public funds.

Our pension money is now invested in widely diversified assets—everything from bonds, to international equities, to real estate, to private equity, to infrastructure, etc.

When I became a trustee our plan's assets were around \$5 billion; they are now over \$8 billion. Those returns on investments are crucial. Only about 25% of the pensions we receive are a return of the contributions we and our employers made over the years; the other 75% comes from investment returns.

During my time as a trustee the financial performance of our plan has been solid.

Actuarial valuations (done very three years) have reported that assets equal or exceed liabilities. Indeed, they have reported surpluses, which have been used, in part, to fund full inflation protection.

Now, I must confess that I will not miss dealing with the minutiae of investment strategies and plan rules when I step down from the board. The reality is that money and how to make more of it has never been a major interest for me. I understand it, but I would far rather be figuring out what dry fly to use on a trout stream.



Flies Courtesy Rodger Cove  
Photo: mlg

What I will miss in retirement is working with my fellow trustees and pension secretariat staff, with PAC representatives and other plan members, and with my fellow retirees at CPPR. I have been appreciated and thanked for my efforts as a trustee, but I have never believed that any one person is indispensable. My role will be filled, and governance of our pensions will, I believe, be in good hands. I am 81. On life's journey there is far more highway behind me than in front of me; I hope to find enjoyable activities and meet interesting people on the remainder of the trip.

*Paul Ramsey  
Retiree Trustee  
College Pension Plan*



Minister of Education with his wife, Hazel, at a Grizzlies Game, 1996

## George Looks Back: The Eighties until now



FACNC Retreat August 30 1992 Bednesti Lake  
Photo (a little blurred with age and editing) taken  
for George Davison

I've known Paul since I arrived in Prince George to teach at the College of New Caledonia in 1990. He taught English at the college but was already the NDP candidate for Prince George North in an election that had not yet been called. I soon found out that he had ample qualifications to be a Member of the Legislative Assembly. Though he grew up in Milwaukee and earned a Master's degree in English at a branch of the University of Illinois, he started teaching at the University of Wisconsin, Superior campus, and, with Hazel, took a chance and applied to do a Ph.D. at UBC. British Columbia and Point Grey were a lot different from the American mid-west in the midst of the Vietnam War. He couldn't have told you what a SoCred or the NDP was in 1971, but he soon got involved on campus and was attracted by Dave Barrett's style of social democracy. In particular, the push to expand post-secondary education through community colleges.

He applied for a job at CNC and was hired in 1974. The Faculty Association

was just getting certified as a union, and he got involved, locally and provincially: he stood in for the College Faculties Federation treasurer at its 1976 AGM, was local President in 1977-78, and part of the push to corral the many unconnected faculty associations at BC's colleges into a unified group. That happened with the creation of CIEA in 1980. By then, Paul had taken a brief turn in admin under a new President who wanted more upgrading done in PG and at its regional campuses: one of his proudest accomplishments was the work he did with indigenous communities to bring post-secondary education to them.

He took a year off to be a house-dad, and when he came back threw himself into the mix again, weathering two support staff strikes in '84 and '86, bargaining, and being elected as local president of the faculty association, and then Treasurer of CIEA for a year, and President of CIEA from 1987-9. These were the dying years of the SoCreds, and strikes in the 80s led to the creation of a provincial strike defence fund. The late 80s also saw more attention paid to post-secondary, with the government setting up university colleges and, when CNC turned down the idea, promising a stand-alone university for the north. Paul was involved as CIEA was asked to help develop the NDP platform for PSE for the election everyone knew was coming but didn't happen until late 1991. He also got part-timers into the College Pension Plan by threatening the then superannuation commissioner with a lawsuit!

*George Looks Back Cont.*



Being Sworn in as an MLA by George MacMinn, Clerk of the Legislature, 1991  
Photo supplied by Paul

In government, Paul was named Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Forests, who at the time was Dan Miller: he sent Paul to do community consultations on tenure and Paul travelled to small towns where everyone turned out, because forestry was their livelihood. Then Mike Harcourt appointed him Minister of Health, the largest and most complex ministry in government. Three issues stood out for Paul when I interviewed him: creating the College of Midwifery, banning extra-billing by physicians, and the *Access to Abortion Services Act*, sometimes called the bubble zone law.

Next, Glen Clark appointed him Minister of Education, from K to Ph.Ds. His chief accomplishment there was getting tuition free ABE and then a tuition freeze for the last several years of his government. Instead of institutions jacking up tuition and fees at whim, a student entering university or college in 1996 paid the same tuition in 2000. Another accomplishment, after the Korbin *Commission of Inquiry into the Public Service and Public Sector*\* recommended sectoral bargaining in health and education, was negotiating class size and composition language in 1998 and then imposing that contract on all the school

boards. He also oversaw the creation of system agencies in PSE: the Industry Training Authority, the Contract Marketing Society, the Human Resources database, the Centre for Curriculum and Transfer, most of which were gutted after the Liberals won the 2001 election. CIEA responded by increasing coordination in bargaining, leading to a Framework Agreement in 1996, a Common Table in 1998 and again in 2001 with most CIEA locals and 7 BCGEU locals bargaining for sectoral salary and benefits.

Paul had some tough years while in government: Glen Clark's budget in 1996 was attacked for fudging the books before the election, thus misleading voters on the state of BC's finances. Paul suffered through three recall campaigns under the legislation Harcourt had brought in to deal with the Vander Zalm scandals. However, a positive outcome from all of that was the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*, which still governs BC finances today. He also delivered two balanced budgets in 1999 and 2000, and would have delivered a balanced budget in 2001 had it not been for the election that he had already decided he would not be running in. Ten years of public service was enough. And then, of course, Gordon Campbell's first act was to cut income taxes by 25%, throwing the province into



*Two Balanced Budgets*  
Digital Images © mlg



*George Looks Back Cont.*

deficit and justifying cuts to programs, slashing the public service and ripping up contracts with health, K-12 and post-secondary that took years of activism and court challenges to overturn.

Another accomplishment has benefitted all of us, and that was the introduction of jointly trusted pension plans. Before 2000, the public sector pension plans were run by the Superannuation Commission: neither employers nor workers had any say in how much was contributed, what pensions were granted, how monies were delivered, or where funds were invested. And when there was a surplus, the government could take all or part of it and use those funds for anything it wanted. Paul's predecessor, Joy McPhail, oversaw the implementation legislation for joint-trusteeship, but Paul saw it through. Boards of trustees were set up for each of the plans, with half coming from the govt/ employer side and half from the workers' side. They now made decisions, and both unions and management were responsible



Thank You Bouquet  
Photo: mlg

for running the plan. The BC Investment Corporation was also set up to administer the funds, now amounting to \$295 billion, \$8.5 billion in the College Pension Plan alone. There are

some 750,000 active and retired members in these plans.

After Paul got back to Prince George, he taught half time at the college and at the university – Political Science courses on

health policy and he wrote a weekly column for the *Prince George Citizen* that was picked up around the province. He retired to the Saanich peninsula in 2005, enjoying grandparenting and a bucolic life with Hazel on their hobby farm. But he was pulled back into things as a retiree rep on FPSE's Pension Advisory Committee in 2008, after subsidized benefits were cut, and in 2014 was jointly appointed by FPSE and the BCGEU as the retiree trustee. He's done that for 9 years, and the work he's done with the Board and the retiree association has advanced the interests of all retirees in BC.

Fifty years' service in the interests of faculty, then British Columbians, and now retirees is an incredible career! We at CPPR can't thank him enough for all he has done. May good health, family and friends comfort him in what really is finally, a well-deserved retirement.

\*(<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/organizational-structure/crown-corporations/central-agencies/public-sector-employers-council-secretariat/commission-inquiry-into-public-service-sector.pdf>)

*George Davison*



The 2017 Budget Meeting  
Photo: Taken at George's Request

## News from Other Groups

### From COSCO BC: Time to Celebrate the Contributions of Older Adults

We've all heard someone say: "Now that I am older, with grey hair, I have become invisible." This is often the way society perceives us, and this is ageism. It's time to turn this belief upside down and change the way the world views us. Let's

*Editors's note:*

**Ageism** refers to the stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel) and discrimination (how we act) towards others or oneself based on age. <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/ageing-ageism>

not permit ourselves to be overlooked, becoming invisible.

First, acknowledge the huge amount of volunteer labour we give freely to keep many community organizations alive. Let us value the many hours of caregiving we do for grandchildren, for elderly parents living to age 90 or beyond, and for other extended family members and loved ones. This unpaid labour, freely given, contributes billions of uncounted dollars to our economy.

Second, let us also value the many seniors' organizations, which contribute so much to keep us older adults socially connected. These organizations provide essential information about changes, programs, and services offered by governments, non-profit organizations, and businesses to keep our bodies, homes, and communities in good working order.

Projects we currently work on include our collaboration with the SFU Gerontology Centre on the Connect!Age research project, which includes several COSCO member groups, and aims to identify ways seniors centres and groups can reduce social isolation among older adults. Our contribution to the Canadian Coalition Against Ageism has influenced the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva to agree to draft a UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons. For the snap Federal Election, we distributed an Election Special for the COSCO News. We've also just presented our recommendations to the BC Government Finance Committee for the 2026 Budget Consultation.

Our voices are heard through campaigns. We joined rallies with the BC General Employees Union and the BC Health Coalition to demand better working conditions for workers at LifeLabs, a company now owned by a foreign corporation. COSCO actively contributes to the campaign to insource HandyDART program – a form of paratransport – into



**For Rent**

Translink and to better coordinate service for the rest of the province. We are advocating with a coalition of partners for vacancy control to support more affordable rents.

*COSCO Celebrates Older Adults. Cont.*

Thankfully we are seeing some recognition that the input of older adults is important. COSCO BC members have shared their experiences with telecom companies to the CRTC (Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission). We participated in Focus Groups with the National Institute of Aging on Ageing in the Right Place. We were invited to the BC budget lockup in Victoria in early March and to an announcement by Housing Minister Ravi Kahlon regarding increases in rent subsidies for the SAFER program (Shelter Aid to Elderly Renters).

You are invited to our COSCO conference on October 3-5, followed by the National Pensioners' Federation convention October 6 & 7, both held in Richmond where issues important to seniors will be discussed and debated. Please visit our website at <https://coscobc.org/conference/> to register!

*Adapted from an article that first appeared in the COSCO News.*

*Leslie Gaudette, President, Council of  
Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC  
(COSCO BC)*

Join us in charting the future and celebrating 75 years at our 2025 conference:

**Human Rights and Ageing**  
*Advocating for an Equitable Future*

 **October 3 - 5, 2025**  
 **Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel**

Join seniors from BC and across the country together with policy makers, NGOs and government to address the issues seniors face. Registration, program and keynote speakers to come.

 **Contact** [conference@coscobc.org](mailto:conference@coscobc.org)  
 **Register** [coscobc.org/conference/registration](https://coscobc.org/conference/registration)



**2025 OCT 3-5** **HOLD THE DATE**

**Coscobc.org**



## UFV Retiree Association Launches!



The UFV Retiree Association officially launched in April 2025, with approximately 40 people attending our inaugural meeting. The meeting was hybrid, with the in person portion held in the Board Room at the Abbotsford campus. We are supported by the office of Community Engagement, their Vice-President and Associate Vice-President.

**Considering starting a group at your old institution. CPPR could help. Contact us at [info@cppr.ca](mailto:info@cppr.ca)**

The President Joanne MacLean greeted us and gave her support to the association. Dr. MacLean recently retired and we will be welcoming her to our association soon.

The purpose of the Association is to promote connection and engagement with the university and the retirement ‘family’ of the university. This includes all faculty, staff, and administrators who have retired from the university. Members will participate in the university community at social, recreational, educational and various events. The Association will also liaise with appropriate retiree associations representing pension and retirement interests.

Our welcome message includes the heading: “Don’t be a stranger.” We want the association to be a place where we do not lose touch with people we have worked with for many years. So when we say, “Don’t be a stranger,” we mean it.



Virginia Cooke, Ian McAskill, Adrienne Chan, Maureen Wideman and Randy Kelley. Photo: UFV.

The Board met in June with four officers and four members at large: President: Adrienne Chan; Vice-President: Randy Kelley; Secretary: Maureen Wideman; Treasurer: Ian McAskill. Members at large: Betty Poettcker, Deb Greenfield,



*UFVRA launches cont.*

Virginia Cooke, and Eric Davis. All of the Board members have had long service as faculty, staff, or as administrators.

We plan to have four events a year. This coming year, we anticipate that two of these events will be social (a barbecue and a dinner), and two of them will be learning events (a panel or lecture, and a tour of a historical site). We anticipate a good balance of social, recreational, and learning opportunities.

We hope you will join us if you are from UFV!

Contact [ufvretirees@ufv.ca](mailto:ufvretirees@ufv.ca)

*Adrienne S. Chan, Professor Emerita and  
President, UFV Retirees Association,  
University of the Fraser Valley*

## SFURA Publishes a Book

The SFU Retiree Association is pleased to announce the release of our latest book - *A Magical Time; The early days of the Arts at SFU*. Simon Fraser University went from an idea in 1963 to opening its doors in 1965, a feat that led it to be dubbed “the instant university.” This multi-authored history chronicles the excitement of that first radical decade of the arts at SFU.

The book is available from the SFU Retiree Association, the SFU Bookstore, or from Harbour Publishing <https://harbourpublishing.com/products/9781998526062>

Proceeds from the sale of this new book are being used to help sponsor a new graduate award for first generation graduate students – students who are the first in their families to pursue graduate studies. Our goal is to raise \$40,000 to create an

endowment that will provide annual financial support to graduate students in perpetuity. By contributing to this scholarship, you are investing in the next generation of scholars, leaders, and change-makers. Your support will help ensure that SFU remains a place where all students—regardless of background—can thrive in graduate studies and beyond. Together, we can create even more opportunities for SFU’s first-generation students. All donations are tax-deductible.

<https://www.sfu.ca/retirees/news/New-Graduate-Scholarship.html#:~:text=To%20mark%20SFU's%2060th%20anniversary,families%20to%20pursue%20graduate%20studies.>

There were two events in June to launch our new book and the new graduate scholarship. The first took place in early June and was sponsored by the Faculty of Arts, Communications and Technology (FCAT). The night began with a performance from students of the School for the Contemporary Arts, followed by stories and remarks from several of the book's authors and contributors. Catering and refreshments were provided throughout the evening.

The second was a dinner at the Diamond Alumni Club in late June, which was co-sponsored by SFU Advancement. Our next event is our traditional "Welcome Back" lunch at the Admirals Pub on 12 September. Please check your emails for the invite via Eventbrite.

*Carl Schwarz SFURA*



Photo: mlg

## BCITRA Plans and Priorities

BCITRA is planning a summer luncheon in August at a Bistro in Fort Langley.

Our planning continues to be to grow our membership and attract new Board members, as well as additional volunteers.

As well we are asking members for feedback/preferences on timing, location and format of our 2026 AGM. Campus parking continues to be a big hurdle.

Increasing our awareness at BCIT amongst all stakeholders is a priority. This includes current, staff, union and management, also Board groups and other provincial pension representatives.

At some point we need to revisit our Bylaws and Constitution for updating.

*Gordon Farrell  
President, BCITRA*

## CURAC and Later Life Learning

In his report, George Davison, CPPR President wrote about the 2025 CURAC Annual General Meeting. CPPR is a member association of CURAC (College and University Retiree Associations of Canada) <https://curac.ca/en/home>.

Probably the main reason why CPPR affiliated with CURAC is CURAC “speaks publicly on issues of concern to the over 24,000 individual college and university retirees across Canada.”

One of the other “Objectives of CURAC “is to share information about activities of member organizations,” and to that end, CPPR will provide you with information from other retiree associations that might be of interest.

As a member of the CURAC Later Life Learning Committee, I receive email postings about online lectures that you may

find interesting. Here’s an extract from an invitation from University of Toronto’s senior College:

Wherever CURAC members may reside, they might be interested in joining a Wednesday lecture in person or online, for a modest fee. To register for a particular talk, which gives access to the Zoom link, contact [senior.college@utoronto.ca](mailto:senior.college@utoronto.ca).

Retired faculty and librarians might consider joining Senior College, wherever they live. There is an online membership category, which includes access to the book club as well as the weekly lectures and other activities. Further information about membership and fees is available on our web site:

<https://www.seniorcollege.utoronto.ca/get-involved/become-a-fellow-or-an-external-fellow/>

We look forward to seeing our colleagues from across Canada!

CPPR has posted full details about UofT’s Senior College Offerings on our website at <https://www.cppr.ca/affiliations/>

*Gordon Lee*



*Photo: mlg*

You may also be interested in checking out courses and public lectures at your local college or university. Anyone over 65 in BC receives free tuition for regular course offerings. And many of BC’s post-secondary institutions offer courses specifically for seniors. However, as you will see from the guest column on the next page, some institutions are curtailing or abandoning these offerings.

*mlg*

### From Mid Island Elder College

When Vancouver Island University cut its support for Elder College programming at the end of 2023, the Mid Island Elder College (MIEC) was born: an incorporated non-profit society formed to continue the Elder College program.

Many of the instructors who have taught for the earlier incarnation of Elder College and/or were Board members before the divorce continue to teach courses for us, and now in our third semester as an independent operation we are maintaining the number and quality of courses offered.

But just as before we are interested in expanding our range of course offerings by bringing in new instructors.

Readers with area expertise and interest in teaching to a group of seniors are encouraged to peruse the MIEC website at [eldercollege.org](https://eldercollege.org), or they may wish to reach out to the MIEC Program Committee at [programchair@eldercollege.org](mailto:programchair@eldercollege.org).



Nanaimo Photos: mlg



### Pension Fund Accounts: A Brief Snapshot

2024 audited accounts have been finalized and have been posted on the plan website as part of the 2024 Annual Report (<https://college.pensionsbc.ca/annual-report>). The tri-annual actuarial review has also been completed and is also posted on the plan website. While that review found a very minor deficit of \$3.8 million—In the context of our \$8 billion in assets—it's about 0.04%—a transfer from the Rate Stabilization Account, which exists for precisely this purpose, enabled the actuary to report a funded ratio for the plan of 100%.

The balance in the Inflation Adjustment Account is also healthy. The actuary reported that C.O.L.A.s covering 100% of CPI are sustainable in the long term.

*Paul Ramsey  
Retiree Trustee*



## Travel in Canada: Haida Gwaii

Text and Photos: **Gordon Lee**



As Canadians are reconsidering their travel choices this year, CPPR members may wish to visit Haida Gwaii, often spoken of as the “Galapagos of the North”. There are different options for such a visit including travel to the Islands, accommodation there,

and tours.

In 2022 (almost post-COVID) my wife and I travelled to Haida Gwaii to learn about the Islands and the Haida Nation. I say ‘almost post COVID’ since a couple who flew in from Toronto had contracted COVID and weren’t able to join our tour with Blue Water Adventures <https://www.bluewateradventures.ca/adventures/haida-gwaii/>.

Prior to starting our tour on *The Island Solitude* for our 9-day sailing adventure mostly in Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve we spent 3 days visiting the inhabited north island communities, where



we learned about the history, culture and art of the Haida. This included visiting

Masset and Old Masset where the first totem pole in almost a century was raised in 1969. Carved by a young Robert Davidson, this was a milestone in the renewal and celebration of Haida culture and tradition. While in Masset, we also



visited several art galleries.

On another day we spent many hours in the Haida Gwaii Museum in Skidegate, a spectacular edifice with many galleries featuring language, art and culture of the Haida people <https://haidagwaiimuseum.ca>. Our accommodation for these 3 days was Haida House, owned and operated by the Haida <https://www.haidatourism.ca>. Haida house offers both lodge and oceanside cabins and features an outstanding restaurant <https://www.haidatourism.ca/haida-house-restaurant>. Haida House also offers all-inclusive tour experiences for 4 or 7 days.

Our 9-day sailing adventure to Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve was one of my peak travel experiences along with the Galapagos and an African Safari. We visited 5 village sites (, K’uuna Llnagaay, T’aanu Llnagaay, Hlk’yah GawGa, Gandla K’in Gwaay.yaay, and SGang



*Travel in Canada: Haida Gwaii cont.*

Gwaay - a UNESCO World Heritage Site) that were abandoned after the smallpox epidemic decimated the Haida living in these villages. The survivors were forced to move north to Skidegate and Old Masset. Today these village sites are hosted and cared for by Haida Watchmen. Access is restricted to small groups each day (no cruise ships here!). There were 10 of us on *The Island Solitude*. Other small groups such as kayak tours and small boat day tours visit the villages, but only one small group at a time can be on each village site.



We were most fortunate to have Captain Gold a Haida elder and historian who developed the Watchmen Program as our guide on this tour. Captain Gold told us he paddled his small canoe to SGang Gwaay where artifacts including house poles, memorial and burial poles and other artifacts had been looted and/or relocated to museums in Canada and abroad. Captain Gold created the Watchmen Program to protect these village sites. He also assisted other indigenous groups around the world to establish their own Watchmen initiatives. Captain Gold was also leader in the protests that stopped logging on Moresby Island. As well, he



has been active as a researcher collaborating with university academics.



On our Gwaii Haanas adventure we also saw orca, humpback whales, spawning salmon, eagles and many seabirds. We also spent time kayaking in the early



morning or just before sunset. And, one morning we spent a two-hours cleaning two hundred metres of beach. We filled two zodiacs with bottles, tires, fishing floats and even a suitcase.

*Gordon Lee*

**Travelling this Year?**

Don't forget Medoc if you have it will automatically renew in August. The last date for cancellation is October 5, 2025.

Medoc is now a product of

**belairdirect.**

## CONNECTIONS

**USEFUL LINKS:** If these links don't work, copy and paste them into your web browser.  
**College Pension Plan**

**Home Page:** <http://www.pensionsbc.ca>

**Other Direct Links from their site**

**My Account:** <https://collegepensionsbc.ca/register-for-for-my-account?inheritRedirect=true>

**GreenShield Information:** <https://onlineservices.greenshield.ca/publicbooklets/cpp.pdf>

**EHC Premiums:** <https://college.pensionsbc.ca/extended-health-care-plan-premiums>

**Dental Premiums:** <https://college.pensionsbc.ca/dental-plan-premium>

**Taxes and Pension Payments:** <https://college.pensionsbc.ca/taxes-and-pension-payments>

**Pension Life:** <https://college.pensionsbc.ca/pension-life>

**Death and death benefits:** <https://college.pensionsbc.ca/death-and-death-benefits>

**Old Age Security and Canada Pension Plan**  
<http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/home.shtml>

To update your information,

Email us at [info@cppr.ca](mailto:info@cppr.ca)

Phone 1-844-655-6565 or Write to us at  
 3-2424 Main Street, West Kelowna, BC, V4T 1P6

**ENCOURAGE** your ex-colleagues to **JOIN CPPR** now and strengthen the voices in support of our Pension Plan. Membership forms can be found on our website [cppr.ca](http://cppr.ca) or by scanning the QR code below.



**REMEMBER**, while other retiree groups may offer similar travel and other insurance options, they cannot speak on our behalf.

**TELL** anyone you know who receives a BC public pension about the organizations that advocate on behalf of the retired members of BC's public sector pension plans.

<b>BCITRA</b>	<a href="http://bcitra.ca">bcitra.ca</a>
<b>Camosun</b>	<a href="mailto:ccare@camosun.ca">ccare@camosun.ca</a>
<b>KPURA</b>	<a href="http://kpu.ca/retirees">kpu.ca/retirees</a>
<b>LCAR</b>	<a href="http://lcar.ca">lcar.ca</a>
<b>SFURA</b>	<a href="http://sfu.ca/retirees">sfu.ca/retirees</a>
<b>UFVRA</b>	<a href="mailto:ufvretirees@ufv.ca">ufvretirees@ufv.ca</a>

Do you belong to a retiree group attached to your old institution?

Why not consider affiliating your group with us?

Email us at [info@cppr.ca](mailto:info@cppr.ca) for more information.

<b>BCGRETA</b>	<a href="http://bcgre.ca">bcgre.ca</a>
<b>BCRTA</b>	<a href="http://bcrrta.ca">bcrrta.ca</a>
<b>MPRA</b>	<a href="http://mpr.ca">mpr.ca</a>

## AGM 2025

**Cypress Room Holiday Inn**  
**711 West Broadway**  
**Vancouver and on Zoom**

**Wednesday 5 November**  
**Call to Order 10:30 pm**

**Watch our Website for updates**  
**[cppr.ca](http://cppr.ca)**



*Prime Time* is published twice a year. If you would like to contribute an article or images, please contact Mary at [editor@cppr.ca](mailto:editor@cppr.ca).