



BC Association of  
Healthcare Auxiliaries

April Newsletter  
2026

GOODBYE

Winter

HELLO

Spring

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Where is spring? One day it is +14 and sunny; the next day it is -4 and snowing!!!

Planning for the 2026 AGM/Conference has been very busy as the Committee responds to membership requests to return to the basics. This will hopefully be accomplished through the break out sessions. We hope to have some fun events and I am looking forward to seeing old friends and meeting new ones.

Following the AGM, the Executive Committee will have new members, according to the Nominating Report: Amanda Laranjo as Vice President, Carolyn Farris as Director of Finance and Ryan Tandiana as Director of Communications.

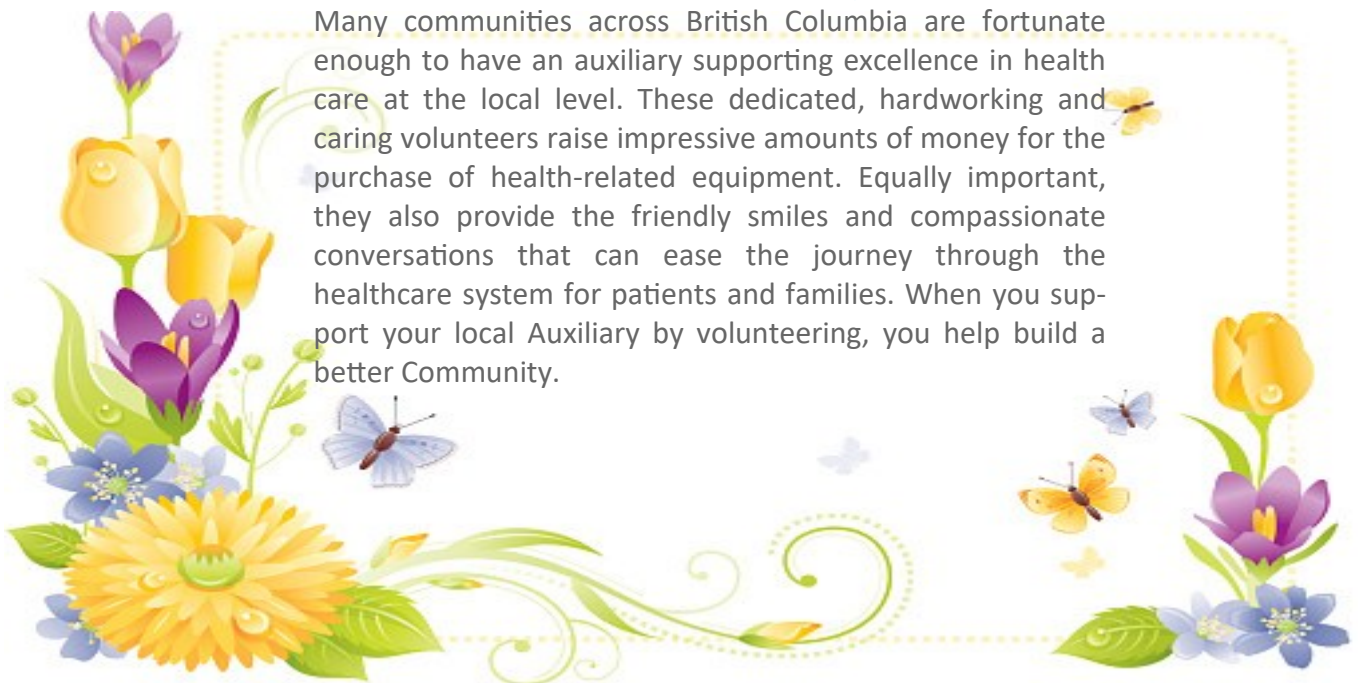
I would like to thank Val Wright and Cheryl Fry for their years of service and dedication to BCAHA!

The BCAHA Executive is still looking for Area Directors for the North Area and Lower Mainland Area, these 2 Areas have lacked representation since September. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact me at 250-368-1657. The Board of Directors is a fun group of Auxiliary members all sharing the same passion and love for healthcare!

Allana Ferro

### Join Your Local Auxiliary

Many communities across British Columbia are fortunate enough to have an auxiliary supporting excellence in health care at the local level. These dedicated, hardworking and caring volunteers raise impressive amounts of money for the purchase of health-related equipment. Equally important, they also provide the friendly smiles and compassionate conversations that can ease the journey through the healthcare system for patients and families. When you support your local Auxiliary by volunteering, you help build a better Community.



## NEWS FROM SQUAMISH



### Christmas Activities at the Squamish General Hospital

In preparation for the Christmas season, the Auxiliary “elves” brought festive cheer to Squamish General Hospital by decorating the front of the main entrance. The welcoming display was designed to lift the spirits of visitors and staff and to bring comfort to patients who were unable to spend Christmas at home with their families. The Gift Shop was also beautifully decorated, adding to the holiday atmosphere throughout the hospital.

As a gesture of appreciation for their continued support, boxes of chocolates were delivered to each department within the hospital. These chocolates were generously donated by an Auxiliary member. Patients were also remembered during the holiday season and were offered complimentary television service between Christmas and New Year’s.

In addition, Auxiliary members took time to celebrate the year’s fundraising achievements by enjoying a festive Christmas luncheon at the Squamish Valley Golf Club.

We look forward with optimism to another successful and rewarding year in 2026.



## NEWS FROM ALBERNI



The West Coast General Hospital in Alberni provided a December tea for the hospital auxiliary., served by the hospital staff.

Before the holidays we collected 15-20 pairs of boots to donate to a Grade 6 class from the

Haahuupayak School. They are participating in a program where they are helping clean up the local estuary and shoreline. They were very happy for our help.

Our Facebook auction has proven to be worth doing with 2024 totals at \$14,363.00 and 2025 total at \$16,840.00.

## NEWS FROM OLIVER

A door prize is offered at the opening of the new thrift shop in Oliver.



## NEWS FROM CHILLIWACK



Our volunteers with Steve Elliott (Elvis) at our fundraising concert August 20.



Our grand opening at the lotto kiosk in August.

## NEWS FROM PRINCE GEORGE

Carole Pitchko receives a Life Membership for her long time dedication and service to the Auxiliary to UHNBC.



Three long serving members receiving the life memberships on Dec 8 at our general meeting. From left, Sharon Panasky, Dayle Jensen and Joan Richardson.

**NEWS FROM QUESNEL**



The R H Baker Memorial Hospital Auxiliary is really proud of their gift shop! Melodie Twemlow and Jean Patchett pack in an amazing amount of inventory into a really cozy space and it is displayed beautifully.

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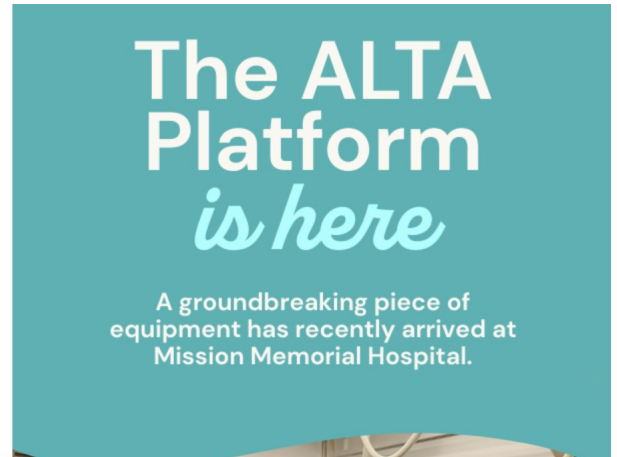


The idea was championed by recently retired Mission physician Dr. Andrew Edelson, who called it "too good to pass up."

The ALTA reduces the staff needed for patient transfers from up to eight people to one operator, improving safety and comfort for both patients and staff.

Funding came from proceeds at The Cottage Thrift Store and the MMH Gift Shop, run by the The Mission Health Care Auxiliary Society. This shows how community donations directly support local health care.

**NEWS FROM MISSION**



The ALTA Platform is a robotic patient transfer device that uses artificial intelligence to safely move patients between beds, stretchers, and imaging tables.

Developed by Canadian company Able Innovations, Mission Memorial Hospital is one of the first hospitals in B.C. to purchase the device and the first small community hospital in the world to have one.



## A LITTLE HISTORY NEWS FROM PRINCE GEORGE

FROM THE PRINCE GEORGE CITIZEN NEWSPAPER 1986

### TOBACCO BAN HURTS

Sales are down by \$4000.00 a month at Prince George Regional Hospital gift shop since tobacco products were removed from the shelves, The lost sales, from about \$10,000 to \$6,000 monthly, means about a 40% cut in profits.



Hospital auxiliary representative Thelma Bell told the board of directors Thursday that people who came to buy cigarettes would also pick up other items for themselves and patients. Now they buy everything wherever they get the cigarettes, she said.

And when you don't sell cigarettes, you don't sell newspapers, magazines candy bars, soda pop, coffee and gifts.

The decision to discontinue tobacco sales June 15 was made by the board of directors following a request by medical staff.

However, smoking is still allowed in patient lounges and the lobby.

The effect of lost sales really showed when the auxiliary presented its usual cheque to the hospital from business during the summer months.

"This \$5000.00 cheque would normally be \$10,000 to \$15,000", explained Bell. Last year the auxiliary earned about \$80,000 for hospital needs.

The auxiliary is trying to earn money in other ways like extra knitted articles, hand-crafted items and quilt raffles.

President Doris Holzworth hopes people will continue to support the hospital through purchases at the gift shop. "We still have a good selection to choose from."

"Spring is when you feel like whistling,  
even with a shoe full of slush."  
– Doug Larson

## NEWS FROM THE ALBERNI THRIFT STORE, THE ATTIC

We are working on getting our name on a map brochure that will be on the ferry and at travel info centers on Vancouver Island. The Alberni Explorer Guide is placed on the ferries and at visitor centers on Vancouver Island. We will have our name in the directory and a dot on the map with our name. It also shows select hotels and other local businesses. It



Exciting news. The Attic has made the top 3 finalists in the Readers Choice Awards and the Alberni Aux has made the list for top 3 Charitable Organizations. So, please get your family and friends to vote for us. Ursula sent you all an email about it. Voting takes place Feb 19-March 13. We think that it's a great way to get our name out in the community.

Many thanks to Roberta Jensen as she steps down from her role as president to enjoy her travels in Australia. Her vision hard work and dedication have left a last legacy to inspire us.

## NEWS FROM COQUITLAM

### Comfort Carts at Eagle Ridge Hospital

#### ED Nourishment Cart Enhances Patient Comfort at ERH

Thanks to the generous support of the **Eagle Ridge Hospital Auxiliary**, the **Emergency Department Nourishment Cart** is now a valued part of the patient experience at ERH. Offered three times daily, the cart provides light pastries, cookies, beverages, puddings, and nutrient rich snacks—helping patients feel more comfortable and supported during what can often be long waits.

Research shows that providing simple comfort items like snacks and beverages can greatly improve patient experience, increase comfort, and reduce stress in the emergency care environment. Studies on ED comfort carts highlight significant boosts in patient satisfaction and emotional well being, as well as improved staff capacity to deliver compassionate care. Access to food and drink is also recognized as an important part of patient centered ED care, particularly for older adults and those with clinical vulnerabilities.

At ERH, the Nourishment Cart is part of the **Permissive Diet Pilot**, ensuring patients can safely enjoy refreshments while waiting, unless advised otherwise by a clinician. This approach aligns with emerging best practices that balance comfort with clinical safety.



#### Family Comfort Care Cart Brings Support and Compassion to ERH Families

The **Family Comfort Care Cart**, funded with generosity by the **Eagle Ridge Hospital Auxiliary**, is making a meaningful difference for patients and their loved ones during some of the most emotionally challenging moments of their healthcare journey. Designed specifically to support families navigating **MAiD** decisions or **end of life** care, the cart provides nourishing snacks, coffee and tea, and a collection of comforting items—including fidget blankets/cuffs, handcrafted quilts made by Auxilians, and thoughtfully selected magazines.

Evidence from comfort cart interventions highlights how simple, compassionate supports can significantly enhance comfort, communication, and emotional well-being for patients and families in stressful clinical environments. Research also shows that offering non pharmacologic comfort items creates a calmer, more supportive atmosphere and helps families feel cared for and less alone during long, uncertain periods of time.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the Auxiliary for making these programs possible. Their generosity brings comfort, dignity, and a sense of community care to patients and families when they need it most.

Marilyn Douglas – Manager

Volunteer Services Eagle Ridge Hospital

**NEWS FROM: SOUTH OKANAGAN AUXILIARY  
HEALTHCARE AUXILIARY THRIFT SHOP**

We wish to showcase a valued Community Partner, the Lutheran Quilters Group. Together we play a valuable role in repurposing, reusing and reducing landfill. From the outside, the St. Paul Lutheran Church in Oliver looks very much like any other church. Not so.....In the basement is an incredible assembly line, a beehive of activity. Every Tuesday, from 9-noon up to 16 volunteers, the Lutheran Quilters Group, gather with their queen bee, Linda Nunweiler (since 2008).



The Lutheran Quilting Group lovingly creates quilts and dog beds. In 2025 they assembled 277 quilts free of charge and over 150 dog beds for the following groups:

- The Grand Forks Women’s Shelter
- Desert Sun Women’s Shelter in Oliver and Osoyoos
- Sunnybank Retirement Centre in Oliver
- Country Squire Retirement Village in Osoyoos
- Warming Centre in Oliver
- Canadian Food for Children Branch Penticton
- Oliver Mission and Free Store
- Oliver Thrift Store and Rock Creek Thrift Store for resale



Linda and her volunteers encourage newcomers to join and “learn the basics of sewing and quilting “(like Darlene). Others come for the supportive working environment. “Best part is Linda feeds us”, evidenced at coffee break, and “we learn a lot at this table”. (Faye)



Their most recent project is an order for 100 quilts for LAMP, a cross-cultural Lutheran ministry in remote areas of Canada. Everyone plays a valuable role.

George sews knots and acts as a delivery driver. Renata makes the most incredible quilt designs from very small squares. Heidi and Faye organize fabric, cut squares and start the sewing assembly line. Linda sews amazing quilts from jean material and other textiles (her favorite).

4-6 people, like the two Sandras, work at the sewing machines joining squares and applying bindings.

The Oliver Thrift Shop is a proud supporter and donor to the Lutheran Quilters Group of Oliver. Each week our volunteers collect and sort linens, batting, fabric, blue jeans and bedding from community donors. Materials which are not saleable are bagged for pick up by Linda. It is a win-win relationship. We also offer our store patrons some of the dog beds and quilts for sale with profits going to health care in our region.



## NEWS FROM FT ST JOHN

Fort St John Hospital Auxiliary are extending SPRING GREETINGS to all the Auxiliaries. We are hoping spring is just around the corner just not sure what corner!

In 2025, our dedicated & hard-working members collectively contributed more than 3,850 hours of volunteer service.

Our Gift Shop had a very busy year. Jean Gammage, our Purchasing Manager does a superb job of buying at the Trade show in Toronto & doing the displays to make our Gift Shop unique & very popular. We had our annual Appreciation Day in December. The snow globes were a big hit again with us selling over 100 globes. Our volunteers stay busy with four grocery and two hot beverage vending machines.



Our Memorial Rose Garden underwent a major location change so in June members enlarged the garden adding new soil, bricks & roses.



## FT St John wins a community award.



We bought a bladder scanner for the Hospital, four WC Synthesis Transportation chairs for Peace Villa, and a 75-inch TV with a rolling cabinet (entertainment center) for Peace Villa, all totaling \$55,755.20.



Pins and certificates were awarded by our Membership Chairman, Gail Weber to the following volunteers in recognition of their years of dedicated service: Pearl Paulson for five years, Rosemary Landry for twenty years, and Denise Cote for twenty-five years. Deidre Hofer and Darlene Hamre, each with 15 years of service, will receive their pins and certificates by mail.

From left to right  
 Back Row  
 Denise Cote, Gail Weber (Membership Chair), Pearl Paulson  
 Front  
 Rosemary Landry

## NEWS FROM THE SUNSHINE COAST

### Showing Compassion

One of the programs that the SC Healthcare Auxiliary gives to annually is the Compassionate Fund.

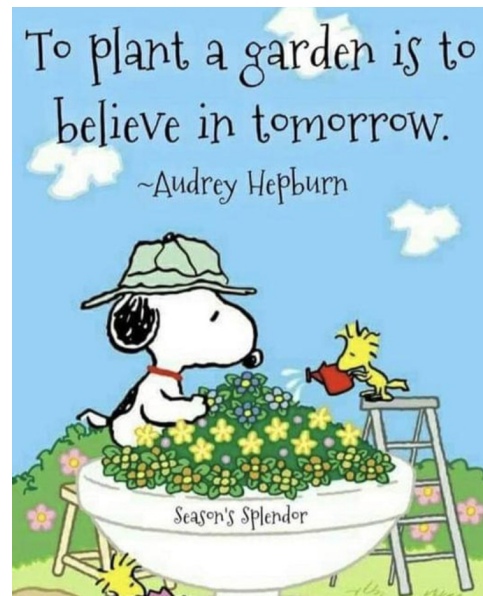
The SCHA is dedicated to this fund and the service it provides. The necessity to provide basic supports to help Sunshine Coast residents through challenges with health, poverty and food insecurity is at an all-time high.

Referred by a healthcare professional or community services worker this fund can quickly provide a service or product for a particular need. Thank you for the caring service you provide.

From left to right, Pictured here with Shari Myhill-Jones and Chloe Delaney of Home Care Services are Jacqui Jones-Cox and Maureen Hamblin of the SCHA presenting the yearly compassionate fund cheque.



## PRINCE GEORGE IGNORES PAGE ONE OF THIS NEWSLETTER AFTER A HUGE SNOWFALL ON THE SECOND DAY OF SPRING!!





## Special Anniversaries:

115 years - 1911 - Shuswap Lake HealthCare Auxiliary

105 years - 1921 - Auxiliary to Abbotsford Regional Hospital

105 years - 1921 - The Auxiliary to Lions Gate Hospital

90 years - 1936 - Lady Minto Hospital Auxiliary

80 years - 1946 - Grand Forks Auxiliary to Boundary Hospital

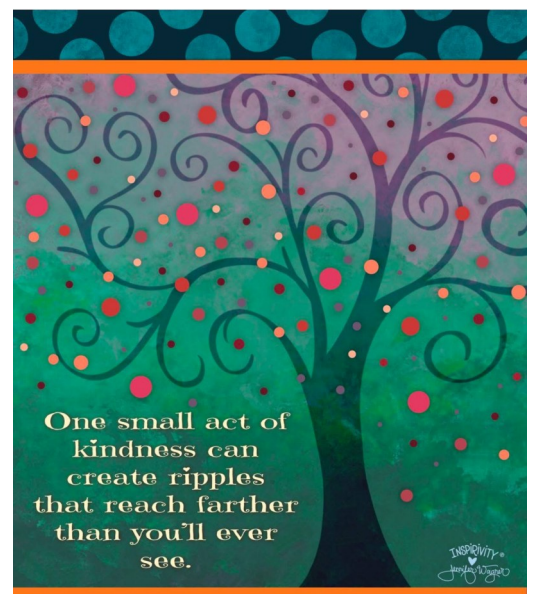
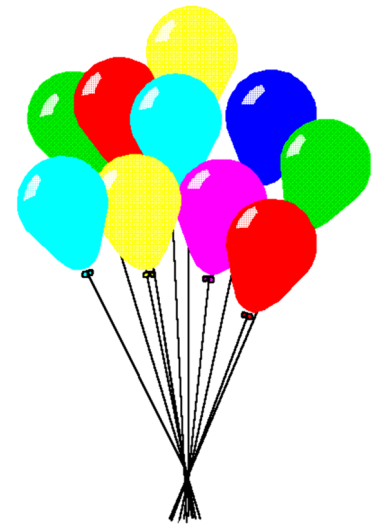
70 years - 1956 - Campbell River Hospital Auxiliary

60 years - 1966 - 100 Mile District General Hospital Auxiliary

60 years - 1966 - Stuart Lake Hospital Auxiliary

55 years - 1971 - Gabriola Auxiliary for Island HealthCare

50 years - 1976 - Auxiliary to Penticton Regional Hospital



## THANK YOU

Dear Allana

A very heartfelt thank you for continuing to send your Newsletters my way. I enjoy reading them and am always reminded of the positive impact that each Auxiliary has in supporting the health and wellbeing of their community including the healthcare system. Extending *my sincere appreciation* to all of the volunteers - you are truly amazing and inspiring.

With warm regards

Vivian Eliopoulos

President and CEO

Vancouver Coastal Health

## BURSARY INFORMATION

### IN MEMORY DONATIONS to the BCAHA Tribute Bursary Fund;:

The Tribute Bursary receives donations from Auxiliaries wishing to remember an Auxiliary Member who passed away and you wish to recognize their contributions.

### 2026 BCAHA TRIBUTE BURSARY:

Each year the BC Association of Healthcare Auxiliaries recognizes the work of youth volunteers by offering Bursaries to students seeking financial assistance.



Applications can be found on the BCAHA website ([bchealthcareaux.org](http://bchealthcareaux.org)) and must be emailed by May 15, 2026

## REMINDERS



**April 19-25 National Volunteer Week**

**April 19-22 Provincial AGM/Conference**

**May 10 Auxiliary Day**





If you would like to have anything published in the BCAHA newsletter, please send to your article or photos to the newsletter editor, Sharon Egglestone at: [bcahanewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:bcahanewsletter@gmail.com) The newsletter is published four times a year! April, June, September and December! The submission deadlines are the 1st of each of those months.

If you would like to have anything published on the BCAHA Facebook page or Instagram please send to Cheryl Fry at: [commdirector.bcaha@gmail.com](mailto:commdirector.bcaha@gmail.com)