

NEWSLETTER

SPRING ISSUE

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 5, 2009

National Pensioners and
Senior Citizens Federation



La Fédération National Des
Retraîés et Citoyens Agés

EDITORIAL:

New Directions

In line with the program adopted at our last convention, the Executive has been busy securing financial and human resources so that we can move ahead with implementing parts of the program. So far, we have been successful in securing \$47,000.00 to establish a presence in Ottawa in order that we can assist our affiliates in more tangible ways. One part of the program would be to act as a clearing house for seniors' health literacy programs so as to assist in the implementation of the World Health Organizations (W.H.O.) Global Age Friendly Communities Program: this is a program to which Canada and the provinces have signed onto and which, if properly implemented, will help seniors to maintain and improve their quality of life in line with their increasing longevity and changing demographics; however for the program to succeed, it must be senior driven and not imposed by bureaucrats or service providers. Therefore, it is important that seniors' organizations play a leading role and that we have an agenda for such participation. Our affiliate, the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC (COSCO), is in the finishing stages of completing such an agenda.

We have started informal discussions with the federal government in regards to funding the NPSCF so that we can set up a clearing house for the purpose of assisting our affiliates in running seniors' health literacy and information programs on the W.H.O. Global Age Friendly Communities Program. COSCO is receiving regular funding from the B.C. Provincial Government to develop and run these programs. Similar funding should be made available in the other provinces. We have found that these two programs help to strengthen seniors' organizations and attract younger seniors to their ranks. COSCO has agreed to provide all their own materials free of charge to our organization, thereby saving us over a hundred thousand dollars in program development costs. In addition, COSCO has agreed to have their instructors do the initial training of trainers among NPSCF affiliates so as to save a lot of instructional costs. COSCO's trainers are retired teachers and retired college instructors who volunteer their time but are compensated for their expenses.

Governments recognize that these programs are not only good for seniors' continued good health, but that they are also cost saving as to regards residential and acute healthcare budgets: this gives seniors' organizations an edge to demand that these accrued savings are spent to improve the quality of primary care. We call this a WIN-WIN SITUATION. Our Primary Healthcare system needs improvement and reform: there must be more emphasis on health rather than sickness. This requires giving more attention to the social determinants of health, such as good housing, good incomes, good home support and social inclusion. This would reduce waiting lists and contribute greatly to a healthier elder population.

We will begin featuring articles dealing with health and well being and encourage our provincial affiliates to do like wise. Health literacy will be featured prominently in the NPSCF NEWS because the first pre-requisite for a seniors' quality of life is good health, so promoting good health will be our priority.

THE NATIONAL PENSIONERS AND SENIOR CITIZENS FEDERATION INCORPORATED

OBJECTIVES

The National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation is an organization devoted entirely to the welfare and best interests of Canada's elderly.

1. To promote and establish and foster Seniors' Centres (called Clubs or Groups) and Regional and Provincial Seniors' groups throughout Canada.
2. To provide education for persons in the retired and senior citizens age group and other individuals interested in aging, and the status and well being of seniors.
3. To reach out to seniors who are lonely, or isolated, or at risk.
4. To provide programs which promote healthy active lifestyles for seniors, thus sustaining mental and physical health.
5. To assist in developing the knowledge that seniors should learn during their aging process, through promotion of educational experiences.
6. To research the aging process, and any problems and benefits pertaining to the aged that might be of interest to the Federation and to use the knowledge gained from that research to educate seniors and any other party or parties who are or might become interested in these concerns.
7. To provide opportunities for seniors to utilize their volunteer and leadership skills for the benefits of all persons.
8. To consult with other private and public organizations which offer similar services in order to gather any educational information that will add to knowledge and be of use to seniors and the public.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Editorial – Art Kube | 1 |
| NPSCF Information | 2 |
| Mental Health Strategy for Canada | 3,4 |
| Submitted by Art Field Past President | 5,6,7 |
| 1 st V.P. John Gatens | 8 |
| 2 nd V.P. Sheila Righi | 9,10 |
| 3 rd V.P. Mary Fleck | 11 |
| Secretary – Fern Haight | 12 |
| Treasurer's Message | 13 |
| Donations | 14 |
| Seniors Lobby Federal Government | 15 |
| Advocating for the Elderly (Ottawa) | 16 |
| Retirees Area Council Ad | 17 |
| At work in Ottawa | 17 |
| On the Light Side | 18 |
| Johnsons Ad | 19 |
| You may advertise | 19 |
| Local 222 CAW Ad | 20 |

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the N.P.S.C.F. newsletter.

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Executive for NPSCF 2007-2008

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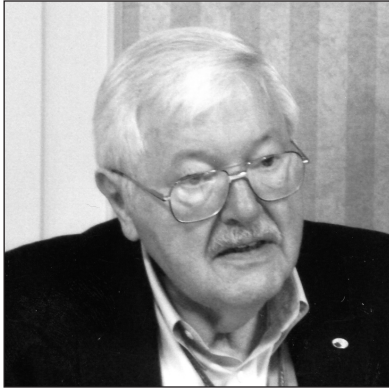
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Art Kube,
President, NPSCF

A FRAMEWORK FOR A MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY FOR CANADA

On behalf of the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation I attended the Mental Health Commission's Stakeholders' Dialogue on the proposed Framework for a Mental Health Strategy for Canada. Canada is the only industrialized country in the world that does not have a national Mental Health Strategy. This is largely do to health being a provincial jurisdiction. The Stakeholders dialogue was attended by forty representatives reflecting a good cross section of society. The eight goals of recovery and well-being received a thorough airing and received mainly support. However it was felt that the social determinants of health, in the document should be much more emphasized and strengthened. Because the issue of mental health is such an important public issue and therefore requires broad public input, we are printing the abbreviated version of the eight goals and ask you to participate in the review. You can view and comment on the whole document by going on www.mentalhealthcommission.ca .

List of Goals

Goal 1

The hope of recovery is available to all.

Recovery is understood as a journey of healing that builds on individual, family, social and cultural strengths, and enables people living with mental health problems and illnesses to lead meaningful lives in the community, despite any limitations imposed by their condition. Family caregivers, service providers, peers and others are partners in this journey of recovery.

Goal 2

Joint action is taken to promote mental health and well-being and to prevent mental health problems and illness.

Factors that strengthen wellness and the ability to face life's challenges – such as balance of body, mind and spirit, resilience, nurturing families and vibrant communities – are promoted. Factors that increase risk of mental health problems and illness – such as bullying at school or stressful work environments – are reduced. In addition, joint action is taken to address underlying factors such as housing, income, education and employment.

Goal 3

The mental health system is culturally – safe, and responds to the diverse needs of Canadians.

In a transformed mental health system, programs, services and supports are culturally – safe, and respond to the diverse needs of Canadians, including those arising from migration, ethno-racial background, age, language, gender, sexual orientation, or geographic location.

Goal 4

The importance of families in promoting recovery and well – being is recognized and their needs are supported.

The unique role of family relationships in promoting recovery and well-being is recognized and supported through education and programs such as parenting support, peer support and respite care. With the consent of adults living with mental health problems and illnesses, and in their role as parents of dependent children and youth, family members are partners in the recovery process and are integrated into decision-making. Family caregivers are also supported to meet their own needs.

Goal 5

People of all ages have equitable access to a system of appropriate and effective programs, services and supports that is seamlessly integrated around their needs.

People of all ages have access to effective programs, services and supports in their community, or as close as possible to where they live. The system is centred on meeting people's needs, and seamlessly integrated across the public, private and voluntary sectors and across the lifespan. In addition, the special needs of Canadians living in northern, remote and rural areas are addressed.

Goal 6

Actions are based on appropriate evidence, outcomes are measured and research is advanced.

Mental health policies, programs, services and supports are informed by appropriate evidence that is based on diverse sources of knowledge. They are evaluated on the basis of their contribution to improving the mental health of all Canadians and the health and social outcomes of people living with mental health problems and illnesses and their families. The support provided for mental health and mental illness research is in keeping with the economic and social burden of mental health problems and illness on society, and the translation of this research into practice is accelerated.

Goal 7

Discrimination against people living with mental health problems and illnesses is eliminated, and stigma is not tolerated.

People living with mental health problems and illnesses and their families are fully included in community life. They are accorded the same respect, consideration, rights and entitlements as people dealing with physical illnesses and as all Canadians, and mental health service providers are similarly respected. Mental health programs and policies are funded and supported at a level that is based on the economic and social burden of mental health problems and illnesses and is consistent with funding provided to the rest of the health and human services sectors.

Goal 8

A broadly-based social movement keeps mental health issues out of the shadows – forever.

There is a sustained national effort to improve health and social outcomes for people living with mental health problems and illnesses, and to improve the mental health and well-being of all Canadians. A broad and dynamic social movement takes root that keeps mental health issues out of the shadows forever.

The Mental Health Commission of Canada would appreciate your comment and input. Play your part in helping to design a National Mental Health Policy, of which Canada can be truly proud of and which reflects our commitment to a civil society. The address for the Mental Health Commission of Canada is: 1145 Carling Ave, Suite 7500, Ottawa, Ontario, K1Z 7K4. The Website address is www.mentalhealthcommission.ca. My participation in the Commission's meeting in Vancouver is the NPSCF ongoing effort to have seniors input in Canadian Public Policy. We need to hear from you too, be it by your organization submitting resolutions to our annual convention or you sending us an Email or letter expressing your concern on important issues. Thanking you for your input on this important issue.

Art Kube, President. NPSCF.



Art Field,
Past President, NPSCF

Past President Message

I attended our executive meeting in Ottawa on the week of February 8th through February 12, 2009. With our executive meeting we lobbied the Federal M.P.'s and Senators. We met with two Liberal M.P.'s, Dr. Carolyn Bennet, Liberal Health Critic and Judy Sgro who is the Liberal Critic for Seniors. We also met with four M.P.'s from the Federal New Democratic Party. One was Wayne Marston, who is the Senior Critic. Wayne spoke at our convention in Truro, Nova Scotia in 2006. We also met with two staff members, Senator Marjorie LeBreton, who is head of National Seniors Council and sits on the Federal Tories, cabinet. We did not meet with any Government

M.P.'s or staff because they are not interested in meeting Seniors or anybody else I am told.

Our entire executive went to Question Period and took part in our meetings with the M.P.'s that would meet with us. I am sure our President will tell you what went on in Ottawa in his column.

I want to answer Fern, our secretary, on her article that was in the last newsletter. In the 1960's and also in the 70's we had minority governments under Lester Pearson, a Liberal, with the support of the N.D.P. under Tommy Douglas and David Lewis. In Ontario we had a two year accord that was signed by the Liberals and the N.D.P. to get rid of 40 years of Tory rule. There were some good things for the people of Canada and Ontario under those governments. I am pointing this out because the Liberals and N.D.P. were going to form a Coalition Government. There are a lot of coalition governments in the world, so we would not be the only country with one. I want to explain how this would work, according to the document I have from the parties. There were a lot of people complaining about the Bloc Quebecois being part of this government but they were only supporting the coalition on certain policies. The Bloc supported Hon. Stephen Harper a lot before the last election, to keep him in power. There is a letter with a copy of the agreement where Hon. Stephen Harper, Jack Layton and Gilles Duceppe wrote to the Governor General when Paul Martin was Prime Minister, to form a Coalition Government.

In closing, things never change. I was watching a video, Prairie Giant, the Tommy Douglas Story and when he took power in Saskatchewan the banks were fore closing on farm mortgages. Now we have problems at General Motors and the two other companies of the Big 3. The Ontario government wants workers to make less and our pensions are not very safe. Why do the workers have to take less and the high up, who make millions, don't cut their salaries, or benefits?

Thought for the day: A child miss-educated is a child lost.

December 1, 2008

Submitted by Art Field

An Accord on a Cooperative Government to Address the Present Economic Crisis

This document outlines the key understandings between the Liberal Party of Canada and the New Democratic Party of Canada regarding a new cooperative government.

1. Role of Caucuses

The Liberal and NDP caucuses will continue to meet as distinct caucuses. They will receive briefings and be consulted as appropriate. Both are entitled to offer advice to the government. The two caucuses may meet jointly as agreed from time to time to jointly address issues. The caucuses will sit next to each other on the government benches.

2. Cabinet

Nothing in this Accord is intended to diminish or alter the power and prerogatives of the Prime Minister

The Prime Minister will be the Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada.

The Minister of Finance will be appointed from the Liberal Caucus.

The cabinet will be composed of 24 ministers plus the Prime Minister.

Eighteen of these ministers will be appointed from within the Liberal Caucus.

Six of these ministers will be appointed from within the NDP caucus, plus six Parliamentary Secretaries, sworn in as Privy Councillors, will also be named from the NDP caucus. In the event the Prime Minister chooses to appoint a larger cabinet, the NDP proportion will be maintained.

The specifics of these cabinet appointments will be made by the Prime Minister in appropriate consultation with the Leader of the NDP.

The rules and practices of cabinet confidentiality and solidarity will be strictly maintained. Normal processes of cabinet appointments and governance in the Canadian federal government will be respected. The cabinet is jointly and collectively accountable to Parliament for its work, including in daily question period.

3. A “no surprises” approach

Within the limits of common sense and the needs of cabinet government, the two parties agree they will work together on a “no surprises” basis.

Furthermore, upon its formation, the government will put in place a permanent consultation mechanism with the Bloc Québécois.

4. Appointments

Both parties are committed to restoring the integrity, transparency and efficiency of the appointments process in the Public Service and in federal bodies like the Supreme Court, the Senate and Commissions like the CRTC.

The Prime Minister will consult the Leader of the NDP as appropriate on appointments.

5. A standing managing committee of the Accord

A standing managing committee of the Accord, chaired by the Prime Minister, will be struck.

It will be composed of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the NDP, and such other persons as the leaders deem appropriate from time to time.

The committee will meet regularly to ensure the good order of the Accord; to deal with key issues that have arisen; to consult on key appointments; and to resolve any disputes which might arise from the Accord (for example, by referring issues relating to the Accord to a trusted committee of experienced, distinguished Canadians).

6. Term of this Accord

This Accord will expire on June 30, 2011 unless renewed.

Agreed on December 1, 2008

Hon. Stéphane Dion
Leader, Liberal Party of Canada

Hon. Jack Layton
Leader, New Democratic Party of Canada

Submitted by Art Field

September 9, 2004

Her Excellency the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, C.C., C.M.M., C.O.M., C.D.
Governor-General
Rideau Hall
1 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A1

Excellency,

As leader of the opposition parties, we are well aware that, given the Liberal minority government, you could be asked by the Prime Minister to dissolve the 38th Parliament at any time should the House of Commons fail to support some part of the government's program.

We respectfully point out that the opposition parties, who together constitute a majority in the House, have been in close consultation. We believe that, should a request for dissolution arise this should give you cause as constitutional practice has determined, to consult the opposition leaders and consider all of your options before exercising your constitutional authority.

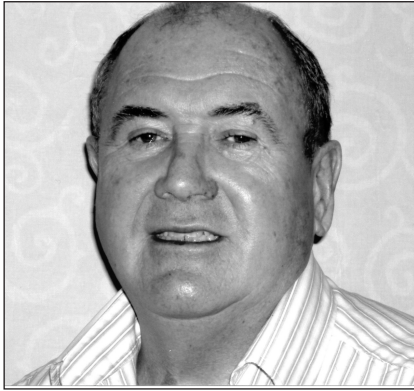
Your attention to this matter is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Hon. Stephan Harper, P.C., M.P.
Leader of the Opposition
Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada

Gilles Duceppe, M.P.
Leader of the Bloc Québécois

Jack Layton, M.P.
Leader of the New Democratic Party



John Gatens,
1st Vice President, NPSCF

Greetings: From your 1st Vice President

I would like to refer to a subject near and dear to me:
The disability tax credit... Many seniors are aware of this, however just as many are not. This tax credit can be applied to men and women who have medical problems in a number of areas, i.e. speaking, hearing, walking, feeding, dressing mental functions, necessary for every day life, elimination of bowel or bladder functions. This tax credit can be a valuable asset to seniors and others who are on a fixed income. If one qualifies it can mean over \$1000.00 per year, tax savings and may be allowed retroactively as much as 10 years.

We have many seniors who cannot walk very far or have to walk with the assistance of a cane or walker or indeed an attachment on their foot or leg. This may qualify you for the credit. Another common condition many seniors face is being unable to speak properly after a stroke. Or you may have a severe speech impediment. These things may qualify you, in short, those are just a few examples of the type of problems that may entitle you to the Disability Tax Credit.

O.K. So how do you go about finding out if you qualify: First off you must get your hands on a document from your tax office headed: Medical and Disability-Related Information, Includes Form T2201. Read this book, take a careful look at the established criteria, then if you think you may qualify take the form to your doctor. Do not self diagnose, let your doctor decide if you may qualify. It may surprise you. Then if and when your doctor fills in the form you send it to internal revenue for approval. This can take a while, however if you qualify and it is retroactive for a number of years again, decided by your physician, it will be well worth the wait.

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of pursuing this little used or little known Tax Credit that thousands of citizens could qualify for if they just make application through their physician, surgeon or medical specialist.

Let me finish by saying that you may not feel that you have a disability since you have lived with chronic arthritic pain in your knees, ankles, feet etc. for so long you just don't think about. You may think that since you have had new knees or new hips joints and that walking has become a real challenge that you won't qualify, let your doctor decide. Finally let me point out to you that should you qualify and that your condition has been affecting you for many years, you could be entitled for as much as \$13,000.00 and may be entitled for the rest of your life, for the Tax Credit which will put money in your pocket. Please, please follow up on this issue for your own good and enjoy a benefit that is out there for the asking.

Respectfully submitted,
First Vice President John Gatens

2nd Vice Presidents Report



Sheila Righi,
2nd Vice President, NPCSF

February 07, 2009 I boarded an “Air Canada Jazz”, plane along with Fern Haight, destination Ottawa, Ontario, a direct flight from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. We arrived in Ottawa 2:00 p.m. and the weather sunny and bright, as we travelled along from the airport by taxi, the driver was very informative as to what we were passing by as the “Rideau Canal”, came into view. It was a picture card setting, with young and old alike skating in the open air on the canal. Many “ice sculptors,” and lights, a beautiful view to behold.

The next morning it’s business as usual 9:00 am going over the brief that will be presented to members of parliament and opposition members as well.

Also the discussion regarding the merger of “Canadian Pensioners Concerned,” which would give National Pensioners And Senior Citizens a much stronger voice when lobbying on behalf of Seniors of Canada. If the merger happens they are assured an “Executive Position” on our board of directors, plus one member at large.

Sunday 9:00 am we are in meeting session again where discussions centered around amendments to the constitution, our next convention in October, 2009 and receiving resolutions, a discussion the resolution’s can be submitted by E Mail.

Discussions re: Poverty, Homelessness, Protection of Pensions and Health Literacy which are all included in our Brief which our President will present to the respective members of parliament he had secured appointments with. Then there was the introduction of the National President for “Canadian Pensioners Concerned”, Winnie Frazer MacKay.

Our President, Art Kube informed our executive that he and Ms. MacKay would be the speakers when presenting the brief.

The following morning we are off to the Parliament with the first appointment at 10:00 am with Carolyn Bennett, Justice Room 804, this was very time consuming. We had our lunch in the “Cafeteria” in Parliament. At 1:00 pm we are going to question period. We go through security and are not allowed in to the room till the Bell toll. Then we are ushered to our seats which contain hand held phones, making it possible to hear the different “Speakers,” set the loudness in English or French at the touch of a button. Very interesting! The next meeting was with Hon. Judy Sgro at 204 Justice Building, again with the presentation of our “Brief” and discussions on all issues concerning seniors and possible solutions if resources are forth coming.

At that time Hon. Sgro made arrangements for our party to have lunch the following day in the “Senators Dining Room” where all members of Parliament partake of their lunch, she also asked if she could have a picture taken with us. I was fortunate to have my camera along, and the picture is not too bad.

February 11, 2009, meeting at 10:00 am in the Main Block, Franklin Room to meet Rebecca Murphy "Policy Advisor" where discussions, pro and cons how some problems seniors face, could be solved. Again resources are an issue which we have to keep lobbying for.

Today we are having lunch in the "Dining Room" Hon. Judy Sgro came to greet us, but had another appointment and couldn't join us, this was a lovely "Buffet Style", lunch very inviting to the palate. We were seated in the center of the large room which consists of individual rooms for each Province with the Province's name posted on the outside wall to the entry of the room.

After the delicious lunch we again went to question period after the toll of the "Bells."

I did have the opportunity to shake hands with the Hon. Michael Ignatief, also Rt. Hon. Mike Duffy.

I've always had a dream that one day I would walk in the halls of Parliament to gaze upon the etched wood work, the marble and pictures of past and present Prime Ministers, Queens and Kings. I wasn't disappointed and found this to be a very educational experience, one that will always be with me.

I also want to add some "Anti-Fraud" tips given by the RCMP as March is Fraud awareness month:

1. Cover your pin-code entry from hidden cameras or on lookers and accompanying a waiter with your credit card when paying for dinner in a restaurant.
2. It's smart to use the same A.T.M. machine as much as possible, so you notice if there's something out of place

The many schemes to take peoples money, cheque fraud is growing the fastest, Cyber crimes most common manifestation is mass-market E Mails. Almost everyone has heard of poorly worded letters from abroad promising great riches. People inevitably want to believe in that pot of gold and end up falling for it. It's worthwhile for these criminals to send out thousands of letters and 10 or more respond and lose \$30,000.00 or \$40,000.00 each. If you suspect something is wrong it probably is. Contact your nearest RCMP.

3. Identity theft, especially when your identity is assumed by a criminal, can cost the victim more than just a sum of cash. As they may secure a bank loan in your name. The same as before, if it looks too good to be true, it probably is.

Take that extra step to be diligent, save your money and a lot of head aches.

Enjoy "everyday" as if it were your last, laugh and be happy.

Sheila Righi



Mary Fleck,
3rd Vice President, NPSCF

REPORT FROM 3RD VICE-PRESIDENT

Well, it has been a very busy time. spring cleaning household, meetings of senior groups and , of course, our executive trip to Ottawa.

I felt the trip to Ottawa, to lobby for senior citizens, was very productive. The meeting with MLA's, different ministers, and even the viewing of the city with so much history. It was certainly a learning experience. I was pleased to meet the minister who coined the phrase "grey tsunami". She was referring to so many people reaching their sixties every year. I like the idea that I am part of a tsunami by standing up for the rights and wishes of all senior citizens. How about you?

It was nice to get to know the rest of the executive, the only one I was familiar with was Fern Haight, but I made friends with Sheila, Sandy, John and his wife, and of course Art Kube. I was glad to see Art Field and Aileen also.

Last week, on CBC, some expert on this monetary situation, said, "There is no one alive today who remembers the "great depression". I may not remember it as such, but, I do remember men walking through our little town, knocking on doors and asking to do work in exchange for a meal. I was very small and told not to talk to them. However, none were ever turned away, though they had to eat on the porch. if you remember having bread with sugar on it for desert . . . you remember the depression.

Here, on the East coast , we are looking to the end of winter, the lowering of gas prices, and a nice summer.

Tragedy did strike, once again in our neighbouring Newfoundland, with the loss of sixteen travelling to an oil drilling platform. Our condolences go out to all the friends and families.

As president of the Federation of Seniors and Pensioner of N.S. I am very busy tying off loose ends for our annual meeting and convention. As usual it will be held in Truro, yup!

That's where we held the National a few years ago.

I look forward to our national this year, maybe it's going to be a BIG one.

My best wishes to all
MARY FLECK

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY



Fern Haight,
Secretary, NPSCF

Our society today has special weeks for so many different things. One that interested me was, “Brain Awareness Week” March 16th to 22nd. The theme “Buff up Your Brain” really caught my eye. I am finding a lot of research has been done on this topic.

Did you know exercise can boost your brain power? Researchers worked with 170 men and women aged 50 and over, who all answered “yes” when asked, “Do you have any difficulty with your memory?” (This is a common answer for many seniors).

Half were given information about memory loss, stress management, a healthy diet, alcohol and smoking, while the other half got the same information, plus counselling, newsletters and other encouragement to walk briskly or do similar exercises for 50 minutes, three times a week.

After six months, the exercise group improved moderately on the cognitive section of the Alzheimer Disease Assessment Scale, while the other group declined. The exercise group fared better after eighteen months.

So folks “What should we do?” GO FOR A WALK EVERYDAY.

Memory loss is due to brain shrinkage, which often happens during the aging process.

Researchers worked with a hundred people, aged 61 to 87, who had no memory loss or other cognitive problems. Over a five year period, those who had low blood levels of vitamin B-12 were six times more likely to lose brain volume, as measured by a MRI scan, than those with higher B-12 levels.

If you are 55 years or older your body may not be able to extract the naturally occurring vitamin B -12 from your food. Your body must have a specified amount of B-12 per day. You can get your vitamin B-12 tested to see if you are within the normal range. Even though researchers haven’t proved for sure B-12 can help your brain, researchers do know it is important to have the proper daily amount.

So what should we do? Well, all I can say is anything is worth a try when it comes to “memory loss.”

Spring will be here in a few days. Enjoy the wonderful spring air and the advent of new life. It is such a blessing to be alive and able to enjoy the beauty of nature.

Best wishes to you all,
Fern Haight

From the desk of the Treasurer



Sandy Carricato,
Treasurer, NPSCF

Unfortunately my winter correspondence was not put into the last newsletter. It went missing and we probably will never know where in cyber space it ended up. It was very troubling to me; I don't want any of you to think that I wouldn't take every opportunity I had to communicate with the members.

The NPSCF's Treasurer's Desk is finally in order. When I first received all the boxes, I wasn't sure where to start but like any endeavor it begins with the first step. I would sincerely like to thank Joyce Mitchell past treasurer for her cooperation and her sincere effort to help in every way to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Please feel free to contact me at any time, I look forward to serving the membership in any way that I can. Remember if you move or any of your particulars change please notify me so that I can update your file. My e-mail address is sandy.carricato@sympatico.ca or you can call me at (905) 985 8170.

Thanks to all of the clubs and members that have sent their dues in. If you haven't done so please do as soon as possible. Your mail labels will have your Club # in the upper right hand corner and if you're an individual member your renewal date will be in the same corner.

A letter was sent to me by a member, a woman that is 86 years young telling me of some of her struggles in her life and how she and others of like mind challenged governments to make positive changes for society. The Club started out as an auxiliary and then transformed itself into the present Seniors Club.

To celebrate International Women's Day (IWD) their Club decided to produce a history of women's struggles in their working lives in BC. The women raised money and proceeded to travel the province interviewing and collecting biographies etc. Unfortunately they weren't able to have it published. Sue (not her real name) couldn't bear to see all of this history disappear so she has offered to write it herself. Good luck Sue.

I'm sure many are wondering what is "**International Women's Day**".

IWD is a major day of global celebration for the economic, political and social achievements of women. On this day the struggles of women worldwide are brought out and examined in a hopeful manner.

As far back as March 8th, 1857 women marched in New York protesting against very poor working conditions and low wages.

As they marched they sang a song called Bread and Roses. The words to the song are as follows.

*As we go marching, marching, in the beauty of the day,
A million darkened kitchens, a thousand mill lofts gray,
Are touched with all the radiance that a sudden sun discloses,
For the people hear us singing: Bread and Roses! Bread and Roses!*

*As we go marching, marching, we battle too for men.
For they are women's children and we mother them again.
Our lives shall not be sweated from birth until life closes:
Hearts starve as well as bodies; give us bread, but give us roses.*

Presently, International Women's Day was celebrated world wide on March 8th.

To all women, I hope you had a very happy IWD, may you have bread as well as roses in your life and to all the men that helped us in our fight for fairness, THANK YOU. The struggle continues.

Sandy Carricato

Donations

From the desk of the treasurer

We can smell spring in the air and what a pleasant scent. It will be a relief for all Canadians to feel the warmth of the new season as it has been one of the worst winters on record.

We have mentioned the winter and spring and we must now mention the fall. In Oct we are having our annual convention in Toronto.

As the elected Treasurer for the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation part of my duties is the raising of funds for this occasion. The convention is always a drain on our finances and we depend on the clubs/members for their generosity to offset the costs of this major event.

We would appreciate and thank you for any contribution you can make.

Please fill out the form below and send your cheque to the following:

Sandra Carricato
Treasurer –
National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation
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Feel free to contact me by phone (905) 985-8170 or e-mail me sandy.carricato@sympatico.ca with any questions or concerns that you may have. I look forward to hearing from clubs/members.

SENIORS LOBBY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT



N.P.S.C.F. Board in Hon. Judy Sgro's Office

Left to Right: Winnie Fraser MacKay, Art Field, Sandy Carricato,
Hon. Judy Sgro, Art Kube, Mary Fleck, Fern Haight, Sheila Righi, John Gatens

The National Pensioners' and Senior Citizens Federation and Winnie Fraser MacKay, president of the Canadian Pensioners; Concerned, met in Ottawa in February, to present their brief to the government.

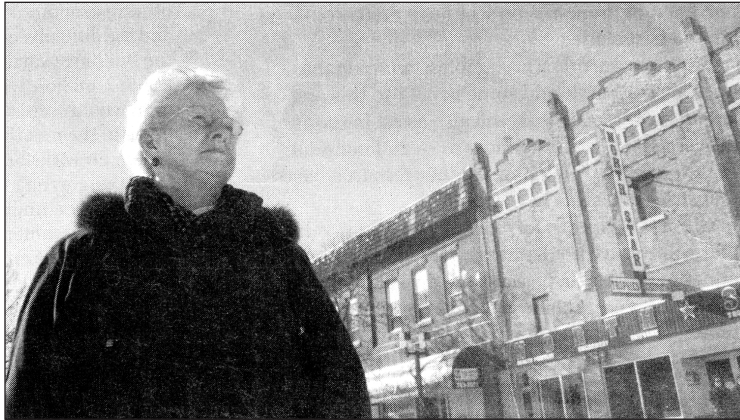
The brief represented the view of close to two million people and reflects the needs, desires and fears of Canadian seniors citizens.

Seniors have been greatly concerned during the past years about the increasing poverty and homelessness among elderly Canadians. This has been brought about by increases in housing, food and energy costs. Part of this increased poverty is a result of an insufficient Guaranteed Income Supplement and provincial rent supplements. Action at both ends of the age scale must be a government priority if we are to call ourselves a civil society. We are also very concerned regarding the security of our members' pensions and retirement savings as a result of the economic meltdown. Seniors who have saved and contributed to their pensions and retirement savings are not responsible for the economic meltdown and therefore the Government has a responsibility to protect those pension and retirement savings.

We hope that the federal government will seriously consider the resolutions in the brief and work toward implementing policies that reflect these Canadian majority values.

Advocating for the Elderly in Ottawa

*Prince Albert resident Sheila Righi makes the voices of poverty-stricken seniors heard
By Sarah Rolles, Herald Staff, February 27, 2009*



Sheila Righi, second vice-president for the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation recently returned from Ottawa after participating in the presentation of a position brief concerning the rights of senior citizens. Herald photo by Sarah Rolles

Seniors have been greatly concerned during the past few years about the increasing poverty and homelessness amongst elderly Canadians.

Sheila Righi, a Prince Albert resident, recently helped to address these concerns as an active member of the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation.

She and other members of the federation and the Canadian Pensioners Concerned travelled to Ottawa to present a position brief to the government of Canada to discuss the issues and concerns of senior citizens throughout Canada.

“Our motto is, “work with us, not for us,” said Righi. “We are advocating and putting out what seniors need.”

The association mentions many topics of concerns but listed the four most important as poverty, homelessness, protecting pensions, and health and literacy programs.

“Poverty is a top concern,” said Righi “And it is happening here in Prince Albert.”

The brief created by the group raises the concern of the increases in housing, energy and food costs, forcing more and more seniors to poverty and homelessness. It also discusses the recent economic melt down and how it has created a concern regarding the security of pensions and retirement savings for many seniors.

“Protecting our pensions has become an issue,” said Righi.

“And there seems to be less affordable and safe housing available for seniors.”

The National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation and the Canadian Pensioners Concerned is made up of almost two million members. And it is their wish to play a constructive role in relations with the government.

“Seniors are the fastest-growing segments of society, their participation rates in elections are over 90 per cent,” said Righi.



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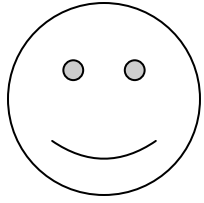
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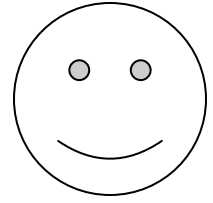
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Secretary Fern Haight and Treasurer Sandy Carricato are diligently at work at the N.P.S.C.F. Executive Meeting, held in Ottawa, February 6th to 12th, 2009.



On the Lighter Side



- Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother, "Why is the bride dressed in white?" Because white is the color of happiness, and today is the happiest day of her life." The child thought about this for a moment then said, "So why is the groom wearing black?"
- Three boys are in the school yard bragging about their fathers. The first boy says, "My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem, they give him \$50". The second boy says, "That's nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song, they give him \$100". The third boy says, "I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon, and it takes eight people to collect all the money"!
- An elderly woman died last month. Having never married, she requested no male pallbearers. In her handwritten instructions for her memorial service, she wrote, "They wouldn't take me out while I was alive, I don't want them to take me out when I'm dead"!
- A police recruit was asked during the exam, "What would you do if you had to arrest your own mother"? He answered, "Call for Backup".
- A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds. After explaining the commandment to "Honour thy father and thy mother", she asked, "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters"? Without missing a beat, one little boy answered, "Thou shall not kill".
- Two boys were walking home from Sunday school after hearing a strong preaching on the devil. One said to the other, "What do you think about all this Satan Stuff"? The other boy replied, "Well, you know how Santa Claus turned out. It's probably just your Dad".

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Saluting the National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation

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