

NATIONAL PENSIONERS AND SENIOR CITIZENS FEDERATION

MARCH NEWSLETTER

Volume 4, Issue 1 March 2004

The Executive of the National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation wishes EVERYONE a Happy Easter

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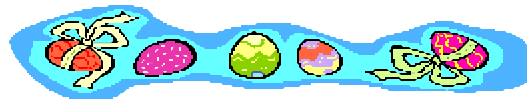
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National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation

CONVENTION: OCTOBER 6 -9, 2004

“Stand and Be Heard”

Come to Beautiful British Columbia

Hilton Vancouver Airport Hotel

(The hotel is located in Richmond, BC, 15 minutes from the Vancouver Airport, close to shopping and restaurants, twenty minutes from downtown Vancouver and 1.5 hours from the Whistler Resort)

Phone: 604-273-6336 Fax: 604-232-5011

Reservations : 1-800-445-8667

Convention Room Rate: \$99.00 for Single and Double

\$20.00 for Extra Persons - Taxes are Extra

When calling the hotel to reserve a room, you must mention the group name National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation to get the above listed rates.

The rates quoted will be extended three days prior to and following the convention subject to availability.

Complimentary overnight parking to all attendees. You must register your car with the front desk.

Hosted by the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC (COSCO)

Registration forms for the convention are in this newsletter.

“Take a look at our website.”

www.npscf.ca

Message from President - *Art Field*

Our brief to the Federal Government from the resolutions from our Convention held in Gander, Newfoundland, has been put together by Will Holland of B.C. Our Past-President Curtis Decoste's daughter is translating it into French. We are going to present our brief to the Federal Government after the election, if an election is held in the spring.

I have been taking part in conference calls every two weeks with the Co-coordinating Committee of the Congress of National Seniors Organizations. Our Chairperson wrote a letter to Prime Minister Paul Martin on the first day he took over, on Dec. 12/03, which was in our December newsletter. As most of you know, there was not much said about seniors in the Throne Speech. The letter from the Chairperson of C.N.S.O. asked for a meeting with the Prime Minister, as there are over 2 million older Canadians who could help develop programs to ensure that seniors age with dignity and security.

Our letter asked for a meeting with the Prime Minister so we could bring our concerns to him. Well, he answered our letter on March 1, 2004, he took almost three months, or his manager of correspondence did, to tell us he did not have the time to meet with us.

Well I guess we can show him what Gray Power is all about at election time. I am meeting with Johnson In. to finalize our agreement so seniors can get cheaper insurance. We are also going to get an 800 number so there will be a better way for our members to get in touch with us.

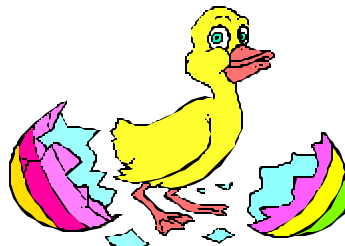
I have been invited to speak at the Federation Senior Citizens and Pensioners of Nova Scotia annual convention in May in Truro, N.S. in the first week of May.

Our 1st Vice President, Rudy Lawrence is busy getting our convention organized for October, to be held in Vancouver, so start saving your pennies so you can go to beautiful B.C.

In closing, Kindness is the noblest weapon to conquer with.

(Letters and replies are included in this newsletter.)

Art...



From the Desk of: First Vice-President

- *Rudy Lawrence*

It has been a busy time for me since the Gander Convention. Your Executive had another planning meeting in Toronto in late November. A lot of good discussion and decisions took place at these meetings. My Provincial organization, the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC held a successful two day health conference for seniors in early October here in Vancouver. 426 seniors registered from all parts of our province. We are currently working on plans for a public forum that we are sponsoring on May 21st at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre with Roy Romanow as the featured speaker. It is nice to be busy in ones retirement.

I am pleased to report that our website is continuing to develop. We now have a photo gallery of pictures from the Gander Convention and the announcement for the 60th annual convention to be held here on October 6-9, 2004. The convention is being held at the Hilton Airport in Richmond, BC just outside Vancouver. Take a look at the website www.npscf.ca. The announcement is also in this newsletter.

In the meantime, plans are now in progress for the convention and it is our intention to make it the best convention ever. The theme for the convention is "Stand and Be Heard", something that all seniors need to do in these changing times. So, start making your plans to come to the convention and I look forward to seeing all

of you in Beautiful British Columbia in October, this year.

It's never too late to care for your vision

By Sean McNeely,
The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)

Human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes. - William James

As we get older, our attitudes become more and more entrenched in our minds. Entrenched or not, changing attitudes is at the root of addressing vision loss in Canada.

Millions of Canadian seniors unnecessarily believe "Vision loss is a natural part of aging ... there's nothing I can do about it ..."

Nonsense. Efforts can and should be made to preserve vision or even improve it. Simple lifestyle changes go a long way toward preserving your sight. Here are some suggestions:

Have regular eye exams - Early detection of eye conditions through regular eye exams is crucial. The earlier something is detected, the better the options are for treatment, rehabilitation and support services.

Stop smoking - A recent study published in the British Medical Journal (March 2004 issue) reported smokers are four to five times more likely to develop age-related macular degeneration (AMD), which is now the leading cause of vision loss in Canadians over 50.

Eat a healthy diet - The National Eye Institute released findings from the Age-Related Eye Disease Study (AREDS), stating that high levels of antioxidants and zinc significantly reduce the risk of advanced AMD.

Protect your eyes - Avoid UV light by wearing brimmed hats and sunglasses.

Maintain a healthy weight - The incidence of diabetic retinopathy is soaring because of increasing obesity in general populations, leading to Type 2 diabetes.

For more information on how to preserve your vision, visit www.cnib.ca or call your local CNIB office.

**A NOTE FROM
EDDA FERGUSON
2ND Vice President**

Well, here it is time again for our newsletter. We here in Nova Scotia had a couple of bad storms this winter, so things were very white for awhile, but the snow is going and hopefully spring is not far away.

The Federation of Senior Citizens & Pensioners of Nova Scotia are getting ready for our Annual Convention to be held in Truro, NS at Howard Johnson Hotel in May.

It is always a busy time of year receiving registrations, preparing resolutions books, etc., for this Convention.

We are looking forward to having the President of the NPSCF, Mr. Art Field attend our Convention to bring greetings from the National.

The NPSCF have also joined Johnson Insurance and urge all members of Senior's Clubs to take advantage of the cheaper rates they can get both in home, car and travel insurance.

Many of the Seniors Clubs do not hold meetings in the winter months, but they will be back to their meetings now that the weather is getting better.

Hope all the Councils and Clubs have a very good summer. Take Care.

Income Tax Time

When the time comes to make out
income tax

Just stay calm, you must relax
The boys in Ottawa will take their share
Although we don't think it's fair
So with pen in hand we settle down
Heave a sigh and cast a frown
In parliament the pinch cannot be felt
While others are asked to tighten their
belts
We add & subtract till our minds in a
daze.

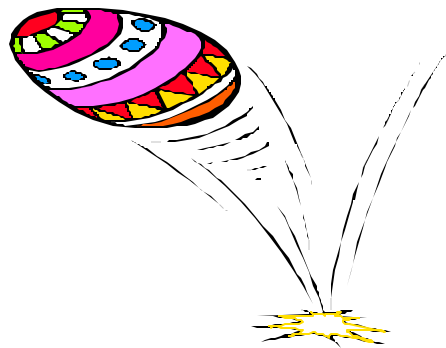
Then decide there must be other ways
So off to an accountant we hastily go.
All the answers he will know
For another year the chore is done
And once again the government won
These words could then be on your tomb
"Taxes drove me to my doom."
-Author Unknown



Canada Customs
And Revenue Agency

***1040 EZ 2 Do Tax Form
New Simplified Tax Form***

1. How much money did you make? _____
2. Send it to us.



TREASURER'S DESK ***- Joyce Mitchell***

Hello to you all, I hope you are enjoying the cold weather that seems to have all of Canada in its grip. As one of the seniors said, think about it, it is so cold that even germs cannot survive, so think of the nice healthy environment we have. Oh well, each to their own opinion.

On the more serious side, I want to thank all the clubs who obviously read their December newsletter and promptly in January sent their dues. It is wonderful to have so many of the clubs being so prompt. It sure makes my job easier. One note though if you haven't sent your dues and don't know your club number, just glance at the label of your newsletter, it is in the left hand corner of the label, by adding it you save me the time of looking it up as that is how you are registered in the computer.

I must say I had a wonderful holiday in our western Canada, (Edmonton) and came back with a different appreciation of how I spend my time. Helping out with the daily chores of a 5 member very active family, "one 8 year old and 14 year old" it seems you spend your days cooking, cleaning and playing taxi driver to different sport functions, music lesson, etc., but to tell you the truth I loved every minute of it, and find my house so quiet now that I have returned.

Take care,

**YOURS FOR THE BETTERMENT OF
SENIORS.**

Joyce Mitchell NPSCF
Treasurer

Elvis Presley's Senior Citizen Song

Are you lonesome tonight,
Does your tummy feel tight?
Did you bring your Mylanta & Tums?
Does your memory stray, to that bright sunny day...
When you had all your teeth and your gums?
Is your hairline receding, are your eyes growing dim?
Hysterectomy for her, and it's prostate for him.
Does your back give you pain, do your knees predict
rain?
Tell me dear, are you lonesome tonight?

Is your blood pressure up, you cholesterol down?
Are you eating your low-fat cuisine?
All that oat bran and fruit, Metamucil to boot,
Keeps you like a well-oiled machine.
If it's football, or baseball...he sure knows the score.
Yes, he knows where it's at...but forgets what it's for.
So, your gall bladder's gone, and his gout lingers on.
Tell me dear, are you lonesome tonight?

When you're hungry, he's not. When you're cold,
then he's hot.
Then you start that old thermostat war.
When you turn out the light, he goes left, you go right.
Then you get his great symphonic snore.
He was once so romantic, and witty and smart.
How'd he turn out to be such a cranky old coot?
So don't take any bets, this is a good as it gets.
Tell me dear, are you lonesome tonight.



From My House to Yours - Secretary

Spring is sprung.
The grass has riz.
I wonder where the birdies is !!!

Yes, spring is here, according to the calendar and we all got through that very cold winter. We in Canada are rugged folk and you know we certainly have to be. All the things our people have endured this last year, drought, West Nile, Sars, BSE, low grain prices, low pig prices, lowering land prices, etc. The agricultural economy is the lowest or you might say the worst in history. Now what!

Well we do have an Agricultural minister, Bob Speller, that everyone should get to know. Many farmers today are seniors; Seniors who are ready to retire but are unable to because of the economic situation. Seniors, let's grab our pens and write Bob Speller a message. Tell him about the farming situation that you are experiencing.

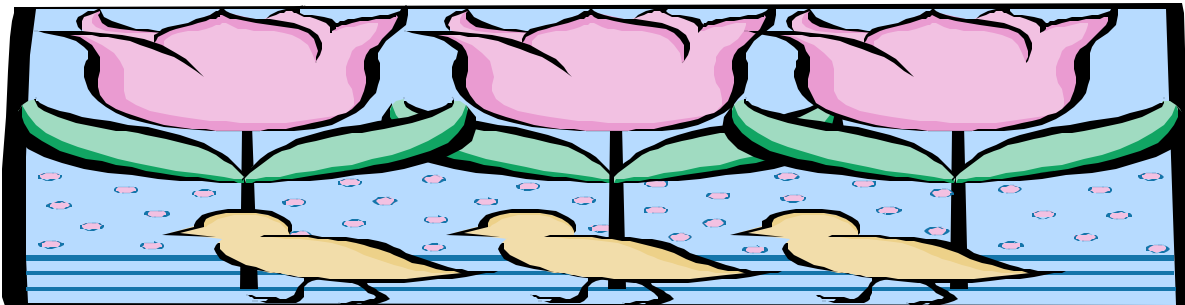
Should we test every animal for BSE enabling the beef industry to get back in motion? Seniors you have ideas. Our M.P.'s need your input from the grassroots people of our country. You have the experience and experience is a great teacher. Sit down and write. Your advice might be the key, the key to improving, improving the terrible mess our country is in.

May 2004 bring changes, changes to the corrupt, scandalous, messy problems of government, a turning point in agricultural woes and accountability be a number one priority in today's government.

Have a Happy Easter everyone.

For the betterment of all seniors.

Fern from Saskatchewan



Generic Drug Industry Offers Improvements to Access to Medicines Bill

Providing affordable generic medicines to developing countries is important and achievable with changes

By Jim Keon

Canada's generic drug makers have proposed several amendments to help ensure a new government bill will be effective in delivering Canadian-made generic pharmaceuticals to developing countries facing health emergencies.

In an appearance before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, representatives of the Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association (CGPA) said that while the generic industry wants the legislation passed, Bill C-9 needs major revisions before it will deliver the Intended results.

Canada's generic pharmaceutical industry applauded the government in its commitment to make Canadian generic pharmaceuticals available for export to developing countries in times of health emergencies, such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa. Unfortunately, Bill C-9 is not effective as it is currently worded.

The CGPA expressed the generic pharmaceutical industry's desire to work with the government, Committee members and other stakeholders to develop workable amendments for Bill C-9 to ensure the legislation will be as effective as possible.

Representatives of generic drug makers said the legislation needs to be revised to simplify overall requirements and provide market certainty before generic companies will consider participating in the initiative.

The most significant problem with Bill C-9 is the provision that gives brand-name drug makers a right of first refusal. This will allow brand-name drug makers 30 days to take over contracts already negotiated by generic companies.

The right of first refusal provision erodes the incentives for generic drug makers to seek out and set up deals for less developed countries. A generic company cannot invest time and millions of dollars if it has to hand negotiated contracts over to brand-name drug companies.

There are less onerous alternatives to the right of first refusal provision that would still ensure Canada meets its international trade obligations. The CGPA outlined two such alternatives in its submission to the Committee.

Other amendments to Bill C-9 proposed by the generic pharmaceutical industry involve providing non-governmental organizations with the ability to purchase medicines for developing countries and changes to the compulsory license requirements.

Canada's generic industry believes that the goal of providing affordable generic medicines is important and achievable. The CGPA and its member companies simply wish to ensure that the steps taken will lead to substantive results.

For more information about Canada's efforts to deliver Canadian-made generic pharmaceuticals to developing countries, visit the CGPA's website at www.canadiangenerics.ca

Jim Keon is President of the Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association.

THE WOODEN BOWL - A LOVE STORY

Submitted by a Senior in Trenton ON.

Excerpt from a home town paper in Western Canada

I guarantee you will remember the tale of the *Wooden Bowl* tomorrow, a week from now, a year from now.

A frail old man went to live with his son, daughter-in-law, and four year old grandson. The old man's hand trembled, his eyesight was blurred, and his step faltered.

The family ate together at the table. But the elderly grandfather's shaky hands and failing eyesight made eating difficult. Peas rolled off his spoon onto the floor. When he grasped the glass, milk spilled on the tablecloth.

The son and daughter-in-law became irritated with the mess. "We must do something about grandfather," said the son, "I've had enough of his spilled milk, noisy eating, and food on the floor."

So the husband and his wife set a small table in the corner. There, grandfather ate alone while the rest of the family enjoyed dinner. Since grandfather had broken a dish or two, his food was served in a wooden bowl.

When the family glanced in grandfather's direction, sometimes he had a tear in his eye as he sat alone. Still, the only words the couple had for him were sharp admonitions when he dropped a fork or spilled food.

The four year old watched it all in silence. One evening before supper, the father noticed his son playing with wood scraps on the floor. He asked the child sweetly, "What are you making?" "Oh, I am making a little wooden bowl for you and mama to eat your food in when I grow up."

The four year old smiled and went back to work. The words struck the parents so that they were speechless. Then tears started to stream down their cheeks. Though no word was spoken both knew what must be done.

That evening the husband took grandfather's hand and gently led him back to the family table. For the remainder of his days he ate every meal with the family. And for some reason, neither husband nor wife seemed to care any longer when a fork was dropped, milk spilled, or the tablecloth soiled.

On a positive note, I've learned that, no matter what happens, how bad it seems today, life does go on, and it will be better tomorrow.

I've learned that you can tell a lot about a person by the way/he/she handles three things; a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas Tree lights.

I've learned that, regardless of your relationship with your parents, grandparents, siblings, or friends, you'll miss them when they're gone from your life.

I've learned that making a "living" is that the same things as making a "life".

I've learned that life sometimes gives you a second chance.

I've learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands. You need to be able to throw something back.

I've learned that if you pursue happiness, it will elude you. But, if you focus on your family, your friends, the needs of others, your work and doing the best you can, happiness will find you.

I've learned that whenever I decide something with an open heart, I usually make the right decision.

I've learned that even when I have pains, I don't have to be one.

I've learned that every day, you should reach out and touch someone. People love that human touch, holding hands, a warm hug, or just a friendly pat on the back.

I've learned that I still have a lot to learn. I've learned that I still have a lot to learn. I've learned that you should pass this on to everyone you care about.

I just did.

Submitted by Reverend Rodger Halvorsen, Semans Pentecostal Assembly.

The Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC

Proudly Presents

THE HONOURABLE ROY ROMANOW

SPEAKING AT THE QUEEN ELIZABETH THEATRE

FRIDAY MAY 21st – 1:30 pm

Come and hear first hand details on the Royal Commission on the Future of Healthcare in Canada and the Importance of Sustaining Our Public Health Care System.

It was our generation that fought to establish Medicare, it should be our generation to lead the fight to save it.

Admission is Free

But you Must Have a Ticket

To obtain your free ticket including your reserved seat:

Contact: Rudy Lawrence at the COSCO Office
Phone: 604-312-2089

Community meeting dedicated to:

“Advancing the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities”

- February 10, 2004

Forty people attended this workshop-meeting. Some attendees were disabled persons themselves while the others consisted of government officials, academics and members of community groups and Aboriginal organizations. The objective of the meeting was to provide comments on a Government of Canada report on

disability issues in an effort to update and improve this report. The meeting was interesting. Although less than 10% of the population under the age of 65 are disabled while more than 40% of the population 65 years of age and over are, the report focused on the needs of disabled person under the age of 65 with sections on skilled development, learning and employment and the ability of disabled person to earn an income. I raise this point to those who organized the workshop. Two sections of the report that are of great interest to seniors with a disability were the object of distinct presentations. One session dealt with “Disability Supports” and another with “Community Capacity”. During my Workgroup’s discussion, I highlighted some supports needed by disabled seniors (i.e. transportation, persons living in low-income housing, help needed for everyday activities, home modifications, etc.) and the need for the development of community programs and services required by disabled seniors, particularly in view of the large percentage of seniors that are disabled. These comments were well received by the other participants in the group.”

Report from/Robert Laperriere
Research and Communications –
FSNA



Congress of National Seniors Organizations

“It’s Time to Take Matters Into our Own Hands”

Over the last decade, slowly but surely, funding and grants to seniors’ organizations by the federal government have completely disappeared. Since many seniors’ organizations relied on these funds and grants as a major source of revenue for their operations, many have become extinct and a very large number of those remaining are barely able to survive.

Parallel to the disappearance of the funds and seniors’ organizations, is the influence that seniors had on the development of policies and programs for older Canadians. The result is that seniors’ issues are no longer of the importance they warrant on the government’s agenda. With an aging society, it is essential that there be an effective advocacy body to ensure that all Canadians age with dignity and in security.

There are a few seniors’ organizations that have a solid financial foundation. However, they are few and far apart, and on their own, their influence is limited, to say the least. Imagine the influence that older Canadians would have if they could coordinate their activities. That was the reason why the Congress of National Seniors Organizations (CNSO) was established.

Most seniors’ organizations rely solely on membership dues to survive. The majority of national seniors’ organizations have annual membership dues that are \$30.00 or less. That is why the majority of these groups counted on funding and grants to carry out their advocacy role. Now, most of their efforts are spent on trying to survive and the very much needed advocacy role suffers as a consequence.

Older Canadians have learned through experience that they cannot count on any level of government to effectively deal with their concerns, needs and requirements. Up to now, many have participated in seniors’ organizations that represented their views and interests. However, as mentioned above, these groups are barely surviving and cannot put the research, communications and marketing resources to effectively lobby.

The Congress of National Seniors Organizations does not have a budget. It relies on the resources of its member organizations and on administrative support from the Division of Aging and Seniors of Health Canada. But, like most of its member organization, much of its efforts are on survival as opposed to advocacy.

So, what is the solution? Older Canadians can do nothing and hope that the government will ensure that the necessary programs and policies to deal effectively with an aging population are developed (don’t hold your breath!!). They can rely on a few seniors’ organizations that have some resources. However, in the big scheme of things, these organizations seem to be special interests groups and very few have effective advocacy resources. There are very few such organizations and their total membership is a very small percentage of old Canadian population. Or older Canadians can take matters into their own hands.

How can they take matters into their own hands? Nothing comes freely in to-day’s society. Funding and grants from governments are not there nor are they the answer. Older Canadians can contribute towards establishing an advocacy process that will ensure that issues of importance to older Canadians are on the government’s agenda.

If each member of the 11 groups of the Congress of National Seniors organizations were to add \$1.00 a year to the membership dues they now pay to belong to their association for the advocacy done by the CNSO, the CNSO would have a budget of approximately two million dollars a year. This would permit the establishment of a permanent secretariat to support the research, communications and advocacy of the CNSO.

Many organizations that need more funds in order to survive have considered raising the membership dues but have been told by their members that an increase, even an increase of a few pennies a month, was out of the question. This reasoning is understandable to a certain degree, given the fixed income of most seniors and the cost of living. However, without the necessary funding, older Canadians are letting decisions to be taken by governments without the assurance that their views, concerns and interests are being considered.

Taking matters into our own hands means effective advocacy. Taking matters into our own hands means ensuring that the influence we have is duly exercised. Taking matters into our own hands means contributing to ensure that all of us age with dignity and security. Expecting that this will happen without coordinating our efforts and without the necessary funding is not being realistic.

CNSO - CONA

Congress of National Seniors' Organizations

"It should be the right of each Canadian to age with dignity and in security."

February 20, 2004

Our file no. 6172

The Right Honourable Paul Martin, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Langevin Block
80 Wellington St.
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister:

In our letter to you of December 12, 2003, copy attached for your information, the Congress of National Seniors' Organizations (CNSO) expressed hope that the commitment made in your document "Making History, the Politics of Achievement" about ensuring that seniors enjoy dignity and a high quality of life, were more than words. We are very disappointed that this commitment was not repeated in the recent Speech from the Throne.

Your Office responded to our letter of December 12 on February 13, 2004. The letter does nothing to address our concerns or to provide any firm commitment.

We are very much concerned that older Canadians were the only sector of society for which no specific programs or measures were mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. Should we interpret this as meaning that seniors' issues are not important to the Government? We have written and have met a number of times with the Minister responsible for Seniors, the Minister of Health, and have expressed the importance of the Government to live up to the commitments it made at the 2002 World Assembly on Aging and to develop comprehensive policies and programs for an aging society. The lack of any action by the Liberal Government, and this appears to continue if the Speech from the Throne is any indication, is unacceptable to older Canadians.

The rumours persist that a spring election will be called. We expect from you, and your Ministers, that seniors' issues will not be swept under the carpet. We will hold you to your commitments.

We will be communicating with more than two million older Canadians and informing them of the Government's position on seniors' issues. We hope that you will find the time to reply to our two letters so that the points you will be raising will be communicated to them as well.

As mentioned in our letter of December 12, 2003, representatives of the CNSO would be pleased to meet with you at your convenience.

We are sending a copy of this letter to the Minister of Health, who is the Minister responsible for seniors and to the Minister of Social Development.

Sincerely yours,

Jean-Guy Souliere
Chair, Coordinating Committee and
Spokesperson for the CNSO

JGS/he

cc: The Honourable Pierre S. Pettigrew, Minister of Health
The Honourable Liza Frulla, Minister of Social Development
Attachment (1)

Office of the Prime Minister
Cabinet du Premier ministre
Ottawa, Canada K1A 0A2

March 1, 2004

Mr. Jean-Guy Soulière
Chair
Congress of National Seniors' Organizations
c/o Federal Superannuates National Association
1052 St. Laurent Boulevard
Ottawa, Ontario
K1K3B4

Dear Mr. Soulière:

On behalf of the Right Honourable Paul Martin, I would like to acknowledge receipt of your letter of December 12 regarding seniors' issues. I regret the delay in replying.

The Prime Minister appreciates the time you took to share with him your organization's views on a number of issues of importance to Canada's seniors. You may be assured that they have received careful consideration.

Unfortunately, the Prime Minister's schedule is such that he will be unable to meet with you in the foreseeable future; however, he has asked me to thank you for bringing this information to his attention and to convey his best wishes in your endeavours.

Again, thank you for writing.

Yours sincerely,

Original Signed By

J.L. Marion
Manager of Correspondence

National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation 13

Minister of Social Development – Ottawa, Canada K1A 0J9

Feb 09, 2004

Mr. Art Field
President
National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Association
P.O. Box 92
Little Britain, Ontario
K0M 2C0

Dear Mr. Field:

As the new Minister of Social Development, I am writing to express to you my hope for a strong and meaningful collaboration between your organization and my department. The Department of Social Development will play a significant role in this Government's goal of securing and strengthening Canada's social foundation.

The new department will be an important mechanism to break down barriers of equality. It will, for example, help families with children, support people with disabilities and, most particularly, will ensure that our senior citizens can participate fully in their communities.

The Government of Canada is committed to making demonstrable progress in a number of areas where the need is pressing. A key priority for us is to ensure that our seniors enjoy dignity and a high quality of life, as their number and life expectancies continue to grow. This mission is even more important, as time is passing and our population continues to get older.

Thanks to the foresight of my predecessors, in partnership with the provincial governments, Canada's public pensions are on solid ground and will continue to be available for a long time to come. That said, we must continue nonetheless to be faithful stewards of the social foundations of Canadian life and remain vigilant that our income support systems continue to grow and evolve.

I would like to offer my own personal commitment toward this objective and toward the responsible management of our retirement programs and services.

All of us who work to improve the lives of seniors can benefit from each other's experience and expertise. The many partnerships we can forge and nurture with our provincial and territorial counterparts, federal colleagues, representatives working on behalf of seniors' rights, and private sector organizations will go a long way to achieving our common goals and objectives.

I look forward to meeting with you and as many representatives and organizations as possible who are working on behalf of seniors. I would like to hear your points of view and benefit from your experience. I hope that we can count on your cooperation and support for our initiatives to ensure the relevance and flexibility of our programs addressing the needs of seniors and to provide all Canadians with the information they need to prepare for their retirement years.

Sincerely,

Liza Frulla, P.C., M.P.

POSITION BRIEF TO THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

January 2004

To: The Right Honourable Paul Martin, Prime Minister of Canada
The Honourable Anne McLellan, Deputy Prime Minister
The Honourable Ralph Goodale, Minister of Finance
The Honourable Pierre S. Pettigrew, Minister of Health
The Honourable Members of the Cabinet
The Honourable Members of Parliament
The Honourable Members of the Senate

Introduction

This brief represents the views of seniors organizations who met in September, 2003 in Gander, Newfoundland for their 59th annual convention.

Seniors are intensely concerned with their status in Canadian society as indicated by 110 resolutions that were presented to the convention for discussion, debate, and democratic vote. The results are incorporated into this document of opinion and advice to Government.

Health care and maintenance of the health care system is the major concern of seniors. However, seniors remain vitally interested in all items affecting them, and all Canadians, from pensions and housing to trade agreements.

This brief is available in English and French. Affiliates that contributed resolutions are listed on page 15. Executive officers of the National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation are listed on page 16.

Respectfully submitted,


Art Field
President, National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation


Rudy Lawrence
1st Vice President, National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation

The N.P.S.C.F. Brief to Government is completed. The cover page is very informative, so we are including it in the newsletter. Copies of the brief are available from our president.

I'm Only Mature

**Today at the drug store, the clerk was a gent
From my purchase, this chap ... took off ten percent
I asked for the cause of a lesser amount
And he answered, "Because of the Seniors Discount."**

**I went to McDonalds for a burger and fries
And there, once again, got quite a surprise
The clerk poured some coffee which he handed to me
He said, "For you Seniors, the coffee is free."**

**Understand – I'm not old – I'm merely mature
But some things are changing, temporarily I'm sure.
The newspaper print gets smaller each day
And people speak softer ... can't hear what they say.**

**My teeth are my own ... (I have the receipt)
And my glasses identify people I meet
Oh, I've slowed down a bit ... not a lot, I am sure
You see, I'm not old ... I'm only mature**

**The gold in my hair has been bleached by the sun
You should see all the damage that chlorine has done
Washing my hair has turned it all white
But don't call it *gray* ... saying "blond" is just right.**

**My car is all paid for ... not a nickel is owed
Yet, a kid yells "Old duffer ... get off the road!"
My car has no scratches ... not even a dent
Still I get all that guff from a punk who's "Hell bent."**

**My friends all get older ... much faster than me
They seem much more wrinkled, from what I can see
I've got "character lines", not wrinkles ... for sure
But don't call me old ... just call me mature.**

**The steps in the houses they're building today
Are so high that they take ... your breath all away
And the streets are much steeper than ten years ago
That should explain why my walking is slow.**

**But, I'm keeping up on what's hip and what's new
And I think I can still dance a mean boogaloo
I'm still in the running ... in this I'm secure
I'm not really old ... I'm only mature**

TO ALL NPSCF MEMBERS

Thank you for your submission of dues for the current year (Jan. 1 – Dec 31, 2004). If you have not sent your dues would you be kind enough to do so at your earliest convenience.

It is unfortunate, but do to the high cost of mailing, only clubs with paid up membership will receive a copy of our next newsletter. Please try to stay current, the executive do thank you for your cooperation.

From the desk of the Treasurer

**THENATIONAL PENSIONERS AND SENIOR CITIZENS FEDERATION
ANNUAL CLUB MEMBERSHIP DUES**

Club # _____ Club Name: _____

Contact: _____ Address: _____

Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

Annual Club Membership Dues will be as follows:

Select ()

Groups under 100 members \$35.00 ()

Groups from 100 to 500 members \$50.00 ()

Groups from 501 to 1,000 members \$75.00 ()

Groups with over 1,000 members \$250.00 (minimum or \$ _____) ()

Donation \$ _____

TOTAL CHEQUE \$ _____

The NPSCF depends on your club's financial support in order to continue and expand our advocacy efforts. Together Seniors can make a difference.

Please print all information clearly and forward with your cheque to:

DIRECTLY TO THE TREASURER

**Joyce Mitchell
44 Second Ave.
Trenton, ON
K8V 5M6**

*If you have any questions please fee free to write to the treasurer or call her at:
(613) 394-0739
Thank You.*

If you want an individual membership the fee is \$25.00

**PLEASE RETURN BOTH COPIES
ONE WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION**

**The National Pensioners and
Senior Citizens Federation**

**Hilton Vancouver Airport Hotel
Richmond, B.C.**

**October 6, 7, 8, 9, 2004
VISTOR'S CREDENTIAL**

Visitor: _____

Address: _____

Affiliation Number: _____ Affiliation Name: _____

Mail This Copy to the NPSCF:

**c/o: Joyce Mitchell, Treasurer
44 Second Ave.
Trenton, ON
K8V 5M6**

Secretary: _____

Address: _____

**The National Pensioners and
Senior Citizens Federation**

**Hilton Vancouver Airport Hotel
Richmond, B.C.**

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Secretary: _____

Address: _____

**Registration: Wednesday October 6, 2004 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and
6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**

Thursday October 7, 2004 7:30 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.

Convention Visitor's fee - \$60.00

**PLEASE RETURN BOTH COPIES
ONE WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION**

**The National Pensioners and
Senior Citizens Federation**

**Hilton Vancouver Airport Hotel
Richmond, B.C.**

**October 6, 7, 8, 9, 2004
DELEGATE'S CREDENTIAL**

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Senior Citizens Federation**

**Hilton Vancouver Airport Hotel
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	Thursday October 7, 2004	7:30 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.

Convention Delegate's fee - \$60.00

President of United Citizens of Ontario - Judy Muzzi

Greetings to our friends across Canada from the United Seniors Citizens' of Ontario. (U.S.C.O.)

The spring flowers are poking their heads up now, so spring is definitely on the way! ---- always a cause for optimism.

The new Government in Ontario has recently (and frequently) been referring to changing the Ontario Drug Benefits Program as one of the means by which the deficit could be reduced.

Premier McGuinty has stated that the program was of "Limited Benefit." And that it has become increasingly expensive to maintain. I'm afraid Mr. McGuinty has forgotten that all Social programs, Health Care, Education (to name a few) have become more expensive ---- why question a benefit that is absolutely essential to the well being of seniors in Ontario?

If the O.D.B. is changed to higher deductibles or higher dispensing fees many seniors will have to choose between food and drugs.

What happens then? People get sick faster, hospitalized longer and end up in long-term care facilities. Increasing costs to hospitals and long-term care facilities seems a very short-sighted solution to lowering the deficit.

The U.S.C.O. has been waging a vigorous and successful letter writing campaign since January.

These letters are signed (with addresses) and forwarded by the individual or the U.S.C.O. Club to their local M.P.'s or the Premier.

We will continue to keep the pressure on until the Government abandons any attempt to change the O.D.B. in any way that will adversely affect the quality of life for seniors.

One of the ramifications of the Ontario Government even suggesting that the O.D.B. be considered for change is that other provinces may consider doing the same, (if they haven't already).

The Federal and Provincial Governments are searching for ways to use scarce health care dollars more effectively.

All Senior Associations must work to ensure that any reduction of deficits is not at the expense of seniors well being

Continued from page 20

Keep up the fight!

After persistent efforts by the U.S.C.O. Our Seniors' Secretariat, Seniors Liaison Group and the Ministry of Housing have formed a sub-committee to examine the current housing crisis.

We will make recommendations that would help to solve the problems.

Hot on the U.S.C.O.'s agenda is legislation to cover permanent mobile homes, much like the condominium act.

Currently, permanent mobile home owners are protected only by the tenant act, which makes no allowances for the mobile home owner.

Since mobile homes are a desirable and affordable type of senior housing, the U.S.C.O. would like to see better legislation.

We are actively engaged in having the Government offer more chronic long-term home care, not just acute care.

Seniors could remain in their homes and communities longer if more long-term in-home care was available.

For low income seniors, paying for this assistance is beyond their means.

Numerous studies have been done, (including several by Marcus Hollander in B.C.) that prove the cost of keeping people in their homes and communities is far more cost effective than "warehousing" them (before it's necessary) in long-term care facilities.

The U.S.C.O. will continue to urge for more long-term in home care as a less costly, friendlier approach to the use of limited health care dollars.

Rising costs of hydro, taxes, water, in-home care, and medication are causing seniors lives to become more difficult.

The U.S.C.O., like our counterparts in other provinces, will persist in challenging our Governments to initiate creative, pro-active approaches to long-term solutions for senior issues and concerns.

We're the fastest growing segment of the population.

We want to remain active, healthy and productive.

We can continue to contribute to our communities as we have always done.

Good luck, keep well and look after one another.

Cheers,

Judy

National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation 21

Saluting the National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation

Best Wishes from the Executive & Membership of the Retired Workers Chapter of Canadian Auto Workers Local 222

John Redko ~ President

Art Field ~ Secretary Treasurer

Frank Locke ~ Vice President

Don Revoy ~ Trustee

Bob Clark ~ Trustee

Bill Stacey ~ Trustee

Gord Lindsay ~ Sergeant-at-Arms

Norma Glober ~ Female Board Member-at-Large

John Sinclair ~ Local 222 Executive Board Retired Workers'
Representative

CAW  TCA
LOCAL 222
Building Our Community

1425 PHILLIP MURRAY AVENUE, OSHAWA, ONTARIO L1J 8L4

TELEPHONE 905-723-1187

TOLL-FREE 1-800-465-5458

www.cawlocal.ca/222

local222@idirect.com

ANNOUNCEMENT

NPSCF is pleased to announce that we have entered into an agreement with Johnson Inc. to provide a Home and Automobile Insurance Plan to our Members. Johnson Inc., a Canadian Company established in 1880, is a leader in providing voluntary Group Insurance Plans to organizations such as ours.

The Johnson Preferred Service Home-Auto Plan, sponsored by over 300 organizations, is currently available to over 1,000,000 Members and Employees across Canada.

The Preferred Service Plan is a unique insurance program developed specifically for selected organizations such as ours. You can benefit from many unique and free Service Advantages, such as: **Online Access to your Insurance Plans** via the Members-Only Website, a secure, private site, **Internet-free Monthly Payment Plans**, and a **Personally-Assigned Service Supervisor** available to handle all your insurance needs.

We encourage you to support the Plan that supports the NPSCF by calling Johnson to test the competitiveness of your current Home and/or Auto policies.

Please be sure to identify yourself as a NPSCF member and provide your Group ID Code: NF

Support the Plan that supports your Association by calling Johnson at:

1-800-563-0677

or visit Johnson at www.johnson.ca



Johnson Inc.
Insurance

Note: Due to the existence of Provincial Automobile Insurance Plans, Auto Insurance is not offered in the provinces of British Columbia, Saskatchewan or Manitoba. Only Home Insurance is available in these provinces. A different insurance plan is available in Québec.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Don Holloway 3rd V.P.

It is budgets here, budgets there, budgets everywhere. It is fiscal restraints here, fiscal restraints there, fiscal restraints everywhere. No money for this, no money for that, no money for nearly everything.

Remember when the Canadian dollar was worth more than the American dollar. Then it costs Americans 110 American cents to buy one Canadian dollar. Today, Americans can buy one Canadian dollar for as low as 62 American cents, although it has moved to 75 US cents lately.

What does this very low priced Canadian dollar mean to the average person. Not very much - until - you try to buy something that was made in the USA. Like an MRI machine if valued at 1 million American dollars, then we would have had to pay as high as 1,500,000 to 1,600,000 Canadian dollars for it. Not peanuts!

When we look at Health Care today, we find governments telling hospitals to be more efficient, cut costs here and there, save money here, there, and everywhere. You may ask what efficiencies? That's a good question! We find that hospital spend 80% of their scarce dollars on wages for staff, from doctors and nurses down to the person washing laundry and dishes in the kitchen to the janitor scrubbing the floor. So who do you lay-off? Lay-off is no answer because then we get no service.

Do you cut the doctor, or the nurse, or the lab technician, or the cook's salary? Of course not. You can not do that again, these salaries have already been cut. Who? When? I'll tell you. It happened when the Canadian dollar began to shrink in value to the American dollar. That's why so many of our medical personnel left us and went to greener pastures, to get away from a 62 cent dollar to earn a 100 cent dollar. Those who are left, God bless them, stayed with us and the 62 cent dollar for their own private reasons and suffer along with the rest of us today.

Look at it this way. If a nurse can make \$40.00 an hour here, and she goes to work in the USA for the same salary, she will actually be making there \$60 an hour Canadian. Should a doctor make \$100,000.00 a year here and then moves to the USA for the same salary, he would then be making \$150,000.00 dollars a year Canadian. See what I mean.

Then, why don't we pay them what they can get in the USA? That's easy to answer. We cannot afford to do it! Why? Because hospitals get paid their operating grants in Canadian dollars. The whole Canadian medical establishment gets their money in Canadian dollars. \$0.62 cent dollars! Now we all realize that Free Trade has sunk us into becoming a 3rd world country like Mexico. Today we cannot afford to pay Medical Practitioners the money that they can make in the open market place. Like everyone else who works, workers gravitate to the highest wages that they can earn. That is only natural. Do you want your son or daughter to earn the lowest pay that they can find? Of course not! We all, only want the best for our children. And, a doctor or a nurse are somebody's child.

Now that we realize that there is a shortage of medical practitioners in Canada, what are we doing about it. Sure, we try to get doctors from foreign 3rd world countries to come here. We get some, but not enough. At that point we through up our hands and proclaim that, that is all we can do about it. We surrender to the fact that we cannot get enough doctors in rural places. We cannot get enough Emergency Room casualty doctors. We cannot get enough specialist doctors to perform certain highly skilled medical procedures in our Health Science Hospitals. Yes, we through up our hands and say "...that's it...we're beat....we quit.." and accept it.

What's wrong with us as a society, supposedly living in the best country in the world in which to live? What's wrong with us? Are we not going to do one blessed thing about it? Winston Churchill gave us the best advice in the world. He said "...we will never surrender... never give up..."!

Why are we putting up with long, long waiting lists to get medical procedures done by specialists? Why are we putting up with waiting long, long hours to see some one in the emergency room? Why do we put up with being thrown out of hospitals before we have convalesced from our illness. Why do we put up with suffering at home without Home Care.

We don't have to do it. If we put our wills to it, we can see that the right things are done to better the Health Care situation for all Canadians.

In 1993 recruitment into medical colleges was cut. This led to our crisis. Therefore the answer is obvious. Let us see that more medical practitioners are graduated. In order to do so, the people should control the amount of medical graduate supply. This, through their governments in each province - and not the Medical Associations.

As governments finance these medical schools, they hold the reigns. They should therefore dictate the number of graduates needed for each year to fill the optimum requirement for each province. Like in the year 2008, and the 2009, and the 2010 and so on. So that the proper quota of students are being trained in these medical schools to fill all of our needs - rural and urban. Family physicians and medical specialists. The same with nursing schools.

What's stopping this? Who's stopping this? Why are our medical needs not being properly met when the answer is so obvious? When there are not enough plumbers around, you can get one next week for \$60.00 an hour. When there are plenty, you can get one any time any place for \$20.00. Workers are workers whether they be Astronauts or Chamber Maids. There is no reason that we can not get all we need.

Let's fix it! Let's do it!

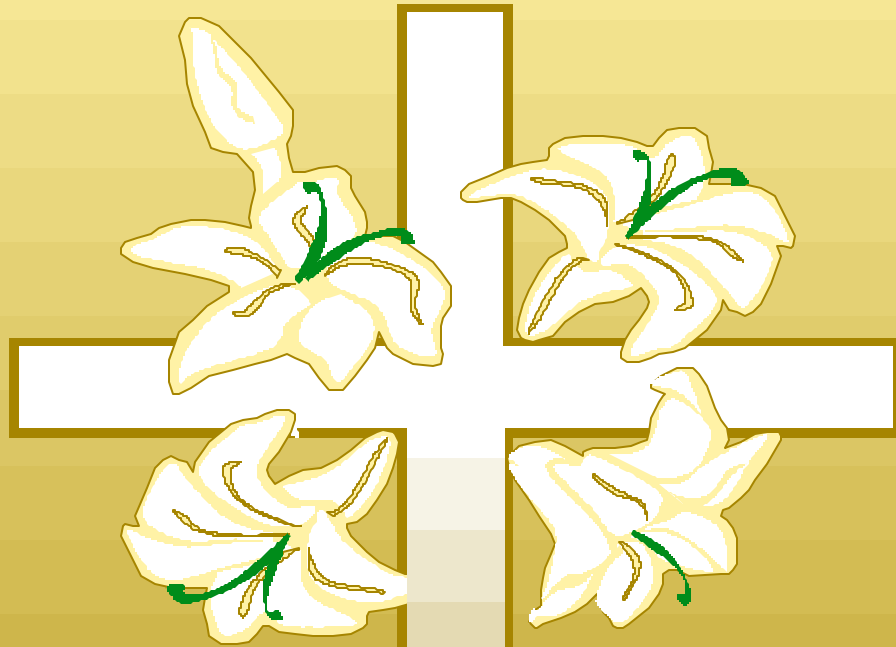
A New Horizons Program for seniors.

The latest Federal Budget recognizes the contribution that is made by seniors and seniors' groups to their communities. It provides \$8 million in 2004-2005 and \$10 million annually thereafter to fund a New Horizons Seniors Program. This program will support a wide range of community-based projects in all areas of Canada that enable seniors to participate in social activities, pursue an active life and contribute to their community.

I have worked so hard for this over the past few years since New Horizons was dropped. It does my heart good to know that someone has finally listened.

Spring is upon us, so let us enjoy it into the summer. Have a great year everyone.

Don Holloway,



Happy
EASTER