



411 Seniors Centre Society OUR VOICE

2023 AGM A Big Hit



By Marion Pollack

The 411 Seniors Centre Society held a successful Annual General Meeting on June 22 2023. Thanks to all who attended and who worked so hard to make this meeting happen. This was the first 411 AGM in our beautiful new Centre and we thanked those whose effort, determination, and tenacity allowed 3502 Fraser to be built and to be a place for all of us.

The meeting voted to reinstate the \$10 per year membership fee. This fee was waived during the pandemic.

The need for 411 to engage in more fundraising was emphasized throughout all reports. If you can donate any amount of money, please think about donating to the 411 Seniors Centre.

A number of new Board members were elected. These are: Jane Belanger, Gaye Ferguso, Lyn Lennig, Edwin Padilla.

Welcome to all the new Board members and thanks for your willingness to serve.

Four great 411 members were given Honorary Lifetime Memberships, joining a group of pretty amazing people. The new Honorary Lifetime members are:

- Stuart Alcock: past 411 President and long time Board member. He worked tirelessly to ensure that our new building happened.
- David Handelman: past 411 Vice President and long time Board Chair of the program

committee. David worked long and hard to gain access to low cost phones and internet for low income seniors.

- Maggie Taylor: long time 411 volunteer and for the past three years our accountant. Her attention to finance and details was crucial to our new centre opening.
- Gwen Willox: long time 411 Board member and former Treasurer. She has led the Board on finance issues and has always emphasized the need for fundraising.

Long time Board President, Marion Pollack has finished her term as President, but is still a Board member. Marika Kocaba, is the new President of the 411 Seniors Centre Society. Jeannie Kamins, who is leaving the Board was also thanked for her service.

The recent AGM showed that 411 is a place where seniors help seniors and where seniors are informed and connected.

COVID-19 Vaccinations and Boosters

To register for the COVID-19 vaccine, everyone in BC (delete periods) must use the Get Vaccinated provincial registration system or call the provincial phone line at 1-833-838-2323. You can register yourself or someone else. Seniors (space added) who are registered on the Get Vaccinated provincial registration system will receive an invite to book a booster dose approximately 6 months after their last dose. Having the BC Vaccine Card/passport does not mean a senior is registered with the Get Vaccinated System. The Get Vaccinated phone centre is

open seven days a week, 7 am to 7 pm. To ask questions and verify registration, call 1-833-838-2323. Appointments space added) for vaccinations and boosters are available in community pharmacies and health authority clinics at a time to fit your schedule. The COVID-19 vaccine is free for everyone living in BC who is eligible to receive it. Please be aware of COVID-19 vaccination scams. Say "No" to unsolicited calls offering home vaccination kits for a fee and emails and texts asking you for sensitive personal information.

Now What?



By Stuart Alcock

When I joined the Board of 411 in 2012, I expected the duties would be straightforward much like other boards. I was wrong! As I leave the Board, I reflect on what I learned.

There was a lot to discover. As the plan for a new centre emerged, we met with architects, designers, and lawyers. This required reading and understanding draft legal agreements, reports on the progress

of construction, and monitoring detailed financial projections and reports, all new languages to me. I discovered that we had to get the permits: Development, Building, and finally for Occupancy.

I spent four years on the Council of Advisors to the Seniors Advocate and one on the City of Vancouver's Seniors Advisory Committee. These experiences and reports from the 411 Information and Referral volunteers, made me more aware and concerned about the issues that too many seniors face: income; housing; a full range of health, dental, vision and hearing care; and difficulties springing from the emphasis on computer technology. There is much to be done to address these.

Also, I started spotting interesting news items about

how seniors can live well. Exercise and nutrition are always important but those of us who read books may live two years longer than people who do not. Having supportive family and friends is important to living longer but so is just simply interacting with other people on a daily basis such as neighbours and shopkeepers. I conclude is that we thrive if we stay socially engaged. What better place to this than a seniors' centre.

Ten years as a 411 Board member has shown me that 411 is more valuable than I first thought. The Income Tax Clinic and the Information and Referral service are important as help for people. On top of that, group activities such as yoga, Zumba, language lessons, playing music, singing, book clubs, art classes and so on are places of being with others and having fun and interesting conversations. Seniors' centres are good for us so I'm planning on staying involved. See you around!

Changes to the Strata

On Nov. 24th the NDP amended the Strata Property Act. The changes will ensure that people living in stratas with 55+ age restrictions will be able to stay in their homes even if their family structure changes. This will include future children and partners of current residents plus permitting exemptions to allow adult children to move back home with their parents and permit live-in caregivers. For seniors in age-restricted buildings this will now allow them to receive the health care support they need in their own homes.

While some strata corporations moved to adopt the 55+ restriction bylaw after the bill was passed, tens of

thousands of strata units now allow renters and younger residents in these homes thereby providing more housing options.

For more information about strata age-restriction bylaws, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/housing-tenancy/strata-housing/operating-a-strata/bylaws-and-rules/age-restriction-bylaws> or call 604-660-2421





Happy Summer Everyone!

By Micheal Volker, Executive Director

For many of us this is the best time of year with so much to do – gardening, walking, hiking, biking, or just sitting in a park. However, with climate change, summers are also a time to be cautious and take care of ourselves.

We have two distinct threats to our health during the summer months. Smoke from forest fires can greatly compromise air quality and depending on the level of contaminants, the air itself can become hazardous, especially for anyone with respiratory challenges. The second significant challenge is the increase in temperature and the potential for a “heat

dome” – a concept that has gained attention over the past few years. A heat dome refers to a prolonged period of extremely hot and stagnant weather conditions that traps heat under a high-pressure system. By taking proactive measures, you can protect yourself from the risks associated with extreme heat. Stay informed, create a cool indoor environment, stay hydrated, limit outdoor activities, and watch out for signs of heat-related illnesses.

411 Seniors Centre was recently approved for an Emergency Preparedness and Response grant so we will have resources available for those that need assistance. We want to let you know that in hazardous weather, 411 Seniors Centre will be open for you to come and cool off. We’ll have cooling supplies, activities, and the benefit of staff and volunteers to help you.

We will begin an outreach program in mid-June of contacting folks in our database, (we might already have reached you). If not, you can call us at 604-874-8171 or email info@411seniors.org. For more information on what 411 is doing, visit our website – we have a section on how to “Beat the Heat”.

Dental Plan for Seniors

Stay tuned for a dental plan for seniors. This will be coming to your mouth sometime in the next 9 months. It will mean free basic dental care for seniors (over 65) who have a family income less than \$70,000 per year and low cost basic dental care for seniors (over 65) who have a family income between 70-90 thousand per year.

Acknowledgement

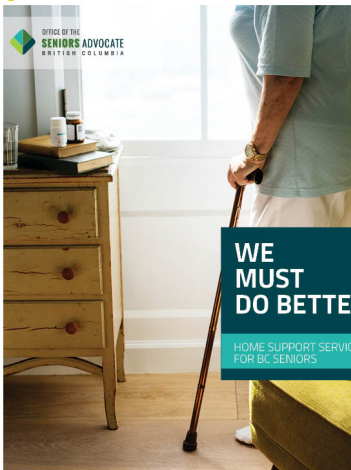
We apologize for an excerpt in “Sylvie’s Story” (04/2023) that may have been considered racist. This was not our intention and escaped our notice. We always try to be careful with what we publish but every once in a while, we can miss something.

Membership fees, a mere \$10/year - JOIN Now



Art Students from the art class make a poster to hang for Seniors Week. It was great fun working together. Photo by Christina Poon.

Home Support Services for B.C. Seniors



In this new report entitled “*We Must Do Better: Home Support Services for B.C. Seniors*”, the BC Seniors Advocate Isobel Mackenzie provides a comprehensive review of the province’s home support services and finds they need fundamental restructuring.

This review shows that

the program is not keeping pace with the needs of a growing seniors’ population and while most provinces (no hyphen) provide these services free, BC is the most expensive in Canada.

The report examines 5-year trends in home support funding, hours of care, client acuity, affordability and caregiver distress. Findings reveal that client complexity and frailty is rising, care hours are not growing to meet this need, and more of the care is being shifted to family caregivers who continue to experience high levels of distress. The review includes survey responses from over 6,000 seniors who receive home support and found those who receive service have high regard for the staff who provide their care and do not feel they are subject to discrimination.

Seniors Property Tax Deferral

The BC Property Tax Deferral Program allows homeowners 55+ to defer all or some of their annual property taxes. The Province pays the tax to the local government on behalf of the senior homeowner and the deferred taxes are repaid to the Province when the home is sold.

Federal Government Grocery Rebate

The one-time grocery rebate announced in the 2023 federal budget will land in bank accounts of eligible Canadians starting on July 5, 2023. Eligible seniors will receive \$225 on average. The rebate will be delivered or deposited automatically with the July GST credit payment and there is no need to apply.

The Latest BC Seniors Guide

From 411 Information & Referral Service: the latest BC Seniors Guide (12th Edition) is available to be picked up on a first-come, first-served basis from 411 Reception. Monday-Thursday. There are versions in 9 Languages: English, Chinese, Farsi, French, Hindi, Korean, Punjabi, Tagalog, Vietnamese.



411seniors.org

411 Seniors Centre Society

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411 Seniors is the go-to hub for older adults interests. The centre works toward an inclusive community of informed and connected older adults in the Lower Mainland.



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411seniors.org



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Located on the unceded homeland of the Skw̓wxwú̓mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations.