

The Golden Gang Gazette

Vancouver Municipal & Regional Retiree's Association

545 West 10th Avenue

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Vancouver BC V5Z 1K9

April 2024

Annual General Meeting

The executive is happy to invite you to attend the upcoming AGM. This will be an important meeting as we have a number of important issues that need to be addressed. In addition to elections for Executive positions there are a number of other significant issues that need to be address. As many of you are aware we have had success of late in offering hybrid meetings which allow folks to attend in person as well as via zoom. I am pleased that we have been able, with the assistance of staff at Bonsor Recreational Facility, to offer this option to our members.

We are doing a good job of bringing in guest speakers on issue that are of real interest to our members. Last meeting was of particular interest and I'm currently exploring the idea of following up with Fraser Health staff about future presentations.

CUPE Local 15 officials have been an enormous help in a number of ways. They do all the mailing of the GGG at no cost to us. This is a significant contribution as the mail out is an expense. The also assisted us as we launch the Zoom option during the Covid pandemic, that didn't allow us to meet in person. The Secretary-Treasurer, Debbie Mohabar, was of particular help in this regard. Their contribution to our Christmas Social helped to ensured that it was real

success. For those of you who were unable to attend, you missed a good meal and lots of fun. The Executive is in the process of requesting funding for our Summer Social and hopefully that we will be successful. Last year we were successful in obtaining a venue in Vancouver that allowed for outdoor activities as well as an indoor eating area. We are hoping to be able to book the same venue. Stay tuned for more information.

Election of Executive Members

We currently have several positions on our Executive that have been vacant for the past year and the potential for other positions to become vacant. Without an active and engaged Executive our organization will falter. These positions are not onerous in terms of the amount of work and time required and I am hopeful that you will consider what you can do to support the group. In addition to positions on the Executive, there is an opportunity to take on some of the tasks that would support the Executive. For example, taking on the work of the G.G.G., writing articles for the GGG, booking guest speakers for the meetings, assisting with the social events. Please consider how you might contribute.

CONTEST WINNERS

Derby Draw Winner:

Donna Davies

Jackpot Winner:

No winner

Pot of Gold Winner

Pam McFayden



You must be in attendance or logged into the meeting in order to win and your dues must be up to date.

Membership Meeting

Bonsor Recreation
Complex and via Zoom

April 3, 2024

11-12:30

Executive Meeting

Please forward any agenda items to an Executive member. Contact information on the back page.

Pharmacare

Health Minister Mark Holland released the long-awaited details of the federal government's pharmacare plan on Thursday, with a commitment to cover some diabetes treatments and contraception.

If the bill, C-64, passes Parliament, Holland will begin negotiating with the provinces and territories on a funding commitment that would cover the cost of providing these medications to people for free. He said he hopes people can access the program sometime this year, although a lot of uncertainties make an actual start date hard to pinpoint.

The federal government says it also will establish a fund to support Canadian diabetics who need access to syringes and glucose test strips to manage their condition but struggle to afford them.

Tax Time

It is always a good idea to get your taxes done early. This is particularly important for anyone who may be eligible for the GIS as this can be impacted if you do not file on time.

Travel Insurance

Just a reminder for those who are unaware, the medical portion of money spent on travel insurance is tax deductible. Contact your carrier and ask them to separate the medical portion of your cost as the trip cancellation etc. portions are not deductible.

Home Equity Tax issue.

I did write about this issue in a previous edition and have spent some time investigating it further. I'm happy to let you know that it does appear that this is a no starter as the politicians are not willing to take on seniors over this issue.

Free Tax Clinics are available at most Seniors Centres if your return is simple and straight forward.

If you feel that you might want to consider using an accounting firm it's good to know that the cost of having them complete your taxes is a deduction on the following years taxes.

Renters Tax Credit

For the 2023 tax year, the maximum renter's tax credit you may receive is \$400. The credit is reduced by 2% of the amount by which your 2023 adjusted income exceeds \$60,000. The credit is reduced to zero at \$80,000

The adjusted income threshold amount of \$60,000 will be indexed to inflation each year. For the 2024 tax year, the adjusted income threshold will be increased to \$63,000 and the credit will be reduced to zero at \$83,000.

This benefit is applicable for those in housing co-operatives. For more info: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/taxes/income-taxes/personal/credits/renters-tax-credit>

Earth Day

Earth Day is an annual event on April 22 to demonstrate support for environmental protection. First held on April 22, 1970, it now includes a wide range of events coordinated globally by Earthday.org including 1 billion people in more than 193 countries. The official theme for 2024 is "Planet vs. Plastics."

On November 1, 2023, phase 1 of the expanded deposit-refund on aluminum beverage containers came into effect across the province. All existing returnable containers, as well as those used to market aluminum "ready-to-drink" beverages of at least 100 mL and no more than 2 litres, are now refundable at 10 cents each.

For example, a can of your favourite sparkling beverage, with or without alcohol, 473 mL or 355 mL, is now 10 cents. Starting March 1, 2025, the second phase of the deposit-refund expansion on glass, plastic and multi-layer beverage containers will come into effect. Phase 2 will apply to all "multi-material" beverage containers from 100 mL to 2 L. In addition, glass beverage containers over 500 mL will be 25 cents each. You'll be able to return your bottles of water or wine for a refund from then on.

President's Message

Like many of you, I'm assuming, you are looking for to spring and the ability to get outdoors more often. My garden needs attention, and while I enjoy the garden it is a lot of work getting started each spring, and unfortunately my back is not getting any younger. We have a beautiful cherry blossom tree which is in full bloom at the moment.

I have been producing the GGG and writing my President's message for several years now and I am hoping to turn some of the work over to a new retiree in the hopes of reinvigorating the work. I have contemplated reducing the number of pages but having heard from folks that they enjoy the information provided. I would much rather have someone able to help with articles etc. rather than reduce the size. I know that there are members who are unable to attend meetings and the information that is provided in the newsletter is helpful to them.

On the Easter weekend there are usually egg hunts, Easter Brunches and other spring-themed holiday activities. This year Easter Sunday will fall on March 31st. The Easter long weekend, meanwhile, runs from March 29th to April 1st (which means that Easter Monday will also be April Fools Day. There are special events throughout the long weekend. There are also events in the prior week such as a Handel concert: Hallelujah & Trumpets on March 24 at the Chan Centre

The 55+B.C. Games will be held this year in Salmon Arm, B.C September 10-14

The mission of the BC Seniors Games Society is to improve the health, lifestyle, and image of British Columbia's 55+ population by:

1. Organizing the 55+ BC Games as an opportunity for the 55+ population of BC to participate in physical and social activities.
2. Providing a forum for participants to continue to compete.
3. Promoting community awareness of the contemporary image of the 55+ population as physically active and socially engaged.
4. Encouraging year-round participation at the zone level through relationships with community, recreation and sport organizations. If you would like more information about either participating or volunteering with this organization, please e-mail to info@55plusbcgames.org

As those of you who were able to attend, either in person or via zoom, will be aware we had a very informative presentation from Fraser Health personnel on the issue of their green sleeve program and representational agreements. We were all provided with copies of the Provincial Governments Booklet "My Voice". Following this presentation a number of folks indicated that they would be very interested in having someone speak to the group about Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID). I have been in touch with Fraser Health and am hoping to be able to arrange this presentation for the April meeting or if not then the June meeting.

I have also been asked to look into the possibility of getting someone in to speak to us about the medical and recreational use of marijuana.

2019-2020

Executive Board

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Remembering

Opinions, viewpoints, and accuracy of facts submitted by members is the responsibility of the writer and not of the Editor, Executive, or the Membership of the VMRRA.



Dues Remittance Form

I enclose my annual dues of \$10.00 per year for _____ years and _____ as a donation.

Total enclosed \$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Postal Code _____

Phone _____

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Former Employer _____

Optional Next of Kin _____

Please mail to: Dianna Smith c/o #1012-6631 Minoru Blvd.

Richmond, B.C. V6Y 1Z1

Cheques should be made payable to VMRRA