



Bell Pensioners' Group

Together, Protecting our Pensions and Benefits

Toronto Chapter

November, 2013 - Newsletter

P.O. Box 5, Stn "D", Etobicoke, ON M9A 4X1

www.bellpensionersgroup.ca

Volume # 67

2014 Membership Renewal Notice

Many of you have already renewed your membership for 2014 at our Fall General Meetings, by mail or PayPal. This is the first official notice. If you have not yet renewed your 2014 Membership we have mailed you a copy of the newsletter and enclosed a return envelope which you may use to send in your renewal. In addition to the enclosed envelope, we have also indicated on the envelope in which your newsletter was mailed, "Membership Renewal Time". If you did not receive an envelope then you have already renewed for 2014. We hope this will clarify your status. The membership fee continues unchanged at \$20. Many of you prefer to pay online and you may do so at the following link where you can use your credit card or PayPal. There is a \$1 charge for this service which is the cost of the transaction fee and not a BPG surcharge. <http://www.bellpensionersgroup.ca/membership.php?lang=en&chapt=Toronto>

We thank you for paying now as it saves our volunteers a lot of time if we don't have to call you in the spring or send out annoying reminders. In April 2014 we plan to distribute new permanent membership cards to all paid up members to replace the current semi-permanent cards which are starting to show their age.

2013 Fall General Meetings Review

There were 2 fall meetings this year, one in Oshawa on October 31st 2013, and the other in Burlington on November 1st 2013. Like the spring meeting we were disappointed at the attendance in both locations. This newsletter will summarize the information presented at these meetings as we realize that it is too far for many who are some distance away or do not have transportation to get to these cities.

At the Oshawa meetings we had members from as far east as Cobourg and west to Toronto. In Burlington we had members from Toronto to the East and Hamilton to the West down into the Peninsula and even one from New York State who attends our meetings each year. In both locations we provided sandwiches, coffee and tea and some treats for those who missed trick or treating.

Chapter Chair Report

The chapter chair welcomed everyone and reported on a range of chapter operational issues. Our shrinking membership continues to be a source of concern and while we have a steady infusion of new members we lose

Continued on Page 2

BPG Toronto November 2013 Newsletter—Contents

2014 Membership Renewal Notice	Page 1	BPG Board/ Chapter Chair Nomination Form	Page 6
2013 Fall General Meetings Review	Page 1	Bell Volunteer Program - Charity & Sports	Page 6
Bell Pension plan solvency ratio reaches 90%	Page 4	Are You Aware?	Page 7
Message from the President of BPG	Page 4	Cost of Living Adjustment for 2014	Page 7
Board of Directors Nominations & Elections	Page 5	BPG Toronto Membership Application Form	Page 8

Cont' from Page 1

many members who do not renew. While this has slowed considerably thanks to our phone calls and reminders, the effort to go after renewals is time consuming and takes away from our recruitment activity.

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS RECENT YEARS

	Membership	New	Deceased	Non-Payment
YE	2010 - 3612	147	47	223
YE	2011 - 3496	106	66	221
YE	2012 - 3408	59	59	62
Sept	2013 - 3316	41	43	44

We Need Your Help!

We have tried ad's in Bell InTouch, COMTECH and Zoomer magazines yet many retirees indicate they have never heard of BPG. You can help us by renewing your own membership and by recruiting new members. Our strength lies in the number of members we represent. To facilitate this we have prepared a list of retirees from 2010 to the present and deleted those who have already joined BPG. The list has been "mined" from InTouch and consequently the city shown is the place where the retiree was working when they retired as opposed to where they currently live. For logistical reasons and cost the list is only available on the internet in a Google spreadsheet by clicking on the link below. If the document does not appear please copy and paste the link in your browser.

<http://bellpensionersgroup.ca/index3News.php?lang=en&id=509&chapt=Toronto>

The list is sorted by city and we ask that you review it and identify any of your friends and acquaintances listed, and use your personal connection to attempt to recruit them as members. A copy of our brochure is at the following link which you can share with those that you try to recruit: <http://bellpensionersgroup.ca/BPG/Documents/BPGBrochureOct2013.pdf>

Thank you for helping us in this effort to strengthen BPG and our efforts to improve the security of our pension and benefits. **BPG has also now extended the membership criteria to include current employees who are members of the "Defined Benefit Plan" so you can also help us recruit active employees who fit that criterion. Those joining now will be credited for 2014 membership.**

You can also send us their contact information at Toronto@bellpensionersgroup.ca or at 905-695-9230.

Toronto & Area Chapter Name Change

In looking at the various obstacles to recruiting members, one of the issues that arose was the name of the chapter - "Toronto and Area". It is believed that people may not identify with that name and think there is no chapter listed for their area they simply do not join. A few years ago the London Chapter changed its name to "South West Ontario" (SWO) to better identify with its geography. The chapter board considered several possibilities and consulted with the other Ontario Chapters as well as introducing the idea at our Fall meetings. Among the ideas considered were "Ontario Central" or "Golden Horseshoe" or "Ontario Central and GTA". The Toronto advisory board subsequently discussed the issue and decided that the chapter should be called "**Ontario Central**". We will implement this change in 2014 coincident with the production of new membership cards and the spring newsletters.

Chapter Membership Survey

The chair also reported on a membership survey conducted over the summer to gather data and input from our members as opposed to the personal opinions of a few of our members. We used a Google Form application to distribute the survey and collect results. While this unfortunately left out our members who only receive hard copy, that given of the cost and complexity that would have been associated with a paper survey as well as the difficulty of tabulation, this approach was not unreasonable. The Google tool costs nothing and automatically tabulates responses onto a spreadsheet for analysis. The survey went to 1966 members or 60% of our membership and there were 346 response or 17.6% providing a 4.8% error rate at a 95% confidence level.

Continued on Page 3

Cont' from Page 2

The survey results can be found on our website at:

<http://bellpensionersgroup.ca/index3News.php?lang=en&id=493&chapt=Toronto>

The key finding was that members support our policy of alternating the meeting locations which gives them a more convenient opportunity to attend at least one meeting per year. Participants were asked to give their first and second choice for meeting locations. Given the error rate there was a virtual tie for the choice of location for a spring AGM with Central Toronto having a slight edge over Oshawa and Mississauga for first choice and a more significant edge for the second choice.

You also told us that the topics you were most interested in hearing about are the following:

Pension status and issues.	25	7.2%
Estate & Financial Planning for retirees	19	5.5%
Benefits including Employee Discount	19	5.5%
Travel and Health Insurance	16	4.6%
Bell Direction/Business Plan/Verizon	13	3.8%

The data collected will be used to guide planning for future meetings.

Chapter Financial Update

There was a brief update on our financial status to the end of September 2013 which is trending similar to last year. Costs have been well contained in the past few years thanks in large part to distribution of newsletters by email and less costly meeting locations. Note that once expenses associated with Fall meetings and newsletters are included, we forecast that 2013 will be quite similar to 2012.

	2012	YTD Sept 2013
Membership fee income	\$68,780	\$66,360
Transfer to Corporate	\$34,690	\$29,070
Liabilities	\$49,165	\$10,125
Total Assets	\$134,316	\$131,200
Investments	\$64,525	\$99,819
Cash Account	\$77,421	\$30,382

Expenditures	2012	2013
Total	\$21,812	\$10,191
Printing	29%	34%
Postage	31%	33%
Meeting Refreshments	11%	9%
Meeting Facility	7%	9%
Travel	5%	4%
Office Supplies	4%	4%

Pension Information Committee Report : Allison Henriques

At both Oshawa and Burlington meetings Allison Henriques the retiree representative reported on the PIC meetings and the 2013 report which can be found on the Bell InTouch Website at the following link:

<http://www.bellencontact.ca/web/en/news/doc/PICReport2013.pdf>

Much of the data will be covered in the President's report which follows but she noted that at the end of December 2012 on a solvency basis the plan has a deficit of \$2.532 Billion on a solvency basis or was 86.8% funded.

Bell reported unofficially that at the end of June the plan was 90% funded and this was also stated during the BCE 3rd Quarter report to the financial community. Allison described how Bell was transitioning the investments from a Revenue Generating Portfolio (RGP) to a Low Risk Portfolio (LRP) as the fund was mature and the intent was to create a stable less volatile fund to meet future obligations. Among other notable items was the fact that the life expectancy of Bell retirees was even greater than the tables of the actuaries so Bell had opted to use the greater but more accurate liability in the valuation of the fund liabilities. In summary the pension fund is being very well managed.

Bell's Pension Plan Solvency Ratio Reaches 90%

The solvency ratio of the plan reached the 90% mark at the end of June 2013 while the plan risk was reduced because of the Financial Risk Management (FRM) framework adopted by the Bell Canada Pension Plan in 2009.

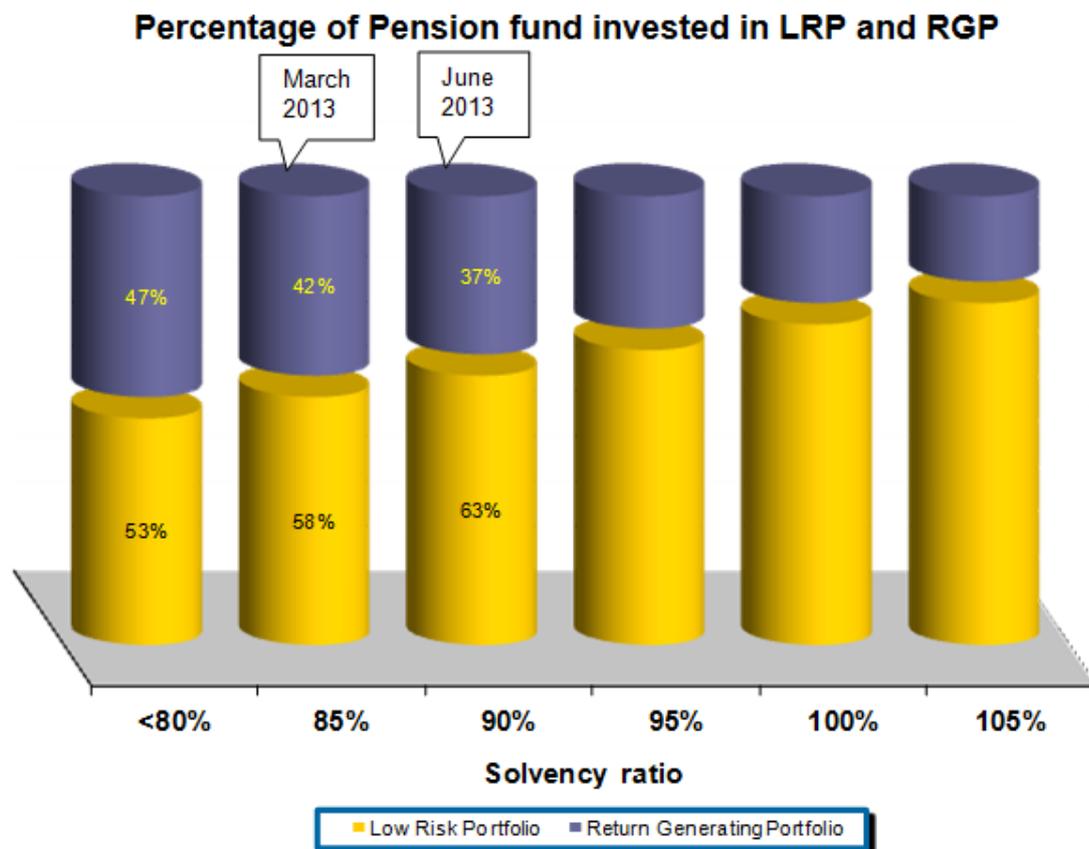
The objective of FRM is to reduce risk and volatility while maintaining or improving the funded status of the plan.

Under FRM, the pension plan is being de-risked in a disciplined and systematic way by dividing the fund into two components:

The Low-Risk Portfolio (LRP), where the objective is to mimic the return of the liability proxy (the amount of funds required to meet future obligations);

The Return Generating Portfolio (RGP), where the objective is to generate return exceeding the liability proxy while assuming an acceptable level of risk.

The pension fund assets are moved gradually from the RGP to the LRP as the solvency position improves. The graph below shows recent changes in the asset allocation.



Message from the President of BPG

Hi everyone,

As stated in my first article last April, one of my intentions was to meet with you at one of your Chapter meetings. I would like to report that I have just completed my round trip, attending all Chapter meetings that occurred last spring and this fall, in Ontario and Québec, including our new Télébec Chapter meetings. I would like to thank all members who have taken the time to attend one of the Chapter meetings.

My first objective was to obtain your feedback on the work BPG performed for you and present to you some of

Continued on Page 5

Cont' from Page 4

our key investigations. I have received very positive comments on the work we are performing as a team and also some of your concerns.

I would also like to underline the great work accomplished by all Chapter primes who have organized these meetings. We need to remember that all BPG primes, including Board members are all volunteers and they do this with a lot of passion and they truly appreciate your participation. For those who have not had a chance to attend one of our Chapter meetings, a video is available on our website providing the President's BPG report.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that Charlie Labarge resigned from the Board last September, because of personal reasons. The work he accomplished in a short period of time as VP and Pension Committee Chair was truly appreciated. I also would like to thank Lancy Hum for her great work and dedication as secretary of the Board, she will be replaced by Patte Seaton, and Ron Hunt for the great work he has accomplished in many positions on the Board over the past 6 years.

We are seeking a replacement for Charlie and Ron. If you would like to join a Chapter Board or the National Board to volunteer for a position, please let us know. I would like to underline that some of our Board members have given many years as volunteers and would appreciate a replacement. If you have any interest in joining a great team, do not hesitate, give us a call.

As you will see in the Pension Information Committee (PIC) Report, the solvency ratio at the end of June 2013 was at 90%, which is good news for Bell pensioners. These improving results are related to the change in the investment strategies that Bell has put in place in the past years, de-risking our pension plan by moving assets from the Return Generating Portfolio to the Low-Risk Portfolio (for details see Page 3) with the addition of voluntary contributions of over \$2.7B, in the past 4 years, and an improvement of the financial market.

Following the Indalex decision, the D'Amours Report and the wireless competition issues, it's obvious for BPG that we need to increase our focus on legislation issues. The Board has decided to create a committee to focus on the Government relationship and the changes to legislation. Some of the key objectives for this committee will be to highlight and track legislation issues and work with the Pension Committee and the Canadian Federation of Pensioners (CFP) to influence all proposed changes to legislation that could have an impact on our pension plan. We will keep you posted on the outcomes.

Since the beginning of the year, BPG's Communication team has focussed on establishing new links to social media such as LinkedIn and Facebook in order to reach out to new members. Again I will request your support, if you know colleagues that are pensioners and not members of BPG, please contact them and let them know about us.

Thanks, Dan Mc Donald,

President – Bell Pensioners' Group

Board of Directors Nominations and Elections

As mentioned in our September newsletter, elections of the corporate Board of Directors will be held at our Annual General Meetings in the spring of 2014.

The BPG Bylaws require that a minimum of seven and a maximum of twenty Board members be elected by the Membership at large. The main role of a BPG Board member is to set strategy and manage the affairs of BPG.

Accordingly, all BPG members in good standing are invited to submit names of interested parties, who have indicated their willingness to serve as a Director at Large for a two-year term beginning June 2014.

The nomination committee composed of Dan Mc Donald and Louise Touchette will review the submissions and present a slate of nominees for election at Chapter meetings in the spring. If you would like to serve or if you know someone that might be interested, please complete and forward the following Nomination Form.

Continued on Page 6

BPG 2014 Board of Directors Nomination Form

Board of Directors Nominations and Elections

This form should be used to submit a candidate for the position of Director at Large. One form is required for each candidate submitted. Both the nominator and the nominee must be members in good standing of BPG and the nominated candidate must have agreed to allow his or her name to stand for election.

Please complete the requirements below and mail or email this information by December 31, 2013 to:

Ms Louise Touchette

BPG Director

700, Nicolas-Perrot

Boucherville (QC)

J4B 7V7

or

ltouchette@sympatico.ca

NOMINATED CANDIDATE

The following candidate has agreed to serve as a Director at Large of Bell Pensioners' Group.

Name.....

Address..... City/Town.....

Province..... Postal Code.....

Telephone..... Email.....

NOMINATED BY

Name.....

Address..... City/Town.....

Province..... Postal Code.....

Telephone..... Email.....

Nominations for Toronto & Area Chapter Chair

Nominations for Chapter Chair are to run concurrent to the Board of Directors election. Please use the above form and **send your Chapter Chair Nominations to :**

BPG Toronto Chapter Elections

PO Box 5 Station D, Etobicoke, ON M9A 4X1 or email toronto@bellpensionersgroup.ca

Bell Volunteer Program - Charity and Sports

To apply for a grant for the current year, the deadline is December 15,

Local charities and provincial and local sport groups benefit greatly from the support of volunteers. The Bell Volunteer Program recognizes the volunteer work of retirees through grants that provide direct financial support to the registered charitable organizations or sport groups for which you volunteer.

The amount of an individual grant is \$250. The amount of the team grant is \$2,500. There is a limit of one grant per retiree per calendar year, either on your own or as a member of a team. The maximum total grant for a single organization is \$2,500 per calendar year.

To apply for an individual grant, you must have volunteered a minimum of 50 hours in the calendar year to a single registered charitable organization or a single sport group that meets the Program eligibility criteria.

Cont' from Page 6

To apply for a team grant, your team of volunteers, comprised of at least two Bell representatives (retirees or employees), must have volunteered a minimum of 500 hours in the calendar year to a single registered charitable organization or a single sport group, with at least 250 hours contributed by the Bell representatives.

You can apply anytime during the year, as soon as your hours have been accumulated. The deadline is December 15 for the current year.

To submit a grant request, please fill out one of the online forms at http://bellencontact.ca/web/en/community/giving_program.asp.

Important notice: Use of the paper form is limited to requesters who do not have an email address. To obtain a paper form, please contact the Employee Giving Program team at employeeegiving@bell.ca or 1 866 670-8800.

For more information, check out the FAQs of the Bell Volunteer Program for charities and community sports on the Bell [In Touch website](#).

Are You Aware?

COMTECH the credit union to which many of our members belong offers its members several insurance options among them is travel insurance through CUMIS. Bell pensioners will be especially pleased to hear that in the event of an accident or illness CUMIS Travel Insurance will not touch your one-time employees benefit from Bell. For coverage and rate information please contact your COMTECH Branch.

Email member_services@comtechcu.com or Phone Number 416.598.1197 or 1.800.209.7444 or <http://www.comtechcu.com/comtech/welcome.php>.

Cost of Living Adjustment for 2014

The Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) on our pension is based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) over a 12 month period ending on October 31 of each year.

For pensioners under 65 years of age, this number is rounded to the nearest whole number, to a maximum of 2%.

For pensioners 65 years and over, the rule of our pension plan states that the COLA should be the greater of :

- 100% of the increase in the CPI (rounded to the nearest whole number), to a maximum of 2%

or

- 60% of the increase in the CPI (rounded to the nearest two decimal points), to a maximum of 4%.

On November 22, Statistics Canada released the CPI data for the last twelve months. According to Statistics Canada, the CPI rose **0.7%** between October 2012 and October 2013 for Canada as a whole.

Based on this, the **Cost of Living Adjustment on our Bell Canada pensions should be 1% in 2014**. The increase will appear on the January pension payment.



Make a mint on your investments

Choose from two incredible term deposit offers:

- ✓ Open a new 18-month term deposit with a min. \$25,000 at 2.25%*
- ✓ Open a new 5-year term deposit with a min. \$15,000 at 2.40%*

Plus you'll receive a *limited edition silver coin* from the Royal Canadian Mint. So mark your calendar for when your investments come due; we're offering a different coin each month.

New Members Welcome!

Call Barb at 416-598-1197 or 1-800-209-7444 ext. 2204

Deposits Protected by DICO

* Rates subject to change

Toronto Chapter 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 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", 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:

<http://www.bellpensionersgroup.ca/membership.php?lang=en&chapt=Toronto>

This newsletter is published by the Toronto Chapter of the Bell Pensioners' Group (BPG). Please send your comments or suggestions to: toronto@bellpensionersgroup.ca or call 905 695-9230, or write to; Bell Pensioners' Group (BPG) Inc., P.O. Box 5, Stn. D, Etobicoke, ON M9A 4X1.

The inclusion of an advertisement in this newsletter does not imply an endorsement by BPG.