

National Pensioners and
Senior Citizens Federation



La fédération nationale des
retraités et des citoyens âgés

Summer 2012

NEWSLETTER

Volume 12 Issue 2



Come to Richmond, B. C. this fall!



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THE NATIONAL PENSIONERS AND SENIOR CITIZENS FEDERATION INCORPORATED

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**“Don’t Plan For
Seniors, Plan with
Seniors”**



President

Barry Thorsteinson

Lies, Deceit and Long Term Misery

On March 29th I was again privileged to be part of the Budget “lock-up” prior to the release of the Federal Budget at 4pm. We are then allowed to proceed to a media room to provide public commentary on the areas of the budget that concerns us. There was not enough paper to cover all the concerns. The Minister of Finance would liked to keep us locked up, many of us felt. Now we know why he had no such worry. He had another way to stifle debate.

Bill C-38 is the so-called budget bill that enables the passage of the budget into law. If it only stopped there. More unemployment through 19,200 jobs being cut, EI benefits cutback for workers who pay their insurance but now face more disparate standards while unemployed, more loss of revenue in the form of further tax cuts for corporations without conditions to add more employees, using increased debt to finance the tax giveaways to those who least are in need, and reduced assistance or elimination of many productive programs and foreign aid. The F-35 program is still on the priority list after all the dishonesty in the efforts made to hide the true costs prior to the 2011 election. ■

Now the Bill has been expanded to erode environmental protections and outright eliminate the National Roundtable on the Economy and Environment. Not to mention the National Council of Welfare; wiped out also. Then there is the injustice of raising the OAS qualifying age to 67 for the next generation of workers. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has disclosed (as have many economists) that this is not necessary to maintain the sustainability of the OAS and GIS. We know who is proven correct when the Finance Minister disagrees with the PBO over cost projections.

Then we have this little gem from the Minister Flaherty's own Ministry from a 2010 study: “long term projections show that Canada's public retirement income system is financially sustainable. There is no pressing financial or fiscal need to increase pension ages in the foreseeable future.” This was written by Edward Whitehouse, who leads the pensions team in the Social Policy Division of the OECD. Once again the government sets aside evidence as they want ideology to prevail and hope that the voters do not look too closely at the facts. It is our obligation to bring out the truth, not exactly the foremost consideration in federal government policy determination these days.

Now the government is using closure to stop debate on the long list of backward looking measures in the Bill. We will not be silent. I attended the special Official Opposition hearing on May 17th to listen to stakeholder groups, including pensioners. I used all of our allotted time on the OAS age 67 issue as this is a cruel setback for our children and grandchildren. For those living in poverty: not even 1 discarded penny. We shall continue to be heard on all the issues that matter to seniors. The Budget has been titled “Jobs, Growth and long term Prosperity”. They are masters at finding words that mask the realities of their actions. A more accurate title is at the top. Seniors deserve better.

THE NATIONAL PENSIONERS AND SENIOR CITIZENS FEDERATION INCORPORATED

Website: www.npscf.org
Toll Free: 1-877-251-7042

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.

**** Notice ****

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

All editorial matter published in this NPSCF newsletter represents the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the publication's editor or the NPSCF. Statements and opinions expressed do not represent the official policy of NPSCF unless so stated.

Deadline for NPSCF Newsletter

submissions is

September 1, 2012

Have you got an article you would like to submit for consideration? Please send it to the Newsletter Editor Jean Simpson npscfnews@gmail.com

Past President**Art Kube****The Harper Budget-Another Nail in the Coffin of Civil Society.**

The federal budget is supposed to address the desires, needs and wants of the majority of the Canadian Electorate. The Harper Budget serves only the greed and neo-liberal policies of the corporate elite. What we see is Harper's drive for income distribution in reverse. No increase in the minimum wage, no increase in the Old Age Security (OAS), but cuts to departmental budgets will result in some program cuts. Budget cuts trump spending by a seven to one ratio. At the same time when we see corporate pockets bulging with 500 billion dollars. Money they spend to either buy up their own shares or taking over other companies, in either case not creating a single job. So Harper is giving corporations a further tax break. This tax break is paid for with borrowed money. Since Harper has come into power the corporate tax rate has decreased from 20% to 15%, robbing the federal Treasury of 10 Billion dollars each year. That amount of money each year could have increased the OAS above the poverty line, stopped all the cuts and balanced the budget. At the same time our corporate tax still would be among the lowest in the industrialized world. Back in 1956 receive from corporation 45% of its revenues, today it's less than 9%. This Harper budget further widens the social deficit in our already stressed civil society.

Unfortunately the Harper budget is trying to hide some of his intentions from Canadians in a 400 page budget document. Instead of transparency and debate what we see in Parliament is a breach of parliamentary traditions and limitation of debate. The budget bill eliminated many institutions of importance to Canadians being eliminated like; the Katimavik program, the elimination of National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, like the elimination of the Board of Referees of Employment Insurance, just to name a few. Because of lack of any kind of stimulus and the elimination of 19,000 public sector jobs, unemployment will increase.

The other issue which is hidden under economic development is the weakening of environmental standards so as to appease his buddies in the oil industry. The specific projects which will benefit from the Budget are the Kitimat Pipeline and the pipeline taking Canadian bitumen to Refineries in Texas. Both of these projects are harmful to Canada's economic interests. Both will lead to a continued overvalued dollar, affecting negatively our manufacturing industries. In addition they will put upward pressure on our energy prices and worst of all they export good paying jobs to the US and Asia. Yes this Harper budget operates on the perverse assumption that, "the poor have too much and the rich not enough".

This Harper budget is damaging to seniors and the vast majority of Canadians and deserves to be strongly opposed. Just think back when we were young, we fought to establish the Old Age Security, Medicare, full employment, good labour standards, the right to appeal to a lay persons board, issues of unemployment and workers compensation, to maintain tax fairness and above all for a civil society that cares for its people, all these instruments of a civil society are being slowly eroded. We can say I'm O.K. Jack, or we can reflect on what our parents said: "My kids gone have it better" and recognize our responsibility to our sons, daughters and grandchildren and to the people that will come after us. Don't they have the right to a clean environment, to a good job, good healthcare, education and a retirement with dignity and security? If you say "YES" to the latter then call your Member of Parliament and express your opposition to the Harper Budget.

Visit our website: www.npsc.org



1st Vice President

John Gatens

Changes to OAS

Greetings; I hope you all survived a reasonably mild winter without too much aggravation for which I'm sure we may now be suffering. I believe the Harper government has declared war on seniors, at least the majority of seniors that rely on pensions promised by the government of the day, and to which we made contributions one way or another. The sneaky way Harper announced his government's intention of making a tremendous change to eligibility for OAS from 65 to 67 years old, and then promptly imposed it on us without any review or discussions with the groups who will be adversely affected by it is unconscionable and will have a devastating effect on thousands of seniors. I know of all the arguments made in favour of this drastic change, and for the most part they contradict the studies made by his government e.g. Canada has one of the most secure pension systems in the world!

Now Harper claims that Old Age Security is not sustainable. I also understand that our life expectancy is greater, the problem is that while we may indeed live longer, many are bent and broken mentally and physically by the demands of the job that they will never be able to continue through age 67. What a cowardly way of sugar coating this issue, selling it by gradually increasing the age of eligibility for the OAS pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) between the years 2023 and 2029 from 65 to 67 while of course emphatically reminding current recipients, and those relatively close to retirement that they will not be affected by the proposal.

What a way of getting seniors off your case, many will shrug and say it doesn't affect me so why should I care! Then there are people like those with the National Pensioners and like minded organizations, and one political party who have voiced opposition to this proposal and who understand that this is perhaps the most devastating change this government can make. It's fine for those who spend most of their working life in a job or profession that doesn't demand a lot of physical input or exertion. This group may be able to continue working until age 67.

But what will happen to those who have spent their lives working on jobs that demand repetitive bodily movements, such as those on an assembly line in a manufacturing environment, where the body breaks down after many years of physical labour? And what about police officers, armed servicemen and women, miners, firefighters, builders, bricklayers, mechanics, tradesmen and women, steelworkers, forge and foundry workers, forestry workers, labourers, farmhands, fishermen and women, paramedics, nurses and healthcare workers. Those workers exposed to dangerous substances, woodworkers etc. jobs or professions that demand a lot of physical effort. There are also those who do not enjoy good enough health to remain on the job beyond age 65 regardless of their profession.

For the most part, those mentioned above, but not restricted to those, will be hard pressed to continue working to age 67 many of whom have to leave work early as it is, because of injuries or simply because they cannot keep up with the demands of the job. Not only will they become the victims of this grossly unfair proposal.

Instead of qualifying for medical aid that is currently available at age 65 will they now have to wait until age 67? The fact that many will not be able to work beyond age 65 will leave them with financial hardship, since they will lose approximately \$11,000.00 from OAS or GIS during the two extended years.

1st vice president con't ...

Who will pick up the shortfall?

I wonder why our elected government thinks we are all doing just fine and that we should tighten our belts, save more for our retirement years, when at the same time our minimum wage doesn't bring us above the poverty line. Again thinking out loud I guess it is because they, our elected members of Parliament do not understand what it is like to live below the poverty line like many of our seniors and the working poor, since they live at a different level of income and guaranteed pension beyond most working stiffs in this country. Surely a majority government duly elected in any country should look after the majority of those they serve and not the wealthy minority.

Well as I see it the only ones applauding these proposed changes to the OAS and GIS entitlement are those who are professional people earning well above the national average, or those to whom it makes no difference because they do not rely on OAS to maintain their life style. Our government surely must see the ever increasing numbers of families or individuals relying on food banks, the ever increasing number of homeless people in every major city in this country, the need to feed the ever increasing number of hungry children attending our schools in most of our towns and cities. There is something wrong with a society that generates a greater number of millionaires, while at the same time allows **abject** poverty amongst seniors and families trying to raise children.

Before I conclude I must salute the NDP in the province of Ontario for forcing the Liberal government to impose a special tax on those fortunate enough to earn more or have incomes greater than \$500,000.00 annually. This should be adopted federally in an effort to recognize the great difference between those who have and those who do not. It could go a long way to making our great country a much better place in which to live and to grow old.

Monday, April 9, 2012

Hi Barry,

RE: THIEVES OF BAY STREET

It was a pleasure chatting with you last week. As we discussed, I was hoping you could put this blurb about my book "Thieves of Bay Street" in the federation's newsletter:

Award-winning investigative journalist Bruce Livesey has written a book "Thieves of Bay Street" that explores why Canada is such a haven for investment fraud. Published by Random House, readers will learn what banks do with investors' money and what happens when they lose it.

They will meet the bogus investment gurus, the brokers who lose money with both reckless abandon and impunity, the bankers who squander money in toxic investments, the lawyers who protect them and the regulators who do nothing to keep them from doing it again. And most importantly, they'll meet the victims who are demanding that our vaunted banking sector finally come clean on its dirtiest secret. As it turns out, most of the victims are senior citizens.

Livesey is willing to speak to seniors' clubs about investment fraud in Canada and some of the measures they can take to avoid losing their retirement monies. He can be reached at 416-483-6490 or at livesey@rogers.com or through his website: thievesofbaystreet.ca Let me know if this works.

Thanks,

Bruce Livesey



Greetings from your 2nd Vice President
Sheila Righi

First to let everyone know I did send a report into Jean Simpson for the spring newsletter. She phoned and said she did not receive it. I don't know what happened as it has not been returned to me. Where is it?

The way I saw it when we made our trip to Ottawa to lobby the Government on behalf of the seniors of Canada on February 6th, we had an evening meeting with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Finance Minister, Shelley Glover. First she reiterated how tired she was. Then she asked our President, Barry Thorsteinson, to proceed talking, which he did. She then interrupted him saying if all you are presenting is negativity towards our government, this meeting is over. At that time it was very evident that these ministers are puppets on a string controlled by Stephen Harper.

Pensions, both public and private, were priority items from our perspective. Pensions are of the utmost importance to seniors of today and the next generation, realizing if we continue with the strategies that the Harper government are imposing on one and all, they will most certainly be in the work force much longer, if there are jobs available.

On February 07, we met with Irene Mathyssen, NDP Critic for Seniors. Her group did take time to hear what our priorities for seniors involve. Then we met with the Hon. Judy Sgro who chaired the Liberal meeting. Both of these meetings were very productive. We left with a sense our message was well received. Hon. Judy Sgro also made arrangements for our group to have dinner in the Parliamentary dining room which was very nice and appreciated.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone again at our convention in British Columbia in October.

NOTICE

This is a NOTICE OF INTENT to change the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation's Inc. constitution at the 2012 convention.

The National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation's Inc. constitution Article III # 9 presently reads: The Immediate Past President will be a member of the Executive of the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation Inc. until a new President is elected.

The proposed resolution to change Article III # 9 in the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation's Inc. constitution will read:

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Immediate Past President will be a member of the Executive of the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation Inc. for a period of two years only.

If a new President is elected before the Immediate Past President's two year term is over, the Immediate Past President's term will immediately end upon the election of a new President.

Seniors on Guard

**3rd Vice President****Mary Fleck**

Since we last wrote a report we, the Nova Scotia Federation of Seniors, have had our annual meeting, or convention. You'll never guess who the guest speaker at our banquet was . . . Barry Thorsteinson!

He was well received, and I was told by many how much they enjoyed his talk.

At the election of officers Bernie Larusic, who has attended several National Fed. meetings, was elected president. The new secretary, who also has attended our meetings, is Virginia Crane and the new Past-President is Alta Covert. That's all my "local federation" news.

Recently it was announced that some Provincial offices are being transferred from their present areas to other, more rural areas. Guess what! The employees involved do NOT want to move from where they have established their homes, and have their children in school. I can't say that I blame them.

On top of this comes the announcement from Ottawa, that people must be willing to move to points of employment in order to be eligible for Employment Insurance . Now, Cape Breton has been the home of my family for four generations BEFORE me! Therefore my children and their children have five or six generations before them. It is a difficult thing to give up ones home, whether it's a generational home or one you have established yourself.

I always seem to have a complaint against some branch of government. Isn't it great that we live where we CAN complain and speak out against what we feel is unfair. Reading a newspaper from Worcester, Massachusetts I came across an interesting article on scams being played on all, but mostly on Senior Citizens. Please do read it; it pretty well explains itself.

1. Job-Seekers: Watch out for "Great Jobs" most especially when they ask for bank account numbers and Social Security numbers
2. Debt Relief: Pay up front = you will probably go much deeper in debt.
3. Work at Home: Either they will ask for money, or you may become a "Fence" for stolen goods.
4. Time-Share resale's: You must pay them a fee, up front, then you are out the money and still have the time-share.
5. Free Trial Offers: You sign up for a "free" trial, but you end up with monthly charges that are very difficult to get stopped.
6. Rogue Home Repairers and Roofers: They collect an upfront fee, with promises of cheap, or less costly work and that's the last you see of them.
7. Lottery/Sweepstakes: Be assured that you did NOT win any contest that you did not enter, OR one you have to pay to receive.

3rd vice president con't ...

8. Advance Fee Loan: DO NOT pay fees in advance for the promise you will get something.
9. Overpayments: They do this because their check is fake and yours is real.
10. IDENTITY THEFT: To give out personal information, PIN or bank account numbers to someone who calls or e-mails you is simply put; **A RECIPE FOR DISASTER!**

For myself; I received an e-mail, supposedly from the Royal Bank. It had the logo and all, but it just didn't seem right that they would have to ask me for the number of my account, which I did not give them. Anyway I called and reported it to RBC. I was thanked and told to always report to RCMP any of these approaches which don't seem quite appropriate.

I feel that summer is not too far away now!



MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

Fern Haight

FROM MY HOUSE TO YOURS

The controversy over the sustainability of the Old Age Security is a quandary to me. Who or what are we to believe? Are the looming demographics of the country going to make the Old Age Security unsustainable? Yes or no? What is the truth? A mind boggling state of affairs.

Members of parliament were voted in to power by the people of Canada. Many of these voters are seniors and trusted the MP's. Promises were made to the people that they would govern in an accountable, commendable, honest and transparent manner. Are voters really being treated with accountability, transparency, integrity, and respect? If they are, why are they repeatedly hearing that OAS is not in jeopardy? Is this whole fiasco just another secret plot that the government is using to exploit seniors.

Seniors were assured before the last election that they would have nothing to worry about. Changes made would not affect them. This is partially true, but the changes certainly will have a great impact on the up-coming seniors. The announced OAS change, by the way, was announced in Switzerland, stating that the age to receive OAS would be changed from 65 years to 67 years in 2023, is outrageous. This is a claw back of a senior's pension.

Seniors will be losing two years of their money. This is an outright contemplated attack on seniors. I believe it is one of many changes that the government has in store in their hidden agenda for seniors. I think it would be appropriate to say that this OAS change is a form of elder abuse. Is this what we call treating the ageing society with dignity and respect in appreciation for all they have done to make this country what it is today?

I hope you all have an enjoyable summer. Take time to sit back, relax and enjoy a holiday. We are so blessed to live in a great country like Canada, where we can enjoy the fresh air, sunshine and a relatively safe environment. Keep active and stay healthy.



**From the desk of the Treasurer
Sandy Carricato**

A WONDERFULL TIME OF YEAR!

May is finally here. The weather is getting warmer. Things are starting to brighten up, my birthday was in May and I'm happy that I'm another year older. When I was younger, you would never have heard me say that!

If you're like many people, this is the time when you start making plans for the summer. Perhaps you're considering a vacation or stroking off one of the items on your bucket list. Maybe you just want to stay home and spend some extra quality time with family and friends.

Whatever your plans are, I wish you and yours a wonderful and safe summer.

For the most part, I will stay at home. My Mom (Mother-In-Law) turned 90 in April and finds traveling very tiring although we did manage to take her to Sault Ste. Marie to visit nieces and nephews. (She is the last of her generation in her family) We also went to the cemetery and visited the gravesites of family and friends especially Dad's grave and her eventual internment site. She appeared to find peace in doing so.

Talking about Mom, makes me think about the home care she is receiving. The Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) came here and assessed her and somehow determined that two hours of care a day is sufficient, one hour in the morning and one in the evening. Mom is totally disabled and in a wheelchair with the exception of being in her bed. I might add that she is palliative.

In talking about this service please don't get the impression that I'm complaining about the workers I am not. What I am complaining about is the system in which they work.

I'll list some of the problems as we see them.

- Too many Personal Support Workers (PSW) or management staff working part time
- When short they have no one to fill the absence
- They have too many clients (whatever happened to the noun patient).
- They allow one hour segments but assign up to thirteen clients in their work/shift period, most clients receive about 20 minutes of care we are told
- Result - a very hurried care that on occasion I call splash and dash
- PSW are to make the client's bed, change linens if necessary, clean the bedroom, do the client's laundry etc., but most importantly perform the personal care required. (bathing, cleaning their teeth, massaging, changing their clothes)

In the one hour allotted to complete these tasks it is near impossible! Why? Because the worker feels compelled to get on to the next client to complete the number of calls that she/he has on their list and is

The services that CCAC provide are extensive and they can't be faulted for not having qualified staff. I'm going to give you an insight to our home and the care Mom receives or is supposed to receive. Personal support/homemaking, support for caregivers (us) medical supplies and equipment etc.

We have had Mom's service cancelled at the last minute.

...continued from the Treasurer

We have time firm on Sundays which means that they must be here at 8:45 so that we can go to church, on several occasions they have come late or not at all.

They don't have anyone to replace our regular PSW so we have to wait until the afternoon. Mom is incontinent and how could it be expected that she would stay in a soiled garment for more than 15 hours! She didn't! Is this a competent and reliable service?

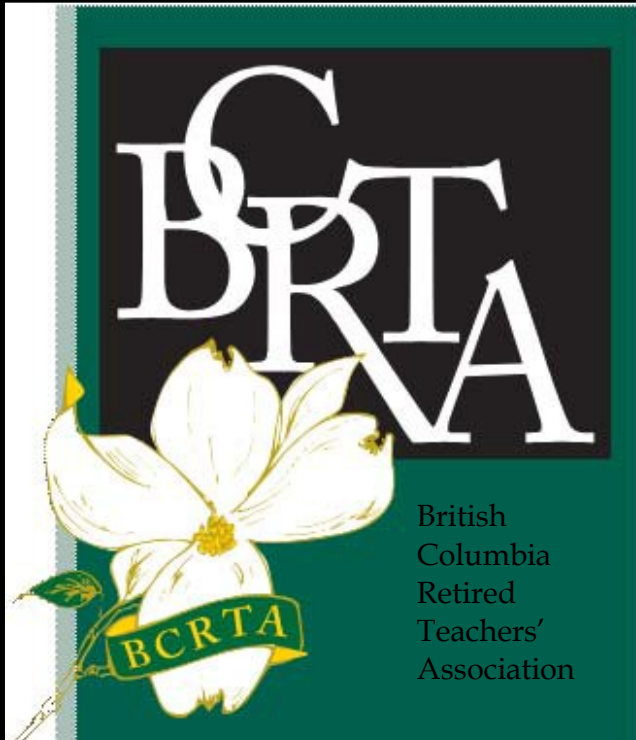
Twice when I was away and my husband was at home, no one came to provide her service and we had to call in our daughter to come and take care of her grandmother. The dispatcher made a mistake. What could have happened if Mom lived alone and we didn't have a granddaughter who is a nurse?

We have so many complaints that I could fill a book.

CCAC have a Long-Term Care ACTION Line to report any concerns clients have about care and the services they are to be provided. We are supposed to be able to call with any concerns or complaints we have about our home care services and have our concerns addressed within a 24 hour period. We have had our phone calls completely ignored by management. Mom has good advocates in her family, but what about those who don't have anyone to speak for them?

I'm sure that Ontario is not the only province experiencing this lack of responsible care. We have to develop programs that will see to it that the care that our taxes are paying for are delivered in a caring, gentle, considerate and timely manner.

Our families, friends the citizens of this country deserve more and they should not be subjected to a system that appears to have no criteria that they are compelled to meet, or if they have criteria, they are not concerned about meeting them or the consequences that could be a result of not meeting such. We are sure that we have won a few battles, but not the war. Our struggles will continue for Mom and many others like her.



The BCRTA values the Federation's work on Pensions, Pharmacare & Housing

**NATIONAL PENSIONERS AND SENIOR CITIZENS
FEDERATION INC (NPSCF)**

The NPSCF financial year is from January 1st through December 31st (the calendar year). Club and Group dues are to be paid each year in January and are based on the listing below.

Please complete this Submission Form (Club/Group address and contact) and submit your dues as early as possible.

Annual Club/Group membership dues:	Select	()
Club/Group under 100 members	\$35	()
Club/Group from 100 to 500 members	\$50	()
Club/Group from 501 to 1,000 members	\$75	()
Club/Group with over 1,000 members	\$250	()
Donations would be gratefully accepted.	_____	()

The NPSCF depends on your financial support in order to continue and expand our advocacy efforts.

TOGETHER SENIORS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call or write the Treasurer.

THANK YOU

Continued on next page

**Please print all information clearly and submit
with your payment directly to:**

**Sandy Carricato
NPSCF Treasurer
2389 Head Rd
Port Perry ON L9L 1B4**

**Phone: 905 985 8170
Email: sandy.carricato@gmail.com**

**We need this information in order to keep our records up to date.
The names and phone numbers of your executive board members
would also be appreciated. On occasion this information is helpful.**

CLUB # CLUB NAME

CONTACT ADDRESS

PROV POSTAL CODE

PHONE NUMBER

**Individual/Family membership is \$25/\$35 respectively and
application/payment may be submitted on this form**

If you have any questions please feel free to write or call the TREASURER

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS ISSUE

Donations

From the desk of the Treasurer

In Oct from the 3th to 6th, 2012 we are having our annual convention in Richmond BC.

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
2389 Head Road
Port Perry, ON
L9L 1B4

(Please cut along line)

Name of club or Member Donation \$

Address

City Province Postal Code

Feel free to contact me by phone at (905) 985-8170 or email me at sandy.carricato@sympatico with any questions or concerns that you may have. I look forward to hearing from clubs/members



Member at Large

Winnie Fraser Mackay

Canadian Seniors Oral Health

As President of the National Canadian Pensioners Concerned (CPC), I wear two hats. I am also a Member at Large of the Executive of the National Pensioners and Seniors Citizens Federation (NPSCF), an affiliate of the CPC. I attended the 67th annual NPSCF Convention in Charlottetown, PEI from October 20-22, 2011.

Many resolutions were presented at the Convention, and since all the issues currently faced by seniors could not be presented to the government, the executive met and decided to focus on four issues, Poverty, HealthCare and Pharmacare, Housing and Dental Care. These were presented to the Federal Government in a brief delivered in February 2012.

I was responsible for collecting and collated research on the subject of Dental Care for the brief. Acknowledgment needs to go to Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia for ten years of ongoing Canadian research on this subject. Excerpts from the brief follow below, and present the case for improved Dental Care for Canadian Seniors.

The 2008 Canadian Dental Association's Report on Seniors' Oral Health Care 12 stated that "Although there is no representative data to profile the oral health status of community dwelling older Canadians, studies consistently indicate poor oral health and limited access to professional care among residents of long term care (LTC) facilities. In recent years, some progress has been made in selective areas of Canada to deal with access needs of the institutionalize elderly. Regrettably, these programs are sparse and reliant on a limited number of highly dedicated professionals with limited support from government. These programs remain the exception rather than the rule." They retro-defined the issues for care:

1. There is a rapidly increasing need for dental care for the failing, complex dentition of some seniors, and for maintenance and palliative oral health care for many others who are becoming increasingly frail and dependent.
2. A number of barriers exist for seniors in accessing appropriate needed dental and oral health care, including but not limited to:

Limited access to care for institutionalized elderly due to lack of public policy and guidelines related to standards for the provision of oral health care; lack of proper facilities and remuneration for oral health care providers; and, a shortage of providers with the interest and willingness to provide care in these settings.

Geographic access creates enormous barriers for home bound and institutionalized seniors in rural areas:

Financial barriers exist for a growing number of seniors who have lost dental insurance benefits at retirement, have limited income or who no longer qualify for government sponsored plans.

Physical barriers in dental offices, such as lack of wheelchair accessibility, limit access for many seniors

Member at Large cont ...

3. There is inadequate educational preparation of dental professionals for the provision of appropriate life-span (including end of life) oral health care, and lack of competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) related to inter professional care for team-based, collaborative practice critical to the care of the elderly. A subsequent CDA document (2009), *Optimal Health for Frail Older Adults: Best Practices Along the Continuum of Care*, supports the best oral care practices for this population.

Erica Weir noted in 2002 that in Canada “Dental care is not covered under most provincial health care plans. According to the 1996/97 National Population Health Survey, only 53% of the population aged 15 or older reported having dental insurance and only 59% reported visiting a dentist in the past year.” (*Canadian Medical Association Journal*, Vol. 167(9)). Dr. Ahluwalia, DDS, makes the case for the state of seniors’ dental care in the USA, in the *American Journal for Public Health*, Vol. 94(5), stating that

“we have failed, as a society, to provide quality and accessible dental care for our elderly. ... we are witnessing increased rates of dental diseases in seniors. The treatment, management, and prevention of oral diseases in seniors will improve not only the conditions of their mouths, but also their overall health and well-being. Recent data indicate that periodontal diseases are associated with chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cerebral vascular diseases, and diabetes. In addition, oral cancer-which is primarily seen in adults older than 60 years... Oral diseases and dysfunction can be extremely painful, and they have an acute impact on quality of life, affecting chewing, eating, speaking, and social interactions.”

Ahluwalia’s first recommendation is to ensure that “the financing and provision of oral health care [is] integrated with the mechanisms used to ensure overall health and well-being for the elderly.”

Dr. Ship DMD in *Oral Surgery, Oral Medicine, Oral Pathology, Oral Radiology and Endodontics*, Vol 98 (6) notes that

“Older people represent the fastest growing segment of the [North] American population. ... The host of risk factors for health problems from “age-related recession” include ‘salivary gland hypo function and its accompanying xerostomia [in] one-third of the elderly, increasing their susceptibility to caries, gingivitis, and oral mucosal infections, and to experiencing difficulty with [chewing, taste], and swallowing...contribute to altered nutritional selections, thereby complicating certain medical conditions. ...Xerostomia leaves the mouth without enough saliva to wash away food and neutralize plaque, making teeth more susceptible to decay and [gum] disease. Saliva is essential for proper digestion and absorption of nutrients. Salivary flow naturally decreases with age but is also affected by micro nutrient deficiencies, dehydration, and medications.”

The general health implications are well supported. It has also been shown that professional oral care decreases the incidence of fatal pneumonia’s in seniors in Long Term Care. A good strategy for Seniors’ oral care is necessary for health and quality of life.

The NSCF called on the Government of Canada to support the resolutions on Dental Care: **That** the Federal Government work with the Provincial Governments to develop and implement a dental care program for seniors on the same basis as PharmaCare. **That** free dental services and necessary dental products for seniors be provided for seniors through of Old Age Pension benefits.

They made the strong statement that “We need only look South of the border to witness the destructive costs of abandonment of responsibility of the nation’s needs in health care protection for its citizens.”

I would like to profoundly thank ,Dr. Brian D. Barrett, DDS, FACD, FADI, FPFA, Dr. Barry Maze DBM, Health Programs Consulting, Linda Lasch RN BN MDE, Dr. Bernard Hogan, PhD Principal Consultant Northern Research + Evaluation for their wealth of professionalism, and expertise while researching this document to provide recommendations to the Federal Government.



Member at Large

Jack Morrison

Summertime

I'm back. It's so hard putting up with the sun, warmth and golfing when wintering in Texas.

Back on Canadian soil, I'm going to have to contend with the black flies and mosquitoes. In all honesty, it's good to be back home.

Just mentioning mosquitoes please remember that they can be more than disruptive and annoying, their bites can cause infection and sometimes spread deadly diseases. You should minimize your exposure to mosquitoes this summer

You could say living up here in Manitoba I'm an expert on these insects and take the following measures to protect myself and family.

Be mindful of these facts and tips:

**Remember that mosquitoes are most active at daybreak and nightfall. They tend to gather in greater numbers among tall grasses and brush. Wear lighter colour clothing they appear to be attracted to dark areas and clothing.

**They are attracted to some humans more than others because they detect the carbon dioxide emitted while exhaling, as well as certain chemical compounds in our sweat. To avoid being bitten, do your activity and gardening that might cause you to breath heavy later in the morning or before sundown.

**Be aware also that they are known to be drawn to floral or fruity fragrances, so avoid colognes, clothing scented with fabric softeners, etc.

**Good prevention chores should include cutting tall grasses and drain all standing water near your home. Mosquito eggs left in still water can develop into adults in a matter of days.

**Don't forget to apply a good insect repellent, follow the above tips and although you might not get through the following months without being bitten, you have done what you could.

West Nile virus can be a result of being bitten by a mosquito that has fed on an infected bird. The virus can cause fatal inflammation of the brain. There is currently no vaccine against West Nile virus.

Be aware take precautions and remember that for most people infected with West Nile, they feel unwell for about three to six days. Symptoms are usually mild and include fever, headache, body aches, sometimes skin rash and swollen lymph glands. With a severe infection we become very ill. If you are worried, see a Doctor immediately or as soon as possible.

NOW DON'T GET DEPRESSED AND HYBERNATE! Enjoy the outdoors, your patios and summer barbeques. Our summers are too short here in Canada not to do so, just do it with precaution and be aware.

68th CONVENTION 2012

WHERE: Richmond, British Columbia

WHEN: October 3rd - 6th, 2012

VENUE: Executive Airport Plaza Hotel, 7311 Westminster Highway

Telephone **1-604-278-5555** Toll free: **1-800-663-2678**

Ask for NPSCF block of rooms and room rate.

Room rate: **\$99.00 plus tax.** No charge for extra person

Cut-off date for this rate is Sept. 5th (Please have a credit card if possible)

Complimentary shuttle service to and from Vancouver airport. Free parking & internet

Registration fee \$100.00 each, for delegates and visitors

Pre - registration cut-off date SEPTEMBER 15th

Registration - Wednesday, October 3rd from 1:30 - 4:30 pm (tentatively)

Final registration - Thursday, October 4th (8 - 8:30 am)

Registration forms are in this issue. (pages 20 & 21)

MEET & GREET:

Wednesday evening, October 3rd, at 7 pm in the Hotel

Convention commences at 9:00 am Thursday, October 4th

Convention ends Friday, October 5th. Banquet on Friday evening at 6:30 pm

Sightseeing tour on October 6th followed by lunch.

Come early and attend the outstanding "The Joys and Tears of Living Longer" Conference on October 1st & 2nd. **Agenda for this conference are in this issue. (pages 22 - 26)**

Send all resolutions to:

FERN HAIGHT, BOX 393, HANLEY, SK. S0G 2E0 or fern.h@sasktel.net

Cut-off date for resolutions will be **September 1st**

Complete agenda in the September Newsletter

PLAN TO BE THERE

"Don't Plan for Seniors, Plan with Seniors"

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

National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation Convention
Executive Airport Plaza Hotel, Richmond, B. C.
OCTOBER 3rd - 6th, 2012

*****DELEGATE'S CREDENTIALS*****

DELEGATE _____

ADDRESS _____

AFFILIATE NUMBER _____ AFFILIATE NAME _____

SECRETARY _____

ADDRESS _____

National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation Convention
Executive Airport Plaza Hotel, Richmond, B. C.
OCTOBER 3rd - 6th, 2012

*****DELEGATE'S CREDENTIALS*****

DELEGATE _____

ADDRESS _____

AFFILIATION NUMBER _____ AFFILIATION NAME _____

SECRETARY _____

ADDRESS _____

FILL IN BOTH FORMS AND MAIL TO:

SANDY CARRICATO, 2389 HEAD ROAD, PORT PERRY, ON L9L 1B4.
Pre-registration cut-off date is SEPTEMBER 15, 2012

REGISTRATION: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3rd, 2012 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4th, 2012 8:00 am to 8:30 am

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

**National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation Convention
Executive Airport Plaza Hotel, Richmond, B. C.
OCTOBER 3rd - 6th, 2012**

VISITOR'S CREDENTIALS

VISITOR _____

ADDRESS _____

AFFILIATE NUMBER _____ **AFFILIATE NAME** _____

SECRETARY _____

ADDRESS _____

**National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation Convention
Executive Airport Plaza Hotel, Richmond, B. C.
OCTOBER 3rd - 6th, 2012**

VISITOR'S CREDENTIALS

VISITOR _____

ADDRESS _____

AFFILIATION NUMBER _____ **AFFILIATION NAME** _____

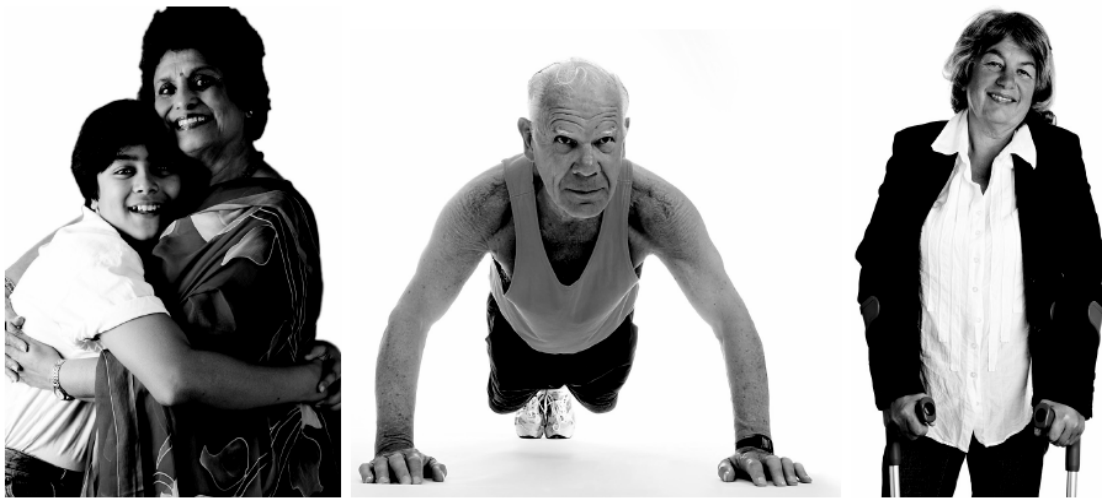
SECRETARY _____

ADDRESS _____

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**REGISTRATION: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3rd, 2012 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4th, 2012 8:00 am to 8:30 am**



The Joys & Tears

OF LIVING LONGER



A national conference to explore the opportunities and challenges of Canadians' increased longevity

THIS IMPORTANT CONFERENCE will explore the opportunities and the challenges seniors face as Canadians live longer and fuller lives. Drawing on expertise from around the world, participants will review how other jurisdictions are dealing with demographic

changes, their impact on the health, housing and incomes of seniors, and the implications for society in general. Seniors and their organizations must have continuing involvement in ensuring that policies affecting their lives are fair and just for seniors.

Please join us October 1 – 2, 2012, Richmond, B.C., for this key event

Conference program

Day One: October 1st, 2012

- 7:30 am **Registration.** *Foyer outside Grand Ballroom*
Early arrivals can also register the evening before between 7:00 pm and 9:00 pm.
- 8:30 am **Welcome and greetings.** *Grand Ballroom*
- 8:45 am Conference Facilitator, **George Heyman**, Executive Director, Sierra Club B.C.
- 8:50 am Keynote Speaker, Prof. **Victor W. Marshall**, University of North Carolina. *Opportunities and Challenges of increased longevity: An agenda for ageing, issues, insights, implications and opportunities.*
- 9:30 am Prof. **Tine Rostgaard**, Aalborg University, Denmark. *Living long, Ageing well: Social and individual approaches to aging well.*
- 10:00 am **Panel discussion** on Aging, touching on the social determinants of income, housing, connectedness and the economics of senior's health care.
- Prof. **Kim McGrail**, Associate Director, Centre for Health Services and Policy Research, UBC.
 - **Lorraine Copas**, Executive Director of Social Planning and Research Council of B.C.
 - **Andrew Jackson**, Research Director, CLC.
 - Prof. **Victor Marshall**, University of North Carolina.
- 10:50 am **Coffee Break.** *Foyer outside the Grand Ballroom*
- 11:05 am **Workshops**
- #1 *Social determinant / Income.* A discussion of G.I.S., CPP, private pensions, intergenerational transfers of resources and more.
Andrew Jackson. *Grand Ballroom "A"*
- #2 *Social determinant / Housing.* Home is where the heart is: home care and home support accessibility, options, downsizing, living arrangements, aging in place.
Lorraine Copas. *Grand Ballroom "B"*
- #3 *Social Connectedness.* Count us in! Social Inclusion and recognition of people aging, participation, barriers to participation, moving from consultation to engagement.
Prof. **Victor Marshall.** *Grand Ballroom "C"*
- #4 *The economics of seniors' health care.* Is the aging population a threat to universal health care? Options, other models.
Prof. **Kim McGrail.** *Westminster Ballroom*
- 12:30 pm **Lunch** *Foyer at front and back of the Grand Ballroom*
- 1:30 pm **Marcy Cohen**, Researcher. *Seniors Care in Canada: coverage, costs and outcomes.* *Grand Ballroom*
- 2:00 pm Dr. **Michael Rachlis**, National Healthcare Advocate. *Is there a right prescription for seniors' health care in Canada?* Health promotion, illness and accident prevention, community care, home care and home support, switch from dying to living.
- 2:30 pm **Panel discussion** on health care. When residential care? Seniors' rights to medical care.
- Dr. **Michael Rachlis**
 - **Sheila Pither**, Treasurer COSCO
 - Dr. **Martha Donnelly**
 - Dr. **Malcolm Maclure**, (invited) Director of Research, B.C. Pharmacare.
- 3:00 pm **Coffee Break.** *Foyer outside the Grand Ballroom*
- 3:15 pm **Workshops**
- #5 *Seniors rights to medical care.*
Dr. **Martha Donnelly**, Director of the Division of Community Geriatrics, Vancouver General Hospital. *Grand Ballroom "A"*
- #6 *Health Promotion/Illness and Accident Prevention.* Health literacy for seniors, when, where and by whom.
Sheila Pither and Dr. **Irv Rootman**, Simon Fraser University. *Grand Ballroom "B"*
- #7 *Residential Care. Assisted living, complex care, acute care and end of life care.*
Dr. **Michael Rachlis.** *Grand Ballroom "C"*
- #8 *PharmaCare.* Accessibility, affordability, is it appropriate and safe for seniors, information from whom?
Dr. **Malcolm MacLure**, (invited) *Westminster Ballroom*
- 4:30 pm **Recess**
- Evening events**
- 5:00 pm **No Host Bar**, Musical Interlude. *Tivoli's Room*
- 6:30 pm **Dinner.** *Grand Ballroom*
- 7:30 pm Dinner Speaker. **Arthur Black**, award-winning author and humorist, long time host of CBC's *Basic Black*.

Who should attend:

- Individual seniors and seniors' representatives from across B.C. and Canada.
- Municipal councillors and planners, social planning representatives, parks and recreation and health authority representatives.
- MLAs, Members of Parliament and First Nations.
- Federal and provincial departments dealing with seniors.
- Non-governmental organizations such as social planning councils, senior and community centre representatives, agencies working with seniors, unions, and advocacy groups.

We encourage municipal councils to sponsor representatives from seniors' advisory committees, and also ask **ministries** to sponsor delegates from provincial seniors' coordinating bodies.

Conference program

Day Two: October 2nd, 2012

- 8:30 am **Opening** by conference facilitator. Grand Ballroom
- 8:35 am Dr. **Garnet Grosjean**, University of British Columbia. *Towards a Seniors Agenda*. What services are necessary for aging seniors. What programs are missing or need improvement? Can we put together a workable national, provincial and civic seniors' agenda to deal humanely with an aging population?
- 9:05 am Dr. **Kendall Ho**, (invited) UBC School of Medicine. *Maintaining the dignity and autonomy of diverse seniors in later life*.
- 9:35 am **Panel Discussion: The role of seniors' organizations in advocating for public policy**
- **Art Kube**, President of COSCO.
 - **Len Harrison**, Chair of the CAW Retirees Council.
 - **Barry Thorsteinson**, President, National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation.
- 10:20 am **Coffee Break**. Foyer in front of the Ballroom
- 10:35 am **Workshops**
- #9 Seniors Abuse and Neglect**. The hidden issues of elder abuse, innovations on how to prevent abuse, the law and abuse.
Prof. **Charmaine Spencer**, Simon Fraser University. *Grand Ballroom "A"*
- #10 Seniors helping seniors**. When and when not to use volunteers.
Jo Ann Lauber, Canadian Association of Retired Teachers. *Grand Ballroom "B"*
- #11 The B.C. Ombudsperson's Report**. Next steps on seniors' care.
Marcy Cohen, Researcher. *Grand Ballroom "C"*
- #12 Building seniors' organizations**. Membership models, financing and structures.
Len Harrison. *Westminster Ballroom*
- 12:00 pm **Lunch**. Foyer at front and back of the Grand Ballroom
- 1:00 pm **Panel discussion**. The role of municipalities, provinces and the federal government in creating age-friendly communities. *Grand Ballroom*
- **Cathy Bennett**, (invited) Public Health Agency of Canada.
 - **Derek Corrigan**, (invited) Mayor of Burnaby.
 - **Rosemary Lawrence**, Coordinator, B.C. Seniors Healthy Living Secretariat .
- 2:10 pm **Round Table: An Integrated Approach to Long-term care, Primary care and community care**.
- **Gloria Levi**, Gerontologist
 - **Shannon Berg**, Executive Director, Home and Community Care, Vancouver Coastal Health
 - Dr. **Jay Slater**, Home VIVE and Home Hospice, Vancouver Coastal Health

- **Michele Jessop**, (invited) Manager, CHOICE / Day Programs, Alberta Health, Edmonton
 - **Anne Chisholm**, Director, Community and Residential Services, Northern Health Authority
- 3:25 pm **Coffee Break**. Foyer in front of the Grand Ballroom
- 3:40 pm Dr. **Irving Rootman**: Summing up. Comments from participants.
- 4:30 pm **Adjournment**

Register early!

This timely and important national conference will take place Monday October 1st and Tuesday October 2nd 2012 at the Executive Airport Plaza Hotel and Conference Centre, 7311 Westminster Highway in Richmond B.C.

The registration fee is \$150 for seniors and \$200 for non-seniors.

The fee includes two lunches, one dinner, four coffee breaks and all conference materials.

The maximum number of participants the conference facility can hold is 400. Previous COSCO conferences were always fully booked, so please register early.

Send your registration form, together with the conference fee, to: Sheila Pither, COSCO Secretary-Treasurer, #1908-1330 Harwood Street, Vancouver, B.C., V6E 1S8.

Deadline for registration is September 15th.

For additional information contact:

- Sheila at (604) 684-9720 or pither470@shaw.ca
- Art at (604) 576-8000 or aakube@telus.net

Accommodation and parking

The Executive Airport Plaza Hotel's conference room rate is \$109 per night, plus taxes. Each additional person in the room is \$15. Parking is included for guests.

If you're not staying at the hotel, parking is \$11 a day.

Room reservations can be made by calling 1-800-663-2878 or 604-278-5555, or visiting www.executivehotels.net.

The deadline for reservations at the hotel's conference rate is Friday, September 14, 2012.

To receive the special rate, you must identify yourself as a participant in the conference.

There is a complimentary shuttle service from and to the Vancouver Airport.

Room reservations are your responsibility.

There will be limited financial assistance to needy delegated seniors to attend.



About COSCO

The Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of British Columbia is a democratic, non-partisan umbrella organization with 80 affiliated organizations representing approximately 85,000 seniors. COSCO is recognized as a leader for social change affecting seniors. Our motto is seniors helping seniors.

COSCO was founded over 50 years ago by retired railroad workers to provide an effective voice for seniors in British Columbia. The purpose of COSCO is "to assemble, coordinate and advance proposals and resolutions related to the health, social and economic well-being of elder citizens in the province."

Our organization is governed by a monthly delegates meeting

Acknowledgements

The Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of B.C. gratefully acknowledges financial and staff support from BCGEU, and the contribution of the B.C. Division of CUPE.

We also thank the conference planning and organizing team: Pat Brady, Art Kube, Sheila Pither, Sylvia MacLeay, Tom Brunker, Jean Sickman, Alice Edge, Gudrun Langolf, Soren Bech, Garnet

and a 22 member Executive Board. All the work is done by volunteers. COSCO runs a seniors' advocacy program throughout B.C. which is staffed by over 100 volunteers. In addition, we offer over 30 health literacy programs.

COSCO delivers additional programs on seniors' leadership. We've held a number of successful conferences which have attracted seniors with considerable talent from different walks of life and different professional backgrounds.

COSCO is a proud member of the over one million member National Pensioners and Senior Citizens' Federation, the co-sponsor of the conference.

Grosjean, Charmaine Spencer, Lauren Syverson, Irv Rootman, Marcy Cohen, Gloria Levi, Doni Eve.

This conference is organized by the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of B.C. (COSCO). It is co-sponsored by the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens' Federation and the COSCO Seniors' Health and Wellness Institute.

This program was produced by volunteer labour and printed in a union shop

The Joys & Tears OF LIVING LONGER

A national conference to explore the opportunities and challenges of Canadians' increased longevity

REGISTRATION (Deadline September 15, 2012)

• Non-senior \$200 • Senior \$150

Name:.....

Organization:..... Title:.....

Address

City.....

Province..... Postal Code:

Phone Fax.....

Email

Make cheques payable to the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC.

Mail cheques and registration form to:
 Sheila Pither, Secretary-Treasurer,
 Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC.
 #1908-1330 Harwood Street,
 Vancouver, B.C. V6E 1S8

Your receipt and workshop choices will be tucked into your conference badge.

Choose your workshop

	<i>1st choice</i>	<i>2nd choice</i>	<i>3rd choice</i>
Monday 10:50 am			
#1 Social Determinants/Income	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#2 Social Determinants/Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#3 Social Connectedness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#4 Economics of seniors' health care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monday 3:15 pm			
#5 Seniors' Rights to Medical Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#6 Health Promotion, Illness & Accident Prev.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#7 Residential Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#8 Pharmacare	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tuesday 10:35am			
#9 Senior Abuse and Neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#10 Seniors helping seniors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#11 Seniors Advocates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#12 Building seniors' organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The CBC must survive Harperland

By Karen Wirsig

In Harperland, it is easy to get the impression there is widespread doubt about the country's need for a public broadcaster.

Harperland exists on a plane of reality propped up by endlessly repeated talking points and active curbing of public discussion, debate and dissent. In this context, public broadcasting is not just unnecessary. It might also be counterproductive. So it is striking when an iconic public figure openly contradicts the storyline, as Lloyd Robertson did after being inducted into the Canadian News Hall of Fame on May 16.

"Canada needs a public broadcaster and always has," said English Canada's longest-serving news anchor, who spent his most high-profile years on the desk of private network CTV's flagship newscast.

The space for public broadcasting is squeezed more than ever – especially in English Canada. CBC is cornered among emboldened private communications conglomerates, Bell, Rogers and Shaw, which now control most of the lucrative private media content as well as the means to distribute it. Coping with much diminished public funding, CBC/Radio-Canada is cutting costs (read: capacity and programming) and looking evermore to secure independent sources of cash: moving radio programming to the web where a commercial revenue stream is possible; putting ads on Radio 2 and Espace Musique; selling off or renting out its buildings to commercial tenants.

As for diminished capacities, CBC/Radio-Canada is closing regional music recording studios and remote recording facilities; scrapping Canada's only TV production studio east of Montreal – the Halifax home of 22 Minutes; shuttering shortwave transmission of Radio Canada International; shutting down the national network of over-the-air transmitters that serve as the only alternative to for-profit broadcast distribution by cable, satellite and internet TV companies.

The one public priority that seems unshaken by the recent budget cuts is the commitment to local and regional programming. However, that may soon be in for a blow. The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) recently held a hearing on whether to retain the Local Program Improvement Fund, money that goes to TV stations in communities of less than 1 million viewers to support local TV production. The fund comes from cable and satellite revenues (via companies such as Bell, Rogers and Shaw); CBC/Radio-Canada gets about \$40 million per year and uses it to air more local programming in small markets in both official languages than any other broadcaster. Most cable and satellite companies told the CRTC they want to kill the fund. The decision about its future is expected later this year. If the fund goes, CBC/Radio-Canada's local and regional programming will necessarily shrink without an alternative source of public funding.

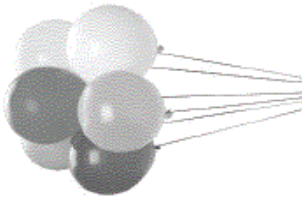
But all is not lost. Canadians who refuse the price of admission to Harperland, or have exited through the turnstile, are taking part in lively discussions about the future of their public broadcaster. Reimagine CBC (www.reimaginecbc.ca), Friends of Canadian Broadcasting (www.friends.ca) and even the *Toronto Star* (<http://thenetwork.thestar.com/>) are running online and in-person events to explore ideas and suggestions for CBC. Tous amiEs de Radio-Canada (<http://amisderadiocanada.com/>) and J'aime Radio-Canada (<http://www.jaimeradiocanada.com/>) are running online campaigns in support of Radio-Canada.

Canadians who support public broadcasting need to speak up now, through the campaigns mentioned above and in conversations with their local MP, before it's too late. We need CBC. Don't take it from me, take it from Lloyd Robertson.

Karen Wirsig is the communications co-ordinator for the Canadian Media Guild.

Follow her on twitter: @karenatcmg or reach her at karen@cmg.ca

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Radisson Hotel Edmonton South – from **\$119**

Mayfield Inn & Suites at West Edmonton – from **\$119**

Ramada Conference Centre Edmonton – from **\$99**

Quality Hotel Fort McMurray – from **\$139**

Quality Hotel Grande Prairie – from **\$99**

Saskatoon Inn Hotel & Conference Centre – from **\$119**

Radisson Hotel Saskatoon – from **\$139**

Regina Inn Hotel & Conference Centre – from **\$114**

Sandalwood Suites Hotel Toronto Airport – from **\$80**

Hôtel des Seigneurs Saint-Hyacinthe – from **\$89**

Hilton Montreal Bonaventure – from **\$199**

Hotel Tadoussac – from **\$149**

Citadel Halifax Hotel – from **\$130**

Best Western Charlottetown – from **\$139**

Traveller's Inn St. John's – from **\$109**



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*Offer valid June 1st – September 5th 2011. Stay two or more nights and upon checkout, you will receive a coupon for a free night for a future stay that cannot be applied to next day check ins. The coupons are valid only at the issuing hotel, but can be given to friends and family. Book by June 30th and receive a \$25 hotel credit. The hotel credit can be used for dining or towards a room upgrade. Food & beverage credit not available at Sandalwood Suites Hotel, Cascadia Hotel & Suites or Best Western Charlottetown - free breakfast offered at these properties. Offer not applicable to groups or with other promotions. Individual property blackout dates may apply.

Saluting the National Pensioners & Senior Citizens Federation

The Executive & Membership of the Retired Workers Chapter of Canadian Auto Workers Local 222

President - Les MacDonald

Secretary Treasurer - Art Field

Vice President - Lyle Hargrove

Sergeant at Arms - Mike Sanders

Member at Large - John Redko

Female Member at Large - Wendy Rolfe

Trustees - Paul Herrington,

Don Revoy and Ron Gay



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**Local 200 Retired Workers Chapter Salutes
The National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation**

Membership-Retired Workers of Ford Motor Company, Windsor, ON

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Vice Chairperson – Jack Gibbons

Financial Secretary – Mike Lepine

Recording Secretary – Rob McLean

Sergeant-at-arms – Elzie Banks

Guide – Ernie Spickett

Windsor Essex/Chatham Kent
Area
CAW Retired Workers Council



Representing Retired Workers from

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