As in previous years, the general meeting held June 17th was attended by a capacity crowd.

In his welcome message Yvan Dutrisac, Montreal Chapter president, reviewed the main accomplishments of the BPG’s Montreal Chapter over the past year. He stressed the importance of well planned succession for the group.

As an example of well planned succession, he noted Raymond Bertrand’s nomination as the new BPG national president, and Diane Long as Vice-President; both are from the Montreal Chapter.

In his first message as President, Raymond Bertrand reviewed the accomplishments of each of the BPG committees over the past year. He then announced his priorities for the next twelve months, namely the protection of our benefits and pensions following the change in BCE proprietorship; and the reform of the pension laws.

He reiterated the Board of Directors commitment to work diligently to pursue it’s mandate, and to continue to inform members in a clear and timely manner. He concluded by stating that: “Your personal responsibility is to ensure that your Bell pensioner friends and ex-colleagues join the BPG NOW, since a large number of members is essential to ensure our success.”

Richard Vanslette, Quebec representative on the Pension Information Committee (PIC), commented on the financial health of the Pension Plan, and summarized the activities of the Pension Committee. He also spoke of the risks related to the sale of BCE.

The guest speaker this year was Notary Eric Lavoie of the firm Prud’homme, Fontaine, Dolan. He dealt with three subjects which were of concern to pensioners: common law spouses, wills, and the mandate for protection in the event of inability to act.

The many questions asked by those present seem to have confirmed the interest for the subjects covered. In conclusion, one of the members who attended stated: “I learned more on the subject today, than I learned during my whole life”.

The format of this year’s meeting reflects the results of a survey carried out at last year’s general meeting. Members in attendance were able to see that the visual aspect of the presentations have been greatly improved while the number and length of the presentations have been reduced.

THE ANNUAL MEETING: A REAL SUCCESS

The Annual Meeting: A Real Success 1
BPG Supports Call for Pension Summit 2
Financial Situation of the Pension Plan 3
Common Law Spouses, Wills, Mandates 4
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Sale of BCE: Are You Ready? 7
The Future of the Montreal Chapter 8

The Eastern Township sector’s annual meeting was held June 20th this year. Many of the members of the Board were able to address the numerous members who gathered at the “amis de la téléphonie” locale in Sherbrooke.

As to our Outaouais and Haute-Gatineau colleagues, their annual meeting will be held Thursday September 25th at the “Cabane en bois rond” in Gatineau, starting at 12:30 hours.
There are currently three major government reviews of pension legislation underway across Canada.

As reported earlier, Ontario and a joint Alberta and British Columbia initiative have undertaken public consultations with Ontario putting an emphasis on identifying issues with defined benefit plans. BPG has submitted in-depth responses to these provinces as well as to Nova Scotia which has also recently undertaken its own formal study.

These provinces are scheduled to release their independent findings this fall and are over and above the Finance Canada May 2005 pension legislative reform consultation. With the wrap-up of these formal consultative processes, there is some uncertainty as to what the next steps in the process will be and when they will take place.

As a result, a key pension plan stakeholder, The Canadian Institute of Actuaries, has written to the federal Minister of Finance requesting the Minister’s agreement and support in calling for a national pension summit to expedite the actions required to get the next steps in developing and implementing new and revised pension legislation underway in all jurisdictions.

It has been proposed that such a summit should take place later this fall or early next year at the latest.

BPG has written to the federal Minister of Finance in support of the Institute’s call for a national pension summit and also has written to the provincial ministers responsible for pension legislation to request their individual agreement and support for such an initiative.

**DID YOU KNOW THAT…**

**The rates of the Provincial Drug Insurance Plan are going up.**

Changes to the financial participation of persons insured under the Public Prescription Drug Insurance Plan became effective July 1st, 2008.

Here are the details of the rates, before and after July 1, 2008, for insured persons age 65 years and over, without GIS (Guaranteed Income Supplement).

**AT THE PHARMACY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before July 1st, 2008</th>
<th>After July 1st, 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly deductible</td>
<td>$14.10</td>
<td>$14.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly co-insurance</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum monthly contribution</td>
<td>$75.30</td>
<td>$77.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHEN FILING THE INCOME TAX RETURN (Annex K)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before July 1st, 2008</th>
<th>After July 1st, 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual premium</td>
<td>from $0 to $557</td>
<td>from $0 to $570</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information call the RAMQ at 514-864-3411 (Montreal), 418-646-4636 (Quebec), 1-800-561-9749 (Elsewhere in Quebec).

Richard Vanslette, Quebec pensioner representative on the Pension Information Committee (PIC) and a member of the BPG’s Board of Directors gave an overview of the financial condition of the Pension Plan at the annual meeting.

While the return on investment was at 12.33% in 2005 and at 12.8% in 2006, it was not more than 4.03% in 2007. Mr. Vanslette recalled that a rate of return of about 7% is required to cover the cash payouts. The 2008 performance is at risk as a result of market volatility and the American recession.

As to the plan’s solvency, we are reminded that the 827M deficit in 2005 was transformed into a 168M surplus in 2006. We expect 2007 results to show a surplus of approximately 100M.

Mr. Vanslette also reported on the activities of the BPG Pension Committee, of which he is a member.

In addition to a continual review of the information available on Bell’s Pension Fund, the Pension Committee maintained its implication in the main forums dealing with pension reform, particularly in the expert Committees established by the governments of Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia and Nova Scotia, as well as the C.D. Howe Institute.

The Committee presented its views during the 2008 federal government pre-budget consultation. The BPG also maintained regular communications and meetings with Finance Canada and other federal government bodies.

Mr. Vanslette also discussed the risks related to the BCE privatization. While the main risk related to the transaction remains the risk pertaining to financing the debt, the risks for pensioners are mitigated by the fact that the pension fund is held in trust, and that by law, the proprietor’s responsibility for the fund continues. In his opinion, the main effects of the transaction could be the limited access to financial information.

As to the plan’s solvency, we are reminded that the 827M deficit in 2005 was transformed into a 168M surplus in 2006. We expect 2007 results to show a surplus of approximately 100M.

Mr. Vanslette concluded by stating that: “We will certainly maintain our links with Bell and will work towards establishing them with the new proprietors”.

DID YOU KNOW THAT…

• A Reminder concerning Employee Discounts!!!

An article in our May 2008 Newsletter detailed the fact that any changes or upgrades to your present Bell services could result in the loss of your 35% discount for certain of these services since the Employee Discount Program does not necessarily apply to the new Bell offerings.

Once again we recommend that you inquire as to what effect any change in service might have on your employee discounts by calling Employee Services at 1 888 391 0005.
This is what Notary Eric Lavoie, of the firm of Prud’homme, Fontaine, Dolan, guest speaker at this year’s annual meeting told members during his presentation which covered three different subjects:

1) Common law (De Facto) spouses in Quebec

2) The will

3) Mandate offering protection in the event of inability to act

**Common law (de facto) spouses in Quebec**

Notary Lavoie revealed the results of a “Chambre des Notaires” 2007 survey covering 805 Quebecers living as a couple.

According to this survey, 60% of the people believe that after a certain number of years living common law, they have the same rights as married persons, while 64% believe that all the assets acquired during their common law relationship will be shared equally in the event of a rupture.

Nevertheless, with the exception of certain articles dealing with consent for care, adoption of the right to maintain rented quarters, the Quebec Civil Code does not recognize the “existence” of common law spouses in Quebec.

In fact, there is no disposition in the Quebec Civil Code which applies to common law spouses concerning the disposition of property in the event of the couple’s break-up.

According to Notary Lavoie, the only way to protect oneself is to sign the appropriate papers:

- The Common Law contract in order to provide for the impact of a rupture
- The Will in order provide for the death of one of the spouses
- The mandate to provide for protection in the event of inaptitude, and of course inability to act on the part of one of the spouses

**The Will**

There are three types of wills recognized or valid in Quebec:

1) The Holograph will

2) The will in the presence of witnesses

3) The Notarized will

For each of these wills, **strict rules as to form must be respected for the document to be valid**: this is why it is recommended that a Notary be consulted.

As to the content of the will; following an analysis of the family and economic situation, the notary can then proceed to prepare a will which will meet the specific needs of the testators. They must however include certain details, the main ones being:

- who inherits your property and in what proportion
- What provisions must be made in the event that the heir predeceases the testator
- Who will settle the estate: liquidator

**The Mandate for protection in the event of inability to act**

The presenter then went on to explain the difference between a Power of Attorney and a mandate for protection in the event of inability to act using the following formula:

**Power of attorney = The present**

The power of attorney can be used where a person needs help for managing his (her) assets. It remains valid as long as it has not been revoked, and that the person who consented to it has the capacities to revoke it.

**Mandate = Illness**

When a person becomes incapacitated, the mandate becomes necessary. The notarized mandate is adapted to the specific needs of the client, taking into account the
DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- **The Vision Care Reimbursement Plan**

  **If you retired before July 2000:**

  The Vision Care Reimbursement Plan reimburses for eye exams and the purchase of prescription eye glasses or contact lenses to a maximum of 75.00$ every 24 months.

  **If you retired after July 2000:**

  Plan A does not provide for any reimbursement.

  Plan B reimburses 100% of admissible vision care expenses, up to a maximum of 150.00$ per insured person per 24 months.

  For further information contact Manulife at: 1-800-749-5953, or visit the Benefits web site at: [https://www.benefits-avantages.hroffice.com/ms/common/logon2.asp](https://www.benefits-avantages.hroffice.com/ms/common/logon2.asp)

- **Cataract Operation**

  The Comprehensive Medical Expense Plan (CME) reimburses certain initial vision care expenses resulting from accidental injury, specific illnesses or severe eye conditions.

  An example of a severe eye condition would be a CATARACT operation.

  If you undergo an eye operation and you are prescribed eyeglasses or contact lenses these would be reimbursed. Manulife requires a note from your ophthalmologist specifying the nature of the illness.

  For more information contact Manulife at: 1-800-749-5953 or the Benefits web site at: [https://www.benefits-avantages.hroffice.com/ms/common/logon2.asp](https://www.benefits-avantages.hroffice.com/ms/common/logon2.asp)
In November 1998, Jim Tjelios asked the then President, Jean-Marc Hébert, whether BPG was interested in having a web site. The Board agreed and the site was activated in the spring of 1999.

At the beginning, Jim managed all of the Chapters’ pages for a year. Then Toronto and Ottawa began administering their own pages. Later, the other chapters took over their pages and Jim continued to look after the Montreal Chapter’s web site until now.

In addition to the web site, Jim designed BPG’s first information brochure and other graphic material for membership cards and campaigns.

Jim retired from Bell in January 1991 after 35 years spent mostly with the Eastern Area Traffic Department in Operator Services and Facilities Admin. He also worked for Telebec, Avalon Telephone in Newfoundland and 3 months in Lebanon in 1977.

These jobs took Jim and his family to Ottawa, Chicoutimi, St. John’s, Quebec, Sherbrooke and Beirut.

His later years were in Quebec Region Network Services and Personnel, with the last 10 years in Internal Audits.

With the redesign of BPG’s web sites, Jim decided that it was time for him to go on to other assignments within the organization. Francine Lussier has taken over the position of webmaster of the Montreal chapter’s new web site.

Jim intends to “stick around” and to remain an active member of the Chapter’s Executive Committee.

BPG’s new web sites are now up and running, and ready to welcome you. Whether it’s to learn more about the Group’s action on pension reform, to consult our newsletters or to obtain information about your pension and benefits, it’s now much easier to find what you’re looking for.

The BPG maintains eight web sites, including the five chapter sites (Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, and Southwestern Ontario), the BPG National site, and the bilingual version of the National and Montreal sites.

A small group of volunteers under the leadership of the Communications Committee has been working since the end of 2007 to make all the sites more functional and easier to navigate. They’ve also updated the content and appearance to create a more professional image.

So check out the new site at www.bellpensionersgroup.ca where you can also link to the local chapters.

We’d appreciate hearing what you think, so while you’re there, send your comments to the Communications Committee. You’ll find the address under “CONTACT US”.

www.bellpensionersgroup.ca
On September 11th, in light of the federal election campaign, the BPG sent a letter to the five main political parties running in the election.

In his letter, BPG President Raymond Bertrand mentions that “all pensioners have a keen interest in the ongoing financial security of their pension entitlements which represent, for most pensioners, the single largest source of their income. Since 2005, the BPG has been advocating with the federal government and relevant federal agencies on a number of initiatives to improve current pension legislation that would significantly reduce the financial risk for pensioners.”

He goes on to state that “in order that the BPG might assist its members in their understanding of your party’s policies with regard to pensions, I request that you respond to the following questions. It is the BPG’s intention to share your responses with its members prior to election day. For this reason, a response by October 3 would be appreciated.

1. Would your party be prepared to press for a legislated requirement for continual full solvency of defined benefit pension plans?

2. Would your party support a legislated requirement that defined benefit pension plans be subject, annually, to an independent audit?

3. Would your party support legislative changes that would, in the case that a sponsor of a defined benefit plan should fail, place the pension plan among those creditors who get preferred access to the remaining assets of the company?”

The replies received from the different parties will be published immediately on the BPG’s web site.

ARE YOU READY TO SELL YOUR BCE SHARES?

It is now quite certain that the deal to take BCE private will close later this fall. If you are a BCE shareholder you should be preparing for when your shares will be purchased by the Company.

A sale of shares could trigger a capital gain or loss which is the difference between:

• The cost to purchase the shares when they were acquired - subject to adjustment for stock splits, issuance of Nortel shares, etc.; and
• The $42.75 per share selling price.

Capital gains and losses are subject to income tax reporting. BPG members, who believe they might be subject to a significant capital gains tax, may have options available which could reduce the amount of tax payable.

It is recommended in these cases that members obtain competent tax advice in time to take appropriate action before the end of the tax year in which the shares are sold.

You can request tax advice through your professional financial planner or advisor. It is also suggested that BPG members may want to consult a professional financial advisor on options and opportunities for reinvesting the proceeds from the sale of BCE shares.

Note that if you do not currently have a qualified financial advisor, major financial institutions have qualified staff at most of their branches to assist you.
THE FUTURE OF THE MONTREAL CHAPTER MAY DEPEND ON YOU

With over 10,000 members, the BPG has become an organization that is recognized in government circles as well as by groups involved in the area of pension protection. We recently assumed the presidency of the Canadian Federation of Pensioners (CFP) which represents over 100,000 members.

If the BPG is to continue to play a role, particularly in these crucial times, it is imperative that succession step forward. Pensioners must see to their own affairs. We are all quite happy to see a pension cheque deposited in our bank account every month; we are all delighted to have a benefits plan at retirement. Then why not make a small effort to get involved for a period of time?

An organization like ours is entirely dependent on the support of volunteers. Recently, our colleague, André Langlois, who had accepted the role of Vice-President and Recruitment Coordinator, had to resign after being lured back to the job market. Here is a golden opportunity for a member to contribute to the growth of the BPG’s Montreal Chapter.

The position of Vice-President and Recruitment Coordinator includes the following responsibilities:

- Acts for the President in his absence
- Participates in the Montreal Chapter’s quarterly meetings (includes the annual meeting)
- Participates in the organization of the Montreal Chapter annual meeting (generally held in May or June)
- Member of the BPG national recruitment committee (4 conference calls annually)
- Responsible for the orientation of the recruitment campaign
- Coordinates the efforts of the regional representatives

There are surely a few people among the Montreal Chapter’s 3000 members who are willing to ensure the continuity of the movement and assume its leadership. The future of the Montreal Chapter is in your hands. Just contact me to discuss this further.

Yvan Dutrisac
President, Montreal Chapter
Bell Pensioners’ Group
514-254-6693
yvandutrisac2@sympatico.ca

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECRUIT A NEW MEMBER?

Some of your colleagues are not BPG members yet? Don’t hesitate to talk to them about our group.

To recruit new members, you can direct them to our internet site at: www.bellpensionersgroup.ca You will also find a membership application form that you can print and give them.

They can also call our BPG line at 514-382-9969 to obtain a pamphlet and application form.

As BPG members you are our best recruiters!