



**BPG President's Message**

Hi everyone,

I hope you are enjoying your summer activities now that summer has finally arrived!

Several provincial governments – including Quebec, New Brunswick, and Ontario - as well as the federal government are looking at, or have already implemented, changes to pension legislation that could jeopardize defined benefit (DB) pensions. Plan sponsors continue to try to influence federal and provincial governments to implement changes that could transfer risk to retirees.

The greatest risks we face as Defined Benefit plan (DB) pensioners are that:

- a) rule changes would allow reductions to pensions we've already earned. Target Benefit Pension plans, under consideration by Finance Canada and others, would permit the conversion of DB pensions and the reduction of pension benefits already earned.
- b) our pension plan could be wound up when it is underfunded. Funding rules, particularly for provincially-regulated DB plans, allow deficits to persist. At the same time, federal insolvency legislation provides little protection for the greatest amounts owed to a pension plan. A good example we're all too familiar with is Nortel pensioners who lost about 40% of their pensions as a result of Nortel's bankruptcy.

BPG continues to advocate for the protection of our Defined Benefit pensions. We are proactively meeting with key players in the new Liberal government to ensure they are sensitive to the concerns of pensioners. At the same time, we are attempting to ascertain the government's priorities and schedule for pension initiatives. It is clear that CPP reform is a top priority for the federal government.

The March federal budget signalled that the government is also intending to proceed with other pension-related initiatives, which we understand to include legislation to further permit Target Benefit plans and a review of the "30% rule" for pension investments. With each of these initiatives, we will ensure that our views are clearly and persuasively presented both proactively and in response to government action on these files. We are also collaborating with the Canadian Federation of Pensioners (CFP) and are closely tying our advocacy efforts with the Air Canada Pionairs on these issues. At the provincial level, we are supporting the efforts of CFP to ensure that pensioner concerns are heard.

The solvency ratio for the Bell Canada pension plan was 93.8% as of December 31, 2015, up from 92.8% at the end of 2014. Official 2015 pension plan results should be available in June 2016. More information

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about these results will be provided on our web site and in this newsletter.

Over the past three and a half years as President of BPG, I have particularly focussed on three objectives: protecting the pension promise, increasing our membership, and improving the relationship we have with our sponsor. I am very pleased with the progress we've made in each of these areas.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Patte Seaton as the new BPG President and thank her for stepping up to the plate.

It has been a privilege for me to represent such an important and impressive organization and I look forward to continuing to work with the Board as past President for the next 2 years. I would like to thank all of you who have supported me in my different roles over the past ten years as a BPG Board member and over the past 3 years as President. Best wishes to you all for a safe and enjoyable summer.

Dan Mc Donald

## Message from Patte Seaton - Our New President

To Our BPG Membership,

Let me introduce myself – I am Patte Seaton and a member of the Ontario Central Chapter. I have been nominated to be the next President of our Bell Pensioners' Group Board of Directors. I was honored to be nominated by the Board of Directors and thankful for the membership support at our recent AGMs. The Board of Directors will confirm the appointment of all Officers, including my role as President at the June Board Meeting. So very exciting!

For those of you who are not familiar with my Bell background, I retired in 2004 as Vice President of Residential Customer Care for 310-Bell. I worked at Bell for 32 years, mostly in Customer Service, working my way up through the ranks from a Grade 3 filing clerk. I am not afraid of hard work!

I have been a member of the Bell Pensioners' Group Board of Directors since 2013. I started as the Recording Secretary, then in 2015 I assumed the Vice President – Ontario role. It has been an interesting journey.

I have learned so much since I joined this Board of Directors: about the risks that face us as Defined Benefit Plan pensioners; the importance of paying attention to legislation that is potentially pension impacting; the criticality of establishing relationships with key politicians; how to use lobbyists in our favor; and just how hard retired Bell folks work for our cause. It is a great team!

I look forward to serving you ... and doing everything that we can do collectively to protect the pension promise! I know you are depending on that. Me too!

I can be reached on email at anytime – [patte.seaton@sympatico.ca](mailto:patte.seaton@sympatico.ca). Don't hesitate to contact me.

Warmest regards,

Patte

## Ontario Central Chapter Chair Report - Titus Ramkhalawansingh

BPG Ontario Central held its AGM in North York on May 17<sup>th</sup> 2016, as well as a General Meeting in Barrie on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2016.

While attendance at both meetings was less than we expected there were many very good questions which helped to clarify BPG's work and chapter activity. If anyone wants more details, the presentations can be found on our website.

We were particularly impressed in the number of members who volunteered to help recruit former colleagues in the areas where they live or in groups that they were involved with. Our Membership Recruitment team will follow-up on these very promising leads. We invite other members to continue to help us pursue current and future retirees who belong to our defined benefit pension plan. If you are willing to help us recruit people in your area or are a member of a group that includes Bell retirees and meets

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regularly we would be happy to provide you with brochures to hand out at the meeting and/or attend one of your events to talk about BPG. Also, we have a list of retirees who are not yet members on our website. Please scan the list and encourage anyone you may know to join BPG. Here is the link: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/111zVKpNtiHjqsELYlopVcxD1\\_lyS3s9hIBJ-AsSxnrU/edit#gid=953625659](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/111zVKpNtiHjqsELYlopVcxD1_lyS3s9hIBJ-AsSxnrU/edit#gid=953625659)

Members who have not yet renewed their membership in 2016 will receive a special insert in their newsletter encouraging their renewal before we have to call and remind them to renew.

At the AGM we conducted the draw for prizes for those members who had participated in our recruitment contest over the winter. Our team will be exploring new ideas to reach out to our current members to help us recruit new members.

In the fall we will return to the UNIFOR meeting Hall in Oshawa on Monday October 24<sup>th</sup> and to the Burnhamthorpe Community Centre in Mississauga on Thursday October 27<sup>th</sup> 2016. We hope that members within driving range of these locations will join us and bring the same enthusiasm as the folks who attended our spring meetings.

## Treasurer's Report - Glen Simpson

### AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS Fiscal Year 2015, BPG INC

On April 28, 2016 BPG Inc. Board approved the audit results from BDO Canada for the fiscal year 2015 and that report was presented at the Ontario Central Chapter AGM on May 17, 2015 which approved an audit engagement for 2016 by BDO Canada. Contrary to past years' audits, BDO Canada provided an unqualified or unrestricted opinion, including BPG's revenues and the income statement now splits expenses between Corporate Group and all other Chapters. The report shows consolidated results only and can be viewed on the BPG web site at

<http://www.bellpensionersgroup.ca/BPG/Documents/Final%20Signed%202015%20Audit%20Report%20English.pdf> or by asking for a copy from the Chapter Chair or Treasurer.

Revenue, overwhelmingly membership fees, was \$215,727 (down 1.3% from 2014), driven by the members count of 10,189, 0.5% lower (although our chapter declined 2.5%). However, BPG Inc. expenses \$238,903 significantly exceeded revenues (a shortfall of \$23,176 down from \$40,767 in 2014), although nearly 8% lower than 2014 and nearly \$35,000 below budget. Continued aggressive funding of advocacy and research required the Corporate Group to collect a special levy of \$5 per member from all chapters or \$49,700. The end result was that Corporate expenses only barely exceeded their enhanced revenues, but all Chapters ended the year in deficit including Ontario Central \$6202. This trend of funding by the Corporate Group is expected to continue and in April 2016 another \$8 per member levy was collected from each Chapter (total \$79,000, Ontario Central \$25,704).

The presentation at our AGM and Barrie meeting provided details beyond the audit report for Ontario Central expenses and Corporate. Ontario Central's \$24,114 expenses (\$5110 or 17% below 2014) are dominated by costs for printing and postage of membership communications (61%), lower this year in the absence of the costs of new multi-year membership cards in 2014. Meetings costs are 13%, leaving 26% for other administrative costs. Thus our Chapter spent \$7.50 of the \$10 retained per member (down from \$8.80 in 2014) before the \$5 special levy to Corporate.

Corporate expenses of \$152,630 (\$172,994 in 2014) can be segmented as \$59,500 (\$72,300 in 2014) for operational costs, \$93,100 (\$100,500 in 2014) for project costs. Or by category, consultancy \$54,700 (3% higher), with accounting \$15,600 and insurance \$9,800 (\$8,200 in 2014). Travel is another \$28,600 (\$23,100 in 2014) and communications costs \$11,500. As a reference point, the geographical chapters traditionally fund corporate \$100,000 by the transfer of half of the membership fee.

From an Assets perspective, BPG Inc. is healthy (though down marginally from last year) surpassing half a million dollars, made up of cash \$259,513, short-term investments \$288,028 and other current assets \$15,644. Our chapter's share is \$46,396 cash and \$103,256 investments. Off-setting liabilities are prin-

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cipally pre-paid membership fees (2016 and beyond) \$177,947 (our chapter's share \$44,875), leaving a residual equity of \$360,338 (down 6%).

## **Minutes - BPG Ontario Central Annual General Meeting - May 17, 2016**

Ontario Central Bell Pensioners' Group held its 2016 AGM on May 17, 2016 at the Willowdale Baptist Church at 20 Olive Avenue in North York. Prior to the business meeting, registration was held and refreshments served as members socialized.

### **Chapter Chair Opening Remarks and Chapter Report & Elections – Titus Ramkhalawansingh**

Titus welcomed the members and talked about the chapter role in BPG and some of the key activities of the Ontario Central chapter which included

#### **2015 Membership Survey**

- Our Chapter's survey results were very good
  - 99% Satisfaction with Services
  - 91% Met Expectations
  - 100% Organization Appropriately represents their needs
- Chapter survey action plans include:
  - Focus on recruiting new members
  - More member meetings in 2016 – return to Barrie, Oshawa and Mississauga
  - Improve communication through more frequent email bulletins on items of interest
  - Better 2 way communication
  - Local and Toll Free number consolidation of voice and email
  - New email program enables replies better error identification

#### **Membership**

- Current membership is 3240 compared to 3153 at year end 2015
- There are 543 members who have not renewed for 2016 who we will need to call despite notices and reminders

#### **Focus on Growth in 2016**

- Special Committee has been established to focus efforts new players/ideas.
- Several Initiatives implemented
  - Attended Telecom Volunteer meetings in Oakville, Fieldway, Brampton
  - Contacting inactive members from the past 5 years
  - Attended COMTECH AGM
  - Attended UNIFOR Ontario Communications Council
  - Held Recruitment Contest – winners selected and announced at the AGM  
Dianne Fullerton, Pamela Fox, Camie Tang Chang, Aubrey Yearwood,  
Elaine McGuire

We need our existing members to help recruit new members!

#### **2016-2017 Slate of Directors**

The National Board consists of up to 20 Directors. The board strives for a balance between Ontario and Quebec that is reflective of BPG membership distribution.

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- Ontario: Patte Seaton, Michelle Pilon, Gayle Duchene, Diane Holgate, Sue Dawes, Marg Eades, Dave Palmer, Peter Dilworth, Denis Henry
- Québec: Daniel McDonald, Denis Marquis, Carol Lacroix, Raynald Wilson, Hélène D. Lefebvre

The 6 Chapter Chairs (3 Ontario, 3 Québec) are Directors on the National Board and are elected by the membership of their respective Chapter.

Titus Ramkhalawansingh moved that **"The BPG membership renews Daniel McDonald, Patte Seaton and Marg Eades for an additional two-year term and elects the following new Directors as recommended by the current BPG Board for a two year term:**

- **Ontario: Michelle Pilon, Diane Holgate, Denis Henry**
- **Québec: Denis Marquis, Carol Lacroix, Raynald Wilson, Hélène D. Lefebvres."**

The motion was seconded by Phil Thompson and approved.

Since there were no nominations for Ontario Central Chapter Chair, the current chair Titus Ramkhalawansingh is declared elected by acclamation for another 2 year term to 2018.

### **Current Chapter Board Members**

Titus introduced our Chapter board members

#### **Question:**

Russ Donaldson asked what Montreal is doing to grow their membership base. Titus indicated that we have been talking to the Montreal board and we are doing the same types of things to secure new members. We have 66 new members since the beginning of the year, however, we have lost 120 to 200 members.

### **Treasurer Audited Financial Report/Appointment of Auditors - Glen Simpson**

Glen walked through highlights of the 2015 audit report which is reflected in his separate newsletter article on Page 3.

Glen made the following two motions:

- **"That the firm BDO Canada be retained as the auditors for BPG until the close of the next annual meeting, at the remuneration agreed to in the response to our "Request for Audited Services"** which was seconded by Pat Deakin and approved.
- **"That the firm BDO Canada, conduct a full financial audit for 2016"** which was seconded by Cathy Vendramin and approved.

#### **Questions**

- Pat Deakin asked about the \$8 per member levy in 2016. Glen explained that the Corporate board required the money as they require at least one year's operating budget. If their funds drop below this threshold, they need to get money from the chapters as they have no revenue sources
- Mary Kot questioned spent on TBP (Targeted Benefit Plan) research and BPG's relationship with CFP (Canadian Federation of Pensioners). Titus explained that CFP is an umbrella organization for several pension organizations. CFP and BPG work very closely together while not duplicating efforts. CFP is taking the lead for BPG on Ontario-based pension issues. With the new federal government, BPG needs to pay for lobbyist to meet with the right deputy ministers to put our platform forward.

### **COMTECH Changes & Direction – John Mach**

John Mach, CEO of Comtech, spoke to our members about the history of COMTECH and the exciting changes underway.

- COMTECH has been a very good partner with BPG, promoting our organization with their members

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- Bell Canada Credit Union was born in 1940 with \$397.79 in assets and 2 products – savings and fixed loans.
- In 1950, the Ontario Telephone Employees Credit Union was formed, with \$295K in assets
- In 1995, the name changed to Comtech Credit Union
- In 2002, they moved to Ottawa and acquired the Nortel Credit Union.
- In May 2016 they have \$400M in assets
- They acquired 2 branches of the Toronto Fire Service Credit Union and there are 2 more branches expected to join them.
- They are also expecting to acquire Limestone Credit Union in Kingston with total assets now expected to be \$513M
- They expect to have branches from Toronto to Kingston.
- They are now a full-service Credit Union with 8 – 15% growth per year.
- Their current business is 50% Retail and 50% Commercial
- The biggest threat is disruptive technologies such as the Uber app created to pay their drivers as well as other non-regulated institutes

### **Bell – Kerry Arbour**

- Kerry Arbour, Vice-President – Customer Service shared what is currently happening at Bell.
- Bell celebrated its 136<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2015.
- Bell is now Canada's largest communication company with 21 million customer connections with revenues coming from the following growth areas:
  - Wireless – 33%
  - Broadband – 26%
  - Media – 12%
  - TV – 11%
- Bell's goal: To be recognized by customers as Canada's leading communications company

There are 6 Strategic Initiatives

- **Invest in broadband networks and services**
  - Bell's LTE network is ranked #1
  - Bell has committed to invest \$20B in network infrastructure by the end of 2020 which is increasing Fibre to the Node and Fibre to the Home.
  - Bell can provide 1GB speeds
- **Accelerate wireless**
  - In Q4, 2015, Bell gained 49.5% of net new post-paid subscribers of all wireless incumbents
- **Leverage wireline momentum**
  - Bell is the largest provider of TV service across the country with 2.7M customers
  - Bell is the largest internet service provider in the country with 3.4M subscribers
- **Expand media leadership**
  - Bell leads Canadian multimedia with its HBO Canada, Crave TV, iHeart Radio digital streaming, and leading sports content
- **Improve customer service**
  - JD Power reported that Virgin Mobile provided the Highest Ranked Purchase Experience among Wireless Providers in Canada
  - Significant investment to improve customer service has resulted in fewer customer complaints
- **Achieve a competitive cost structure**

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- Bell announced an increase in the common share dividend in February 2016. This is the 12<sup>th</sup> time in the past 7 years and provides a total increase of 87%
- Since the end of 2008, total shareholder return has grown by 208%

In 2010, Bell launched Bell Let's Talk: Mental Health initiative which has raised awareness plus \$120M over 10 years.

If you experience any unresolved issues or come across a Sales opportunity, feel free to email Kerry directly at [kerry.arbour@bell.ca](mailto:kerry.arbour@bell.ca).

Source of all info: <http://www.bce.ca/investors/AR-2015/2015-bce-annual-report.pdf>

### Questions:

- Bell Sympatico email is gradually migrating from Outlook.com to another Canadian email server. Customers need to follow instructions sent to them by email. They can call Bell or email [kerry.arbour@bell.ca](mailto:kerry.arbour@bell.ca) to get technical support.
- Bell Satellite TV is the largest satellite provider. Bell continues to offer this service while rolling out Fibe TV
- A member asked about Ransomware. If you are affected, send an email to [privacy@bell.ca](mailto:privacy@bell.ca).
- A member received a detailed survey from Bell. Kerry said to send the survey to him if his name is not on the survey
- Another member is receiving duplicate emails – Kerry said to send the emails to him
- A member asked about the recently announced acquisition of Manitoba Tel. We will need to wait until the end of the year to see if the CRTC approves it.
- A member questioned the touch tone charge on their monthly billing. Unfortunately, this cannot be changed at this time.

**Please Note: that details of the presentations can be found on our website:**

<http://www.bellpensionersgroup.ca/index3News.php?lang=en&id=742&chapt=OntarioCentral>

## Welcome to New Members

RAG	Giguere	THUNDER BAY	ON
D A	Priddle	VINELAND	ON
B W	MacMillan	SAULT STE MARIE	ON
M	Joyce	WOOLER	ON
M A	Hatton	NEWMARKET	ON
T	Hewitt	OAKVILLE	ON
J	Westlund	TORONTO	ON
M	Nasato	NORTH YORK	ON
O	Hew	MARKHAM	ON
J D	Campbell	CHURCHILL	ON
P C	Brooks	ETOBICOKE	ON
D V	Reynolds	TORONTO	ON
L	Musack	HILLSDALE	ON
L	Humphries	BARRIE	ON
C	Hickling	WHITBY	ON



# COMTECH CREDIT UNION

Wise Rate Alert  
[www.comtechcu.com](http://www.comtechcu.com)

1 Year Term Deposit	18 Month Term Deposit	5 Year Term Deposit
2.05%*	2.10%*	2.30%*

### Did you know?

Bell Pensioners can have a deduction from their pension cheque deposited to a Comtech account.

### Refer a Friend

Refer a friend or family member who opens a Term Deposit or TFSA, and we'll reward both of you with a \$30 gift card for gas or groceries.

### Special rates for Bell Pensioners, friends and family

\* Rates subject to change. Term Deposit rates apply to regular deposits, TFSAs, RRSPs and RRFs.

Call our Member Support Centre at 1-800-209-7444 (press1)

9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Monday to Friday

9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Saturday

## Ontario Central BPG Membership Application Form for New Members



Bell Pensioners' Group

Together, Protecting our Pensions and Benefits

I am a current or future (Defined Benefit) pensioner from the Bell Canada group of companies and would like to become a member of the Bell Pensioners' Group (BPG) Inc.

Given Name:	Family Name:	
Initials:	Telephone:	
Address:		
City or Town:	Province:	Postal Code:
Retired or Retiring From (check one):    Bell Canada ___    Bell Mobility ___    Expertech ___    BIMS ___		
Bell ExpressVu ___    BICTOS (Connexim) ___    BCE ___    Aliant ___    Other (specify) _____		
Year Retired/Left Bell (yyyy)		I will retire/Leave Bell (yyyy)
I would like to receive my newsletters ( <i>which may include commercial content</i> ) by		
(check one):                      Email _____                      Mail _____		
Email Address:		
Payment Amount enclosed:		
Signature:		Date: (yy/mm/dd)

The Annual Fee covers the period from January 1 to December 31

There are two options for paying your yearly BPG membership fee:

1.    **Paying by personal cheque** - Please complete this form and return it with your payment of \$20.00, payable to "Bell Pensioners' Group", or to "Bell Pensioners' Group (BPG) Inc.", P.O. Box 5, Stn. "D", Etobicoke, ON M9A 4X1. (*Please do not send post-dated cheques*)
  
2.    **Paying by credit card using our online application form** – To access the online application form just enter the following link into your web browser:  
<https://bellpensionersgroup.ca/membership.php?lang=en&chapt=OntarioCentral>

**This newsletter is published by the Ontario Central Chapter of the Bell Pensioners' Group (BPG).**  
**Please send your comments or suggestions to: [ontcentral@bellpensionersgroup.ca](mailto:ontcentral@bellpensionersgroup.ca) or call (905) 695-9230, (toll free call, 1+ (855) 691-2073) or write to; Bell Pensioners' Group (BPG) Inc., P.O. Box 5, Stn. D, Etobicoke, ON M9A 4X1.**  
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