



## 2019 AGM Offers Insights, Laughs, and Renewed Commitment

The BCRTA held its Annual General Meeting and Conference Oct 3-5 in Richmond. Here are some highlights:

### SURVEY SHOWS MEMBER SATISFACTION

A survey of members made available online and in PostScript magazine drew a large response of over 1,500 submissions.

Members expressed a strong desire for BCRTA to continue to focus on defending pension security for members and seniors, and a strong satisfaction with the job BCRTA is doing in that area. Areas that could use growth include branch engagement and use of BCRTA Advantage programs.

See some more details of the 2019 Survey at

<https://bcрта.ca/2019-member-survey-highlights/>

### SPEAKERS

The 2019 Conference Keynote Address was given by Dr. Art Hister, who had the delegates “in stitches” with his humorous health advice. Amongst his many *bon mots* was an injunction to be careful with medical advice that applies to “the average person.” After all, Hister quipped, “the average person has one testicle and one ovary.”

Following Hister’s talk there was a time for delegates to engage in some physical activity and a presentation on de-cluttering your home.

*AGM continued...*

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AGM continued...

President Gerry Tiede updated the delegates on the association's progress in pursuit of its strategic plan, and gave some further insights into current news in pensions.

Membership awards were given to branches with the most member growth.

The Friday evening banquet included the inaugural PostScript Excellence Awards, an event celebrating the contributions of members to BCRTA's flagship publication. The winners were cheered by attendees. Dancing and socializing concluded the evening.

## FINANCES IN ORDER

On AGM day Grace Wilson, 1st Vice President and Treasurer, reported on BCRTA's financial results for the year ended June 30, 2019, which had a bottom line better than budgeted. A representative from auditor KPMG confirmed a clean bill of health for the financial statements. A budget for the 2019-2020 year was approved, along with a setting of member fees to \$42 per year effective the year following.

## MOTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Two motions were made from the floor of the AGM:

**Motion:** "To eliminate the use of single use plastics and Styrofoam in our BCRTA meetings provincially and in the BCRTA branches."

*Moved by Barb Henshall, Campbell River*

*Seconded by Bonni Roset, Campbell River*

**Amended:** by Rosalind Kellett, Vancouver

**Amended motion:** "That BCRTA strive to eliminate the use of single use plastics and Styrofoam in our BCRTA meetings provincially and in the BCRTA branches."

**CARRIED**

**Motion:** "That BCRTA encourage the federal and provincial governments to move quickly to ban flavoured juices used in vaping devices."

*Moved by: Val Windsor*

*Seconded by Pat Thiesen, Delta*

**CARRIED**



**Have a friend who is eligible to join the BCRTA?**

- Retired Teachers
- Retired Support Staff
- Retired Post-Secondary Educators

**Get all the benefits of membership and the first year is free!**

[bcрта.ca/join](http://bcрта.ca/join)



## Dale Lauber Awarded BCRTA's Highest Honour

A highlight of the 2019 BCRTA AGM was the recognition of Dale Lauber for his many years of service to the association. Lauber was named a Life Member by the assembly, the highest honour conferred upon BCRTA members.

BCRTA President Gerry Tiede noted that Dale served on the Teacher Pension Plan Board of Trustees for some 18 years, first in his role as a pensions specialist with the BC Teachers Federation, and later as a retiree himself. All this experience proved invaluable for Dale's service on the BCRTA Pensions and Benefits committee for many years.

More recently, Dale served as BCRTA's representative on the board of the Canadian Association of Retired Teachers (ACER-CART).

Dale also teamed up with JoAnn Lauber to champion an intense lobbying action to protest the federal government's introduction of Bill C-27 which would erode the security of defined benefit pension plans. The campaign resulted in over fifty petitions being presented in the House of Commons, and Ottawa insiders reported that the constant attention to the

issue was a factor in the government not pressing forward on their plans. The bill died on the order paper with the dissolution of Parliament, but Lauber warned the BCRTA that renewed attempts to undermine pension security are likely to be made in the coming years.

Dale's acuity for policy and numbers is complemented by a spirit of bonhomie, a ready laugh, and a wide network of contacts developed over the years.

Delegates stood and applauded as Dale walked to the platform and received a certificate. In his comments, Lauber remarked that now his home office will be "balanced" with a Life Membership certificate on the wall over his desk that will match the Life Member award over his wife JoAnn's desk, an honour conferred upon JoAnn just last year.

Among Dale's plans for the coming year are joining the BCRTA group departure to Morocco and Portugal in February 2020.

Thank you, Dale, for your outstanding service to our organization and to retirees across Canada!

# PostScript Excellence Awards



On October 4th, 2019, the BCRTA celebrated the inaugural PostScript Excellence Awards. Three BCRTA members were recognized for their contributions to PostScript Magazine.

## SHEILA GAIR AWARD

First up was the Sheila Gair Award, named for PostScript's long-time editor and columnist. This category recognizes the best Personal Experience Article.

The nominees were:

- One Hand on the Wall by Leslie Davidson (Summer 2018)
- Art of Ikebana by Lynda Grace Phillipsen (Fall 2018)
- A New Course: Life Aboard SV Khamsin by Gillian West (Winter 2018)
- Making a Difference for Moms by Kate Patten (Winter 2018)
- Northern Adventure by Cheryl Hofweber (Winter 2018)
- A Rediscovered Joy by Pat Thiesen (Spring 2019)
- C02 Challenge by Norman Gleadow (Spring 2019)

The winner was **Pat Thiesen** of Delta.



*Pat Thiesen of Delta receives the Sheila Gair Award from PostScript Editor Tim Anderson.*



*PostScript Magazine Contributing Editor JoAnn Lauber presents Garry Litke with the PostScript Excellence Award for Best Travel Article.*

## BEST TRAVEL ARTICLE

The PostScript Excellence Award for Best Travel Article had plenty of strong contenders.

The nominees were:

- Vamonos Guatemala by Bev Hiscock (Summer 2018)
- Ocean House Haida Gwaii by David Wei and Suzanne Clouthier (Fall 2018)
- Leaping Tiger Gorge by Ed Armstrong (Fall 2018)
- Time to Get Smart (travel tips) by Lenora Klappe (Fall 2018)
- Cuba: Mojitos and More by Gary Yakimow (Winter 2018)
- Fez by Garry Litke (Spring 2019)

The Best Travel Article award went to Garry Litke of Penticton.

*PostScript Excellence Awards continued...*

## BEST PHOTO

A number of strong photos were published in the past year. Most were submitted as part of an article.

Nominees for the PostScript Excellence Award for best Member photo were:

Ocean House Haida Gwaii by David Wei (Series ) (Fall 2018)

Leaping Tiger Gorge by Ed Armstrong (Fall 2018)

Havana by Gord Yakmow (Cover Winter 2018)

Tannery in Fez, Morocco by Garry Litke (Spring 2019)

The nominated photos are displayed to the right.

The winner was **David Wei** of Vancouver.

Congratulations to all our winners and thanks to all contributing BCRTA members who together make PostScript Magazine a unique treasure.



*Leaping Tiger Gorge by Ed Armstrong*



*Havana by Gord Yakimow*



*David Wei receives his PostScript Excellence Award for Best Photo by a Member from Communications Chair Charan Gill.*



*Ocean House floating resort at Stads K'uns Gawga (Peel Inlet) Haida Gwaii by David Wei (left) and Tannery in Fez by Garry Litke (right)*

## 2019 Member Survey Highlights

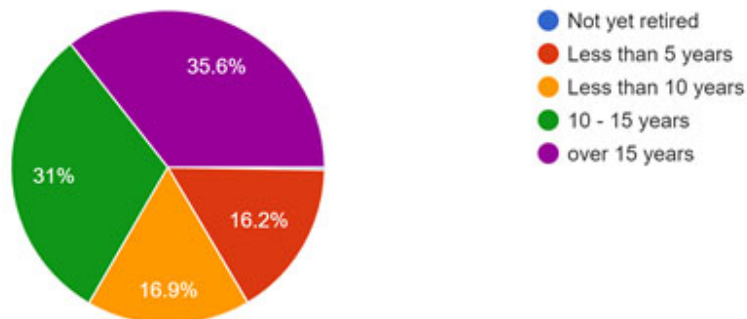


A recent survey of BCRTA members showed a strong commitment of members to the central purposes of the association and high levels of satisfaction.

A good cross-section of members responded to the survey.

### How long have you been retired?

1,504 responses



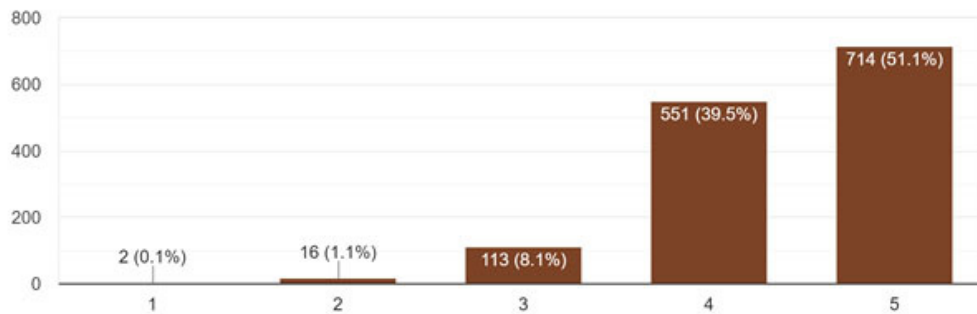
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Survey Highlights continued...

Defending the pensions of our members and seniors in Canada has been a central goal of the BCRTA. Members indicated strong satisfaction with the association's activity in this area.

### In your opinion, how effective is BCRTA as an advocate for pension security?

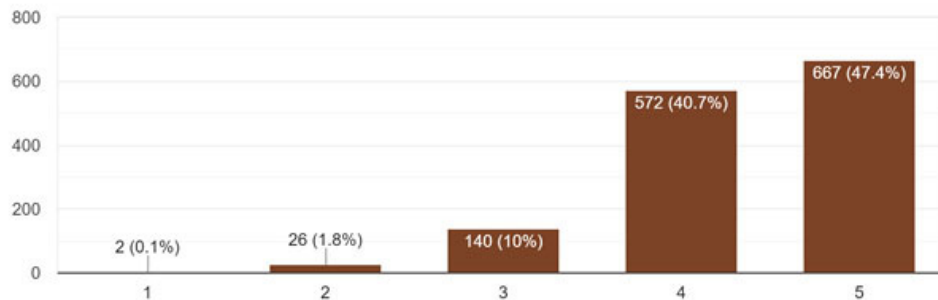
1,396 responses



While many members are comfortable with electronic communications, the majority of members prefer to receive our flagship publication PostScript Magazine as a full-colour print publication. PostScript is very popular with our members.

### How would you rate PostScript Magazine?

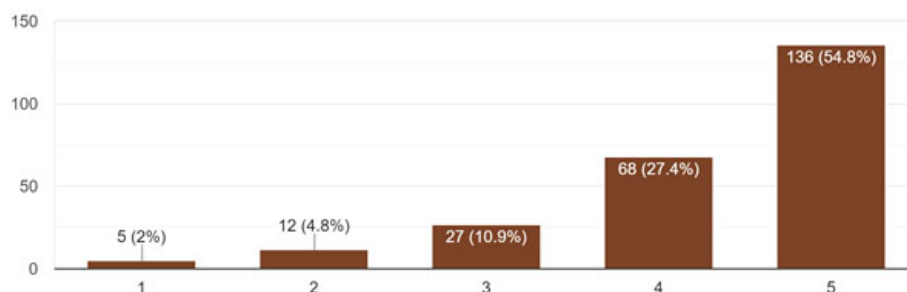
1,407 responses



Members were asked about their experience in receiving support from the BCRTA office, and feedback was very positive.

### If you contacted the BCRTA office, how would you rate your support experience?

248 responses

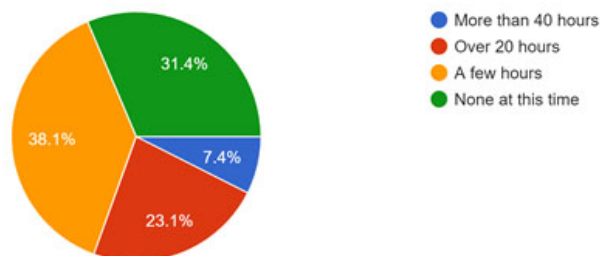


Survey Highlights continued...

The survey showed that the majority of BCRTA members provide some form of unpaid work in their communities. Based on the responses, BCRTA estimates that our members give more than 238,000 hours each month providing care to others, in the mentoring of young people, in service on non-profits and many other forms of volunteering. When valued at a modest hourly rate of \$20, we estimate that BCRTA members provide some \$57 million dollars per year of unpaid service to their communities!

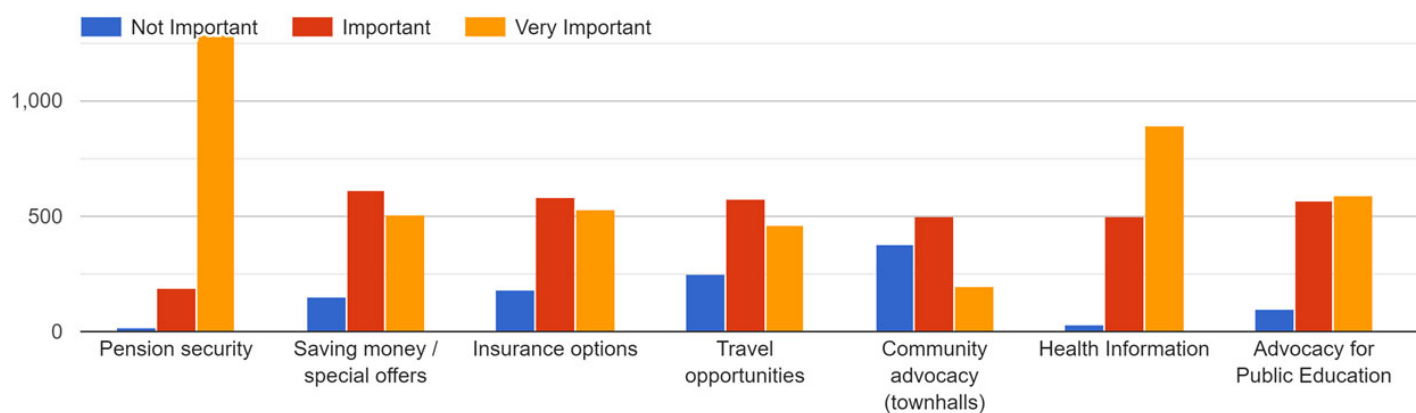
How much time do you spend as a mentor or volunteer each month?

1,479 responses



The survey asked our members to indicate how important different activities of the association were to them. Here are some of their responses:

How important to you are these dimensions of BCRTA's work?



BCRTA's Board of Directors and branch executives will be using the results of the survey to better serve our members.

Thanks to all who participated!

## QUICK FACTS ABOUT LONG TERM CARE IN 2019

In October 2019, the Office of the Senior's Advocate released the 2019 Quick Facts Directory (QFD) that provides information on all publicly funded long-term care homes in BC.

The data indicates a significant increase in care hours over the past year bringing public facilities closer to the 3.36 hours of care per bed per day, particularly for bed space that is contracted from private facilities. In addition to funded hours of care, the QFD reports on a series of quality indicators and new for this year are the release of inspection reports that shows a total of 765 inspections which found 1,103 infractions; 21% related to care and supervision, 19% to record keeping, and 13% due to staffing issues.



The demographic data indicates the average resident age is 85 and 5% of residents are under the age of 65. Other highlights included: food costs have increased by 3% and ranged from \$5.59 to \$19.88 per day, the length of stay has remained stable,

overall care per diems increased by 4.6% ranging from \$182.23 to \$272.35 per bed per day, the rate of reportable incidents remained constant and has dropped from 17.5 to 15.8 over the past five years, and the substantiated complaints has dropped over the past year from 7.4 per 1,000 beds to 5.9.

A summary of the QFD is available at

<http://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/app/uploads/sites/4/2019/09/QuickFacts2019-Summary.pdf>.

To review the full report go online to the Office of the Seniors' Advocate at <https://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca> and search British Columbia Long-Term Care Facilities Quick Facts Directory.

If you are considering moving to or have a family member who needs to be moved to an extended care facility I would recommend taking a bit of time and refer to the summary and to the full report on the public facility you might be considering.

*Terry Green*  
Chair, Well-Being Committee

## HAVE YOU HAD YOUR FLU SHOT YET?

It's time to get your annual "Flu" shot. As a senior, it is recommended that you get the High Dose Fluzone version of the vaccine (costs about \$80), but it will not be available for distribution until later in November this year. If you are one of the more vulnerable in our society, you shouldn't wait for the High Dose, you should get the standard (and free) version of the flu vaccine from your own doctor or pharmacist who are giving the vaccinations now.

It is better to get basic protection against the virus that is already here in BC. It not only protects you from getting sick but all those people you come in contact with – friends, family (especially grandkids), and your community will have protection, too. And check to see if you should up-date other vaccinations – shingles, tetanus, and pneumonia.

*Pat Thiesen*  
Well-Being Committee



## BC PENSIONS OUTPERFORM BENCHMARKS

The British Columbia Investment Management Corporation (BCI), which is the investment agent for several pension plans including the Teachers' Pension Plan, had an annual combined pension return, net of costs, of 6.1 per cent for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2019.

This return surpassed a combined market benchmark of 4.5 per cent and generated \$2 billion in added value for BCI's pension plan clients.

The excess return was largely driven by the outperformance of its private assets, finishing the fiscal year with significant returns from both income generation and capital appreciation. Its managed net assets increased to \$153.4 billion from the previous year, reflecting investment gains of \$9 billion, partially offset by \$1.2 billion of client distributions.

"Our results reflect solid performance from all asset classes despite the uncertainty and volatility in the markets," says Gordon J. Fyfe, CEO/CIO of BCI. "These contributions signal the success of our strategic focus since 2015 of adopting an active, in-house approach that emphasizes private markets.

**Note:** this data refers to all pension plan returns and is not specific to the Teachers' Pension Plan.

Source: Pension and Benefits Monitor News



## HEALTH FUNDING AGREEMENTS

Jo-Ann Lauber, a member of the BCRTA and an active participant in our organization has provided a comprehensive analysis and comparison of the 13 different health agreements reached with the Justin Trudeau Liberal government between their election in 2015 and 2019. This was Jo-Ann's last major contribution to our and other retired teacher organizations before stepping back for a bit. It is a comprehensive, well-researched, and documented report. I recommend to all BCRTA members to read and review this report.

You can view the report by visiting [www.bcrta.ca/healthfunding2019](http://www.bcrta.ca/healthfunding2019).

*Terry Green*  
Chair, Well-being Committee



### JUST MADE AVAILABLE!

Two studio rooms have just been made available on the BCRTA Group Departure to Portugal.

Use code BCRTATM18 at [bcrta.tripmerchant.com](http://bcrta.tripmerchant.com) and search for Portugal.

**Any changes to your e-mail address or home address?**  
**Contact Laurie Boyd at the BCRTA Office**  
**at [laurie@bcrta.ca](mailto:laurie@bcrta.ca) or 604-871-2260**



# DISCOVER THE VALUE OF BCRTA'S MEMBERS' ADVANTAGE PROGRAM

[www.bcrta.ca/members-advantage-program/](http://www.bcrta.ca/members-advantage-program/)



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