

South Interior Power Pioneers

News Update

Christmas 2023 Edition

Were you there? - editor

Eighty-five members and guests registered for the annual Christmas Buffet Gala held 7th December at the Schubert Centre. The opulent buffet service that we have come to expect did not disappoint! Schubert Centre staff and newly recruited *Chef Deepanshu* delivered as promised. It turned out the children's choir was not available this year but on short notice the *Platinum Country* singing duo, Brenda & Rick filled in admirably. Once again our volunteers are to be commended for an extraordinary effort in successfully organizing this event.

As usual BC Hydro Power Pioneers subsidised one half of the member's cost of the meal making it an unbeatable bargain in the face of inflating meal prices. Just the opportunity to mingle and visit was worth the price of admission.

This is how it went....

Check-in Reception



Doors to the Emerald Room opened at 11:00 AM. Upon arriving, member and guest registrations were verified by Sonja Laschuk who then issued your door prize ticket. Next Rita Wernicke and Pauline Niemi offered

you 50/50 draw tickets. Moving along to Member Services table, Donna Wallach handed you a stick-on nametag, a table reservation tag and a 2024 membership badge for your lanyard. You were encouraged to donate to the Salvation Army Food Bank as well as to the Power Pioneer's Literacy Program. Then you were free to find a table and mingle. Dania and Josh had their cash bar for libations conveniently located right beside you. Jayne Lapointe worked the floor collecting the annual gratuity for the volunteer catering staff.



Lunch Buffet



At noon the lunch buffet was ready to go. Fred Wernicke welcomed everyone; said grace and the feast began.

The fare was essentially the same as last year: simple, delicious and plentiful – just like at Grandma’s house. On offer were dinner rolls, lettuce salad, cabbage salad, sliced beets, mashed potatoes, steamed peas & carrots, turkey stuffing, baked salmon fillets, tender

Leading the charge is Maria MacIntosh

roast beef, and roast turkey. Top it off with choice of gravy, tartar sauce, horseradish, or cranberry sauce.

Self-serve dessert table included plum pudding, assorted pastries, and a fruit platter.



The hungry hoard queues up.



Down the home stretch, Chef Deepanshu serves three choices of protein.



Yes please!



Platinum Country Singers



During our meal Brenda and Rick sang background nostalgic tributes to the likes of Patsy Cline, Del Shannon, and Elvis. This was followed by a karaoke sing-a-long of Christmas favourites.



Guest Speakers



Ryan Angman

Representing BC Hydro was Ryan Angman, Senior Field Manager, South Interior Distribution. He is a third generation employee thirty-three years with BC Hydro. His grandfather worked on the *Terzaghi Dam* [Bridge River Project] and his father was an electrician for thirty-two years.

Ryan commended the Power Pioneers for their contributions over the years and particularly for their support of the Safety Rodeo.

He went on to recap the impact that wildfires had this year. Here are some of his remarks edited for brevity:

...a recap of what our wildfire season was like this past year. This has been quite unprecedented. A lot of work went into the restoration [of service].

This past season – all the bills aren't in yet – we spent a little over 13 million dollars for the restoration of [damage from] wild fires. Probably the largest portion was in our own back yard. We had the McDougall Creek fire on the west side of the lake and then the Bush Creek fire over the Shuswap. Between the two of those fires we put in the neighbourhood of 880 poles in the ground [during] the beginning of August through the

first week or so of September.

We got a lot of support from our contracting world and our internal resources. It just goes to show you what this company's capable of doing when our back's up against the wall. All told for our fire season this year we had 1300+ plus poles that were destroyed in all of the fires throughout the province – and that's only the distribution poles – I don't have a count of the transmission infrastructure that was damaged or lost.

There were 213 overhead transformers, 2 regulator banks, 3 re-closures, and a metering kit that were destroyed.



Maureen Lachnit

Maureen Lachnit, retired for about six years, is the current Vice President of the Power Pioneers Provincial Executive. She used to visit Vernon in the past to provide job training and to play baseball. She was delighted for the opportunity to return to speak to our Christmas gathering.

She thanked the Pioneers for contributing to the success of various charitable efforts - in particular:

- **Small is Mighty**
- **Annual Giving Campaign**
- **Ed Turner Memorial Endowment for Medical Genetics**

About the upcoming jamboree next September...

I really hope that a lot of you are attending that. We have 152 people that are already signed up for the cruise that is the [Alaskan] Northern Lights. You'll see lots of advertisements about it in the newsletters. I hope you can join us, we promise it to be a lot of fun and looking forward to that.

As a result of the membership survey last spring, action plans are forthcoming to be announced in future Provincial Newsletters.

Thank you all for participating and giving us feedback. Some of the key things that came out:

- ✓ *You guys really like to have fun and like to have your activities. ...because that's what we're all about.*
- ✓ *Easy access to pension and benefits information.*
- ✓ *New ways of attracting members.*

From the feedback we got from the survey we have developed action plans you will see coming out in the next newsletter.

It was great to see that the BC Hydro Hockey Tournament is back as well as you guys hosted the Safety Rodeo. Lots of fun was had there and really great you guys raised \$5000 for Children's Hospital with 50-50 tickets.

Last but not least, the COLA is going to be 3.06%

Presidents Award for Volunteer of the Year.



L->R Jim Clouston, Fred Wernicke.

This year Jim Clouston was honoured as Volunteer of the Year for his efforts in organizing a very successful Power Pioneers Golf Tournament.

Fred presented Jim a copy of *Voices from Bridge River*

Door Prizes

Prize runners Mark Raymer, Jayne Lapointe and Sonja Laschuk delivered the goods as Stew Wallach and Fred Wernicke called out fifty-four door prize tickets for thirty bottles of wine and twenty-four chocolate surprises!

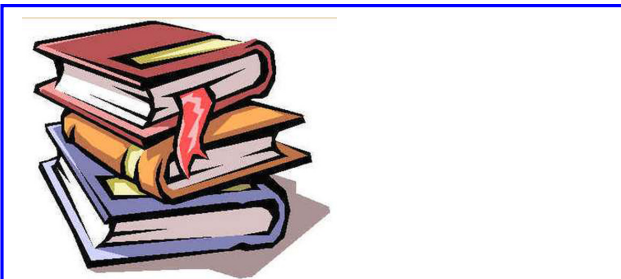


Stew & Fred call out door prize ticket numbers

50-50 Draw Winners

Gloria Regier and Marjorie Prentice each won \$80.00

'Tis the season for giving...



Members generously donated a number of books plus \$207 cash into Literacy Book Program collection jar. Debbie Raymer is giddy with excitement looking forward to a book-shopping spree!



Maureen draws the 50-50 winners.

More People Watching...

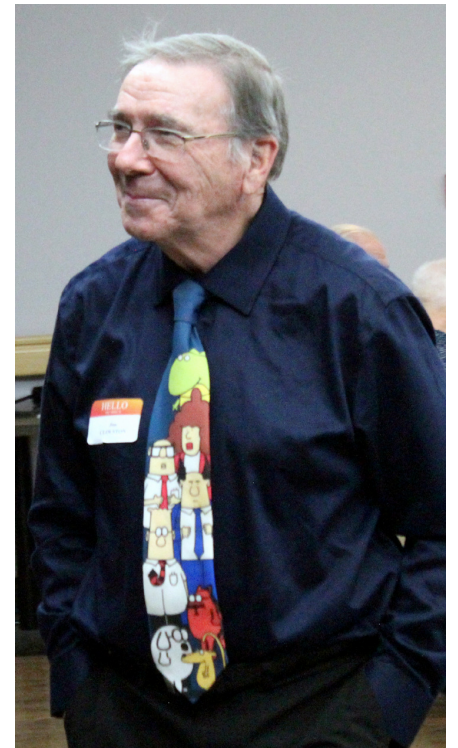


**Giving
Hope
Today**

We were pleased to collect \$312.25 in the Food Bank jar, which will add to our scheduled branch donation of \$500.



Our Mother Hen!



Nice tie!



Donna presents annual gratuity collection of \$303.30 to Schubert Centre wait staff.

Meet the Phoning Committee



L->R Sonja Laschuk, Penni Bosovich , Donna McDowell , Marjorie Prentice, Pauline Niemi, Rita Wernicke

Nine times a year you will receive a call from one of our *phoners* inviting you to attend an upcoming luncheon. The *phoners* then send their lists to Sonja Laschuk who reserves the desired number of meals with the caterer.

S. I. Power Pioneers Luncheon

9 January 2024

The usual meal and social camaraderie will prevail. The Treasurer will present the annual financial report for 2023. We hope you will find the time to attend this important event. When your *Phoner* calls –just say YES!

Not on the call list? – Contact Donna Wallach at 250-542-2097. She can fix that!

It's a new year and a new price. Your cost is only \$22 for the best lunch in town.

Congratulations if you diligently read this far – then you already know the COLA pension adjustment for 2024 is +3.06%

Editor

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