



ANNUAL REPORT

2025



"Connecting adults 55+ with a happy, healthy life."



OUR VISION, MISSION & STRATEGIC PLAN



RMSS VISION:

Connecting adults 55+ with a happy, healthy life.

RMSS MISSION:

Providing services, fostering shared experiences, advancing the well being of adults 55+ in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows.

RMSS VALUE STATEMENTS:

We strive to...

...be a community leader in relation to issues relevant to adults 55+.

...be a welcoming, inclusive, safe centre that celebrates adults 55+.

...be a hub of social, fitness, and educational activities for adults 55+.

...provide opportunities for volunteerism and community service for our members.

...be a caring compassionate, accessible, and transparent organization that works to improve the lives of our members.

...remain relevant and responsive to member needs.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



President - Karen Hjort-Olsen
Vice President - Bobbie Duncan
Secretary - Patricia Gordon
Treasurer - Kathy Baxter
Director - Margaret Attwell
Director - Leslie Carnie
Director - Deborah Jamieson

RMSS STAFF

Executive Director - Maria Perretta
Administrative Coordinator - Nancy Markham
Activity Coordinator - Carmen Tischer
Caregiver Connection Coordinator - Raman Singh
Events Coordinator - Anita Bettsworth
Outreach Coordinator - Bev Schmahmann
PM Facility Coordinator - Marcia de Vega
You Connect Coordinator - Vanessa De Freitas
Bus Driver - Don Fernets
Volunteer Coordinator - Kara Matthew
Food Service Supervisor - Grace Nunnikhoven
Food Service Staff - Leah, Comfort, Maria, Mushtari
Support Staff - Joys, Robyn, Sandra
MR / PM Facility Attendants - Mojgan, Sally

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

And so ends another year for the Board in the evolution of Ridge Meadows Seniors Society (RMSS). While members think of RMSS as their community place for fitness, food and fun, we are slowly transitioning to so much more. The board has worked hard to update existing and institute new policies and procedures for the Society and both locations. These enable RMSS to operate efficiently and ensure fair treatment to all members in any instance.

In 2024 I indicated the Board's intention to increase our voice on behalf of all seniors through advocacy. I can advise Board members are actively participating in various tables, including Housing for Seniors, as well as Age and Dementia Friendly task forces. We are bringing our members' issues to the table, to ensure we are dealing with reality and not anecdotes.

While fitness, activities and nutritious food attracts members to our locations, we also expanded social events and educational programs, providing fun and important information to the community. These initiatives are not just services; they are lifelines for many of our members and non-members supporting independence and promoting community involvement. This variety has resulted in significant growth in our members, bringing more seniors to our community. The laughter, stories, and mutual support are the heartbeat of RMSS.

Our dedicated volunteers continue to inspire me. From serving meals, driving members to appointments, helping at events, they are the backbone of our society. Without them, none of this would be possible. I also want to extend my heartfelt thanks to our donors, community organizations and the cities of Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge, who have contributed resources, time, and funding. Your support allows us to grow and evolve to meet the communities changing needs.

We have exciting plans for the year ahead. Our focus will be on continuing advocacy, expanding outreach to isolated seniors, improving accessibility to our programs, and continuing to build partnerships that enhance the wellbeing of our members. With your support, we are confident we can make a deeper, lasting impact.

Thank you to our board members, staff, volunteers, and every single member of RMSS for making this community a vibrant, compassionate, and joyful place. It is an honor to serve as President, and I look forward to another year of working alongside all of you.

Karen Hjort Olsen,
President, Ridge Meadows Seniors Society



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

It is with deep pride and gratitude that I reflect on what has been an exceptional year of growth, connection, and service for the Ridge Meadows Seniors Society. As Executive Director, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the powerful work our team of staff, Board of Directors and volunteers have done to elevate the lives of our senior population - and the momentum we've built is evident.

As the largest seniors' serving agency in our communities, RMSS has expanded its programs to better meet the evolving needs of seniors in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows. Our two activity centres remain vibrant hubs of community where seniors gather, participate, find resources and thrive in the activities they love. This year we spent time working out how we can expand to satellite locations to meet the needs of seniors closer to their home while easing the growth in our current centres. More work will be needed to make this concept a reality.

We understand the challenges that face seniors today are multifaceted. They involve isolation, limited access to support, financial strain, and systemic complexity. At RMSS, we understand that these are not simply problems to be solved, but opportunities to show up - with compassion, innovation, and purpose. We do this work because we believe every senior deserves the opportunity to live well and age with dignity because being part of a community shouldn't depend on mobility, income or circumstance.

The growth we've achieved this past year is just the beginning. With renewed energy and a vision rooted in inclusion, we look forward to expanding our reach, evolving our services, and deepening our impact while ensuring our voice is heard in places where decisions are made.

To our staff, volunteers, board members, members, partners and our sideline supporters: thank you. This success is shared, and it's built on your dedication. Together, we will continue to redefine aging in our community - with care, courage and connection.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Perretta,
Executive Director, Ridge Meadows Seniors Society



RECREATION

During the last fiscal, creativity and health were top of mind.

Many participated in the arts with painting, making jewellery, creating cards, learning French, writing memoirs, jamming, singing, dancing, and of course performing with Variety Plus. Close to **9,500 attendances** were recorded for RMSS programs between both centres - not including free “try it and see” visits.

The numbers and interests for staying fit and actively aging also increased. Chair Fit at Maple Ridge centre now runs five days a week and Chair Yoga at Pitt Meadows three days a week. Dance Fit and dancing programs continue to thrive. Including those checking out the programs, **30,000 visits were tracked**.

Our **Wellness Clinic** received a Maple Ridge Community Foundation grant in the amount of \$3000 to help with refreshing and rebranding. The revised vision is to create a relevant meeting place where 55+ adults can connect with others, communicate their health concerns, and come away confidently knowing they are in command of their well-being. With community partnerships in Fraser Health, Chartwell Willow, Venvi Sunwood, Triple Tree, and the Alouette Men’s Shed, the grant money has extended to allow additional purchases for foot care, decor updates, admin supplies, and promotional material. Our volunteers are ready to greet and serve your in-between GP visits from blood pressure checks to footcare, mental wellness chats to information workshops.



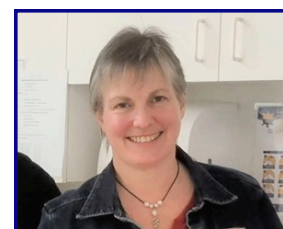
The society's growing numbers affected parking availability. For bus trips, an ongoing collaboration with Legion #88 allows for date specific parking (with parking pass) for the Maple Ridge pick up. For Pitt Meadows centre, Onni Group welcomes the Pitt Meadows pick up locale to be Meadowtown Centre. In line with RMSS mandate, and in an effort to alleviate parking strain, offsite programming was investigated to consider bringing popular activities closer to satellite locations where a concentration of members may reside; to date this has not become a viable option.

TALLIES FOR THE PAST FISCAL YEAR:

PROGRAMS (# OF TIMES OFFERED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR)	@ MR	@ PM
FITNESS	972	524
SPORT	1092	770
DANCE	220	132
GAMES	568	312
MUSIC	201	86
ARTS & CRAFTS	109	68
TECH HELP / TAX CLINIC	63	42
WELLNESS	230	64
WORKSHOPS/ INFO SESSIONS / CLINICS	41	25
BUS TRIPS	24	24
PROGRAMS (NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS ATTENDED)	@ MR	@ PM
DROP-IN PROGRAMS	31,479	16,138
WELLNESS CLINIC VISITS	222	N/A
PRE REGISTERED PROGRAMS	1532	1023
WORKSHOPS / INFO SESSIONS	633	316

Members continue to volunteer ideas and skillsets to benefit RMSS. We are grateful and appreciative of the variety of programs and activities available at the Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Seniors Activity Centres.

Respectfully submitted,
Carmen Tischer,
Activity Coordinator



EVENTS



In August of 2024 I was welcomed to the RMSS team as the Events Coordinator. My mandate was to continue implementing engaging events that provide opportunities to connect with and foster a vibrant and inclusive environment to our members.

BUILDING STRONG CONNECTIONS THROUGH NEW & TRADITIONAL EVENTS

Throughout 2025 I continued to provide regular social gathering opportunities that reinforced community bonds and created meaningful connections.

- Traditional events like the Strawberry Tea and Fit for Life remain key pillars of the calendar.
- New events with extra flair, such as Robbie Burns Day, Mrs Roper's Romp and Mardi Gras were added and met with enthusiasm. Members were dressed up for the gathering and dancing in the aisles.
- Monthly Pie & Ice Cream Days continued throughout the year, providing a warm and welcoming environment.
- The number of Bingo afternoons were increased to further enhance social interactions and help with fundraising.
- Popular themed lunches included more diverse cultural culinary experiences including Filipino, Japanese and Indian inspired dishes.

The variety of events cater to a number of different interest groups bringing new participants and creating an energy of excitement and anticipation.



SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

I continued to support the Social Meals program funded by United Way. This program provides seniors with a welcoming place to enjoy a healthy meal and connect with one another facilitating a sense of belonging and improving the wellbeing of the participants.

It takes a team to make an event successful - and our dedicated volunteers and staff are at the heart of it.

From planning and preparation to event day execution, our volunteers work tirelessly behind the scenes and on-site. Whether it's crafting decorations, assembling party favors, or lending a helping hand wherever needed, their efforts bring energy, creativity, and warmth to every part of the experience. I couldn't do it without them!

Whether it's through themed gatherings, shared activities, or laid-back get togethers, our events are designed to provide a comfortable, inclusive setting where members can build strong social connections while having some good old-fashioned fun. The events program continues to enhance the lives of our seniors and contributes significantly to our vibrant thriving senior community.

**Anita Bettesworth,
Events Coordinator**



VOLUNTEERS

When asked what RMSS Volunteers DO, I smile. What do they NOT? Volunteers are the heart of our organization. They support staff at the centres, govern the society, lead activities, assist with programs and offer personalized services.

We were fortunate to maintain a pool of about 150 Active Volunteers for the last couple years. This year we broke 170! Most Volunteers were RMSS Members, but we continued to welcome “younger seniors” and “non seniors”. We added volunteers to our specialized teams, including our Driving Service, Wellness Clinic, Tax Team and Tech Help; roles that are often challenging to fill.

→ RMSS VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTED ALMOST 19,000 HOURS! ←

Last year we were bursting... this year we busted at the seams with the things we do! Volunteers shared their love of sport, the arts, games and more by leading Drop-ins or helping with activities like Karaoke and 50/50. Over 50 volunteers came out to help our Events Coordinator with socials and special events at both centres.

Extending from Outreach and Caregivers services, RMSS Volunteers helped run our much needed weekly Foodbank and yearly Santa Bag program, and sourced essentials for seniors in need. Volunteers also represented RMSS at our Welcome Tours and Social Meals, and at community events.

We relied more on our Daily Operations Volunteers to keep the centres running smoothly. Volunteers at the Welcome and Member Services Desks, and Volunteers at the Coffee and Lunch Counters greeted, assisted, and served an increasing number of visitors. They provided friendly points of contact for our regulars and were the first to notice if someone or something was off. An experienced Baker returned to Pitt Meadows. We added a second Friday Lunch Cashier in Maple Ridge. Admin Volunteers produced meeting notes, printed material, and statistics to keep us organized behind the scenes.

On top of their regular duties, our Board of Directors supported us all with their presence at the centres and help at events. They led creative fundraisers and sought way for RMSS to be an even bigger voice regarding the needs of seniors.



A rallying effort by our Wellness Clinic Volunteers and supporting staff resulted in 5 new Volunteers coming on board as part of a refresh project. Volunteers contributed to revisioning and revamping the space, services, and processes. Some exciting updates were completed and more are underway!

Our Driving Service offered members “the best and most economical ride in town”. RMSS Drivers provide much more than a ride. They provide personal assistance, companionship, and help members maintain their independence. Drivers made 1,166 trips, saving members at least \$28,000 over cab fares. With 90% being return trips with no wait-fees, savings were even more! An average of 45 members booked a Driver each month. Most trips were for local medical appointments or shopping. The need to travel outside of Ridge-Meadows for medical services increased, as did requests for off-hour rides.

RMSS hosted free Tax Clinics through CRA’s Community Income Tax Program. Our service caters to local seniors, but is available to anyone unable to complete a basic return on their own or unable to afford a fee-based service. **Our Tax Team continued their record-breaking streak, filing over 800 returns!** That means a savings of over \$80,000 for our clients! In addition to weekly sessions at both centres during the CVITP season, Volunteers offered mobile sessions at Katzie First Nations, attended CRA Super Clinics, and offered off-season appointments.

Another question that makes me smile is “Why do people volunteer with RMSS?” Generally, to serve and stay busy. More specifically, Volunteers say they want to help build a true community... and belong to one. 45% of our Volunteers take on two or more positions. Many Volunteers have friendships that began at one of our centres. ALL RMSS Volunteers fulfill their duties with kindness, compassion, dedication and patience. We couldn’t be more grateful for, proud of or inspired by the calibre of our Volunteers and their contributions to RMSS.



**Kara Matthew,
Volunteer Coordinator**





VOLUNTEER STATS AT A GLANCE

SERVICE OFFERED	# OF VOLUNTEERS	# HOURS DONATED
WELCOME DESK	34	3,181
MEMBER SERVICES	23	3,414
COFFEE SHOP & BAKERY	26	1,334
LUNCH CASHIERS / SERVERS	33	1,069
ACTIVITY LEADERS	34	2,091
BOARD OF DIRECTORS & ADMIN SUPPORT	11	810
WELLNESS CLINIC	12	481
TAX CLINICS	13	442
FOOD BANK	17	1,588
DRIVING SERVICES	10	2,110

RMSS TAX TEAM GROWTH

CVITP ACTIVITY PERIOD	RETURNS FILED	MIN SAVINGS
JUNE 1, 2018 - MAY 31, 2019	200	\$20,000 +
JUNE 1, 2019 - MAY 31, 2020	250	\$25,000 +
JUNE 1, 2020 - MAY 31, 2021	310	\$31,000 +
JUNE 1, 2021 - MAY 31, 2022	412	\$41,200 +
JUNE 1, 2022 - MAY 31, 2023	522	\$52,200 +
JUNE 1, 2023 - MAY 31, 2024	590	\$59,000 +
JUNE 1, 2024 - MAY 31, 2025	798	\$79,000 +

OUTREACH & SUPPORT

Over the past year, the Ridge Meadows Seniors Society has deepened its commitment to supporting seniors living independently, with dignity, and with meaningful connection to their community. Our work focused on reducing barriers for understanding seniors - particularly those experiencing challenges related to mental health, housing insecurity, and systemic navigation.

RMSS provided hands-on support for seniors facing critical life transitions, from helping them find stable housing, registering for the seniors food bank to assisting in the completion of government paperwork and applications. Staff worked one-to-one to simplify access to benefits and essential services, ensuring seniors could maintain their independence.

We increased access to mental health resources by building partnerships with local organizations and offering referral services tailored to individual needs. Whether coping with isolation, grief, or anxiety, seniors were met with compassion and guided them to either a current RMSS program or a community partner.

RMSS acted as a trusted advocate and liaison within the healthcare system. We supported seniors in locating family doctors and assistance with coordinating appointments.

From navigating benefit forms to applying for subsidized housing, RMSS staff and volunteers were there to lend a hand. Our practical assistance empowered seniors to overcome barriers and gain access to much-needed support.

RMSS is thankful to be partially funded for the Outreach program through the BC Government Gaming Grants program. Each interaction with a senior is both personal and purposeful and we have made a tangible impact on the well-being of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows aging population. Our work reflects not just service delivery, but a deep understanding of the challenges older adults face - and a commitment to walking alongside them as they face them.

Maria Perretta
(On behalf of Bev Schmahmann, Outreach Coordinator)

CAREGIVER CONNECTION

The Caregiver Connection Program (CCP), funded by United Way of British Columbia, is a critical resource for caregivers supporting family and friends 55+ in our community. The CCP recognizes that caregiving is a complex role and therefore needs a multifaceted support network. Our program strives to provide vital emotional, social and educational support through individual and group support, as well as workshops, information sessions and educational programming.

A YEAR OF SUPPORTING CAREGIVERS

The 2024 - 2025 program year has been successful in empowering and supporting caregivers in a variety of different ways

Peace Of Mind Planner Workshop: Through this presentation caregivers were given the tools to organize all medical, financial, and housekeeping information in one consolidated location (i.e. a binder), to be prepared for emergencies.

Informal Respite: Through programs such as the Memory Cafe and the Music Program, caregivers were able to access informal respite services. In addition, the new EngAge Program run by Jessica Rogers will be providing an opportunity for weekly respite from 9am to 3pm every Thursday and Friday.

PROGRAM OFFERINGS

Bi-Weekly Support Groups: This year saw the addition of the Maple Ridge Golden Ears United Church support group. Thus, through four bi-weekly support groups at three locations (Maple Ridge Activity Centre, Pitt Meadows Activity Centre, and the Maple Ridge Golden Ears United Church), we provided a safe space for caregivers to share, connect, and receive peer support. We will be working on expanding these offerings for the 2025 - 2026 program year.

Individual Support: Through in-person, phone, or virtual methods, we provided 214 individual support sessions for 23 caregivers, addressing their individual needs.

Meal Coupons: By way of funding secured through Petro Candada's CareMakers Foundation we were able to supply over 300 free meals to caregivers and the people they provide care to.

VOLUNTEERS - THE HEART OF THE PROGRAM

With dedication, empathy and kindness, our two dedicated volunteers helped to co-facilitate 75 caregiver support groups, totaling 112 hours. As always, we are thankful for their generosity of time and support.

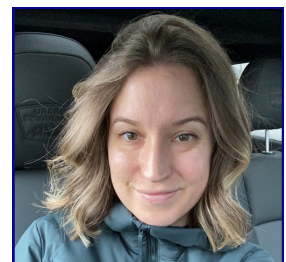
IMPACT STORIES

“The ability to share the unplanned journey through the world of dementia is such a gift. This group discusses tips, tricks, wins and losses, plus the available resources and how to access them. In a secure, private setting we have told our love stories, laughed at silly things, and cried as reality broke another heart. Sincere gratitude to Raman, Margaret and, now Julia for 2 years of professional guidance and support.” - Eileen C

LOOKING FORWARD

Looking forward to the next program year, our main goal is to expand the Caregiver Connection Program. We are hosting information sessions at Chartwell Willow Retirement Community and at the Maple Ridge Seniors Village, with the intention of running monthly support groups at both locations. We hope that through the addition of these two off-site support groups we can further serve our diverse community of seniors.

**Julia Larsen,
Caregiver Connection Coordinator**



ONLINE & SOFTWARE UPDATE

YOU CONNECT SOFTWARE UPDATE

This past year has been a positive one for our You Connect Program. It's been exactly one year since we successfully implemented our new software system, which was a big change, especially after our previous software was no longer available. The new system has directly enhanced our ability to provide services and programming. It has given us more time to focus on our members by making tasks like managing attendance and memberships much more efficient. Our fantastic team of staff and volunteers truly shone during this transition, putting in countless hours to learn and master the new system. We celebrated it's successful live launch in March 2024, and now, a full year later, we're celebrating its smooth and consistent use.

OUR GROWING COMMUNITY: MEMBERSHIP BY AGE & LOCATION

Our community is truly thriving! We're proud to report that our membership has grown significantly this year, reaching a total of 2,288 members. This is a great jump from last year's 2,044 members, showing how many more adults 55+ are connecting with us and enjoying happy, healthy lives. Breaking down our membership by age, we have observed positive shifts:

- 55- 60 Years Old: This group has seen a growth from 61 members last year to 81 this year.
- 61-70 Years Old: Our members in this age bracket have increased from 476 last year to 538 this year.
- 71-80 Years Old: This remains our largest age group, growing from 918 members last year to an impressive 1,000 this year.
- 90+ Years Old: We are delighted to see our most senior members growing from 99 last year to 118 this year.

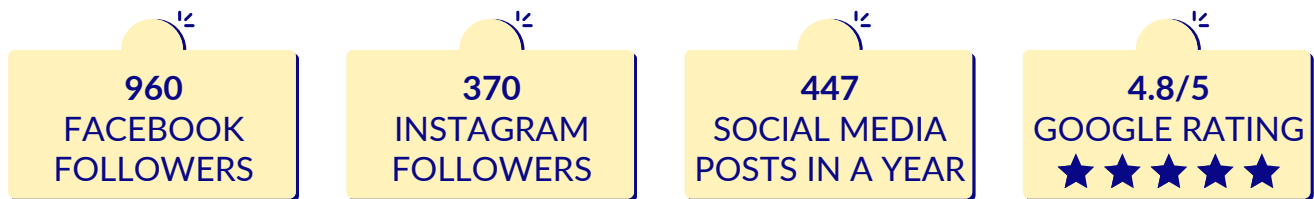
This year, our total Pitt Meadows membership stands at 534, while our Maple Ridge membership has grown to 1,754.

DIGITAL FOOTPRINT: WEBSITE UPDATE

Our website, www.rmssseniors.org, remains a primary source of information, boasting 69 active, regularly updated pages. It continues to attract an average of 3,000 visitors monthly, providing access to the latest news, programming details, services, links and much more.

SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE

We are thrilled to report consistent growth across our social media channels! Our Facebook followers have increased from 801 last year to 960 this year, and our Instagram community has also grown from 324 to 370 this year. We continue to actively post program updates, upcoming events, and relevant news, fostering new ways for our members to stay involved and connected. You can find us by searching “rmssseniors” or by scanning the QR code to connect directly!



GOOGLE MY BUSINESS UPDATE:

Our strong online presence is a testament to our community's satisfaction, reflected in a consistent 4.8/5 Star Google Rating.

Over the past year, our combined profiles generated 4,263 total interactions. We saw 1,957 direct visits to our website and an amazing 15,699 profile views, showing a high level of interest in senior services in our area. We were found in 6,290 searches, received 698 direct calls, and had 2,927 requests for directions to our centres.



Vanessa De Freitas,
You Connect Coordinator

FOOD SERVICES

RMSS continues to nourish the community through our popular hot lunch program at our two activity centres. Every weekday, seniors are welcomed to a warm and inviting environment where they can choose from a delicious variety of sandwiches, fresh salads, hearty soups, homemade desserts and a hot meal of the day. These meals provide more than nutrition - they offer comfort, social connection, and routine that support overall well-being.

This year we continued with our partnership with Maple Ridge , Pitt Meadows Community Services to prepare the Meals for the Meals on Wheels program. This important program ensures that seniors who are homebound or mobility challenged receive hot, nutritious meals delivered directly to their door.

New this past year and in response to growing community need, RMSS implemented the Social Meals Program with funding through United Way of BC. This breakfast program brings seniors together in a casual setting, where good food is paired with meaningful social interaction. For many, these meals offer a rare and valuable chance to connect with others in a supportive space. Through the Social Meals Program, RMSS was able to also provide snacks and sandwiches to some of our community partners seniors' programming and group gatherings.

Recognizing the immense responsibilities that caregivers shoulder, our Food Service department in conjunction with our Caregivers Support program, and the generous funding of Petro Canada Caremakers, provided complimentary meals to help relieve the burden of daily meal planning. This small gesture has had a big impact, offering caregivers much-needed time, nourishment, and appreciation.

Through every plate served and every bite shared, RMSS food programs contribute not just to nourishment - but also to dignity, comfort, and community connection. We remain committed to serving our seniors with care, compassion, and delicious meals that make a difference.

Maria Perretta
(On behalf of Grace Nunnikohoven,
Kitchen Supervisor)



YEAR IN REVIEW







Thank You

To our funders & supporters!



WAYS YOU CAN HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- Share with friends and neighbors how RMSS has helped you & encourage them to get involved.
- Ask friends & family to donate to RMSS in lieu of birthday or holiday gifts.
- Invite a friend to try out a program with you!
- When visiting one of 4 local Neighborhood Liquor Stores, ask for the sale to go towards the RMSS account. These stores donate 5% of that sale to our society.
- Offer the gift of time: volunteer with us!
- Donate your recyclables to the RMSS account at any Return It Express Depot Centre. Account is under (604) 467-4993
- Leave a legacy gift.
- Make a monetary donation yearly or even monthly. Secure donations can be made online at www.rmssseniors.org. (Or by scanning the QR code below)

