

NEWSLETTER



National Pensioners Federation



NATIONAL PENSIONERS FEDERATION

NPF Executive 2017 - 2018



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To the Readers,

All editorial matter published in this NPF newsletter represents the views and opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the NPF or the publication's editor.

Statements and opinions expressed do not represent the official policy of NPF unless so stated.

Have you got an article you would like to submit for consideration?

Please send your articles to the publication's editor, Mary Forbes at mary.forbes@npfmail.ca.

Thank you to Jean Simpson for your continued support.

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Printing of the NPF Newsletter courtesy of Unifor Regional Office, 140 Pine Valley Blvd., London, ON





President's Message

The Future of NPF

Another year is coming to a close. Are seniors better off today than they were a year ago or 10 years ago? Most of us have been experiencing a stagnant or declining standard of living for many years, while the number of billionaires on the planet has doubled since 2007, when there were 946 billionaires according to Forbes magazine. In 2007, the billionaires' combined net worth climbed by \$900 billion to \$3.5 trillion. That equates to \$3.6 billion apiece. The rest of us did not fare so well in 2007. Ten years

later, in 2017, the number of billionaires has risen to 2,043, according to Wikipedia. Their total net worth value is US \$7.67 trillion. According to a 2017 Oxfam report, the top eight billionaires own as much combined wealth as "half the human race."

So what are we doing about this known growing inequality of the distribution of wealth? Obviously, not enough! When we have political and economic systems in place that do not promote real democracy, equality, and social justice, nothing will change. The psychological domination of hope ensures that people will not be motivated to believe that things can change for the better. All of us, individually, must stop listening to the endless torrent of manipulation that discourages our hopes and live like our dreams are reasonable and achievable, because they are. What we put up with now is by every measure inhumane and unsustainable. In Canada, the U.S. and around the world, people are beginning to recognize that the political stripes of a party are not as relevant as they were. People just want politicians to stand up for their constituents and stop the noxiously obvious servitude to multinational corporate interests.

On a personal note, I would like to update you on my role as president of NPF. I feel compelled to explain what happened so that everything is transparent and rumours can be minimized. At our convention on October 3, I announced that I was stepping aside as president. This was due to the workload that had developed and a feeling that I had accomplished what the membership had hoped I would do. During our lunch break, one of our guest speakers offered a solution that would reduce that workload considerably. This was basically a fundraising solution that would have enabled us to hire some people to do much of the administrative and research work. After this solution was offered, I announced that I would complete my term because the workload issue could be resolved. This discussion is ongoing. On November 10, I had a doctor's appointment that did not go as well as I had hoped. He told me that I have a number of health issues that will not be remedied as long as I was exposing myself to the stress that I currently had. He made a "strong recommendation" that I stop my involvement with all the advocacy work that I do for a period of six months to a year to see if there is any improvement. I believed it would be foolish not to take his advice, so it was with much disappointment that I was back to a decision to step aside. On November 27, I called an unscheduled conference call for the Executive to discuss how to best handle this. I knew that someone would have to assume the tasks that I was doing so I provided a list of these prior to the call. Each individual Executive Board member was very responsive to the need for each of them to pick up extra work. I assured the Board that I would be available for any explanation or mentoring required. The Board will continue to function in the best interest of our membership and provide updates on these developments.

I have volunteered for many organizations. The most rewarding of these has been the National Pensioners Federation. I will be forever grateful to have had this opportunity. I have met incredible dedicated activists in many fields and professionals that use their knowledge and training to promote social democracy and many people with busy lives that make time to stand up for issues they believe in.



...continued from President's Message

So how has NPF changed in the last five years?

Numerous organizations of all sorts are forming meaningful relationships with like-minded organizations to build more effective campaigns with a stronger democratic voice. Can you imagine any organization that would not want to partner with a vibrant seniors' organization? We have a huge opportunity and we must take advantage of it now. To put this in perspective, here is Canada's current population distribution. We recently passed a historic milestone in Canada's population. As you all know, the number of seniors has surpassed the number of children 14 and younger for the first time in Canadian history. I have broken our population into four categories for perspective.

Percentage of Canadian population

Age 0-14: 5.8 million	25%
Age 15-39: 12.39 million	50%
Age 40-64: 12.42 million	50%
Age 65 +: 5.9 million	25%

We may be the fastest growing cohort of the population, but we are certainly not the largest.

We have recognized this advantage and have been busy building those relationships and we need to continue to strengthen them by demonstrating our ability to clearly express our memberships' concerns. As one of the original proponents of the campaign in Canada to recognize the United Nations Resolution regarding October 1 as the International Day of the Older Person, we sit on the steering committee of Seniors' Voice (**seniorsvoice.ca**): a collaboration of organizations across Canada that support the United Nations resolution to honour and celebrate the contributions of people as they age. We represent Canadian seniors on the Service Canada, Ontario Region, Seniors' Advisory Committee, which has direct input into the process of identifying and advocating solutions at the provincial and national level from a seniors' perspective. We work with and have made presentations with the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (**piac.ca**): a talented group of legal advocates to address issues of access to participation by seniors in areas where the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission has jurisdiction. We have made presentations to the Federal Finance Committee and Senate Committee on the federal budget and pension issues. We are a part of the Public Awareness Committee of the Canadian Deprescribing Network (**deprescribingnetwork.ca**). We are members of the Canadian Coalition for Retirement Security (**honouryourpromise.ca**). We participate annually in the Canadian Health Coalition (**healthcoalition.ca**) lobby day in Ottawa. There are more efforts we have made and are making. You can view these on our website (**nationalpensionersfederation.ca**).

These are all venues to express our members' concerns. In order to effectively express our membership's concerns, we must use the tools we have available. These tools include resolutions to our annual conventions, online communication through the website, and emails and surveys sent directly to our members. We need members' contact information to do this. Our database, which will make much of this work so much easier, still needs your input. Our membership cannot continue to underestimate the importance of two requests: register your contact information on the website and consider becoming an "individual supporter" by donating \$25 a year. If just 5% of our million members gave this small donation, we would have an incredible \$1,250,000 in our budget. We could hire staff and not have to worry about the timing of our conventions. We need individuals, as well as national, provincial or municipal organizations, which may or may not pass on NPF information. Please take this message about these two requests to your organizations.



...continued from President's Message

When I review the changes we have made together, I realize how much the organization has changed and how much more work is needed. We now have a more recognizable profile in Ottawa and with other national and provincial organizations. We have a new name, a new Constitution, a new website, a Facebook page, a Twitter account, and a YouTube account. We have negotiated three new affinity programs with special rates for NPF members. We have a new database, which will improve contact with our members and supporters, track membership renewals, encourage online registrations for events or conventions, and track donations and fundraising campaigns. We now have portfolios to focus our energies on major topics of concern with designated Executive Board positions to provide a reciprocal link with the Executive and portfolio members. We have monthly Executive Board conference calls and quarterly calls with our affiliate leadership. We now have all the tools that an advocacy organization needs to be successful in today's climate. Now, we need to continue convincing people to use those tools.

We have four committees required in our constitution. They are all fundamental to the success of NPF.

I want to thank the members of the Health Committee: Executive Liaison Mike Kaminski, Chairperson Kathleen Jamieson, JoAnn Lauber, Alma Johnston-Tynes, and Winnie Fraser-Mackay. In particular, special recognition to Kathleen and JoAnn for the incredible work they each did on the health reports, which will have an impact on government policy decisions. The federal, provincial, and territorial ministers of health, opposition health critics, Federal Minister Jean Ives Duclos and federal seniors' critics, the Federal Standing Committee on Health, the new Federal Minister of Health Ginette Petitpas Taylor, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau received these two reports. These reports were some of the first input that the people in new positions received. Please follow up locally with your MP.

I want to thank the Housing Committee: Executive Liaison Bernie LaRusic, Chairperson Barb Mikulec, and Robert Sexsmith. Special recognition to Barb for the reports and updates that will also impact government policy decisions. The other two committees required by our constitution are still looking for members. We did have some volunteers come forward at the convention and the executive liaisons are getting in touch with these members.

Our Membership and Outreach Committee is now being chaired by our newest Executive Board member. Congratulations to Trish McAuliffe (1st Vice-President). I know Trish is an excellent addition to this Executive Board and will do a great job on behalf of our members. Thank you to Barry Thorsteinson, our past 1st Vice-President, who continues to work with NPF by helping out with pension issues and Ottawa events.

On our Finance Committee (which is really a fundraising committee), Executive Liaison Mary Forbes is in the process of populating this very important committee.

We have put in place a policy that the Executive Board positions will have defined responsibilities attached to specific committees. They are Executive Liaisons for the following:

1st Vice-President: Membership and Outreach Committee

2nd Vice-President: Health Committee

3rd Vice-President: Housing Committee

Treasurer: Finance (Fundraising) Committee

...continued from President's Message

We have also recently developed terms of reference and a political action process for the Resolutions Committee. The Member at Large Doug Edgar has this responsibility. This will provide more clarity when people want to run for these Executive Board positions in the future.

NPF needs people to step forward to fill these committees. The structure has been set up with the concept that if everyone does a little, no one has to do a lot.

I want to express my gratitude to all the Executive Board members I have had the honour to work with over the past five years. They have showed their commitment to NPF in many ways. The most important has been their participation in our monthly conference calls where the decisions affecting the members of NPF are made. I must thank my partner Yolanda and my family for their patience and sacrifice while I spent time working for others. Their support and encouragement helped me through some challenging periods. I remember well their instant approval of my candidacy for president. They now also agree that it is time for a break.

My most sincere gratitude goes to you, the NPF membership. I can honestly say that I have fulfilled the expectations of this job to the best of my ability and that my ability to do so improved during that time.

Thank you for the opportunity of a lifetime.

Wishing you and your family all the very best of the holiday season!

Herb John

*Best
wishes*

NPF Housing Report

In the NPF Housing Report presented to the AGM in Dartmouth, it was noted that the federal government planned to “double the current federal funding” with the provinces or territories matching federal investments and have flexibility to deliver programs that address local housing needs. The federal government will support construction, repair and adaptation of affordable housing for seniors, with the provinces or territories not required to cost-match these funds.

The federal government’s Social Development Minister Jean-Yves Duclos recently announced the Canada National Housing Strategy with a goal of building 100,000 new housing units over 10 years. Repairs and renewal of 300,000 existing housing units will be undertaken, as well.

The report www.letstalkhousing.ca notes the consultation process for the full Canada National Housing Strategy which is accessible at www.placetocallhome.ca.

The new portable Canada Housing Benefit (starting in 2020) will supplement the rent of low-income citizens, providing an average of \$2,500 per year to each recipient household. The federal government hopes these initiatives will lift 530,000 families out of core housing need, and help seniors, Indigenous peoples, survivors of family violence, people with disabilities, refugees, veterans, and those grappling with homelessness.

The federal funding of the Affordable Rental Housing Innovation Fund of \$200 million over five years will be administered by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). The funds will be used for innovative housing approaches to lower costs and risks to finance affordable rental housing projects.

Each province has unique approaches to housing: Ontario has some rent supplements available to help renters, as many face rising market rents, especially in urban areas.

Quebec provides shelter and safety for women facing homelessness and single mothers experiencing family violence by transforming an unused elementary school into a shelter with transitional housing units.

New Brunswick has an Affordable Housing Program with forgivable loans, and in some cases rent supplements for the acquisition, rehabilitation, conversion, and operation of rental housing projects.

Another housing policy is a Rental Conversion Program, which gives financial assistance to owners or landlords to convert non-residential properties into affordable self-contained rental housing units.

Programs to renovate and repair housing include Rental Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program, with forgivable loans for remediating the accessibility of units occupied by seniors or persons with disabilities.

Alberta aids rural residents needing more help and without easy access to services and supports by renovating an Edson facility with an updated building that offers home care, meals, and accessibility features for wheelchairs.

Alberta’s Minister of Seniors and Housing Lori Sigurdson welcomes the federal housing strategy announcement and she was not surprised by the focus on cost-sharing between governments. By contrast, the Quebec government wants to negotiate a funding agreement outside the national program so the province “can continue to run housing.”

...continued from NPF Housing Report

British Columbia (BC) announced that it will build over 100,000 affordable, rental, non-profit, co-op, and regular housing units over 10 years. The BC premier welcomes the federal announcement, which aligns with BC plans.

There will also be increased funding for the Residential Tenancy Branch to improve service for both tenants and landlords in BC.

The City of Vancouver plans its first Land Trust by building on city land. Community land trusts are an innovative way to create affordable housing, helping non-profit housing societies and co-ops combine their equity and cities to develop and finance affordable housing. Tenants are income-tested to ensure they pay no more than 30 per cent of their income on rent. For more information, visit www.vancouverlandtrust.ca.

Vancouver has 80% of its land zoned for single-family houses, and the proposal is to build an additional 10,000 ground-level townhouses in single-family neighbourhoods in the next decade as part of the planned 72,000 new homes in the city - a very ambitious goal.

Modular homes are also being built. The City of Vancouver, in partnership with the Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency and BC Housing, is building 600 temporary modular housing units on underutilized sites to create temporary housing for homeless residents. Some of the units will provide homes for seniors with physical illness or disabilities. This temporary affordable housing is funded under Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's new Affordable Rental Innovation Fund.

Unfortunately, many of the federal programs will take time to implement, especially the Canada Housing Benefit, not beginning until 2020. But there are steps being taken and best practices that give hope for the future. The housing crisis is now; let's swing into high gear!

Recommendations:

- a. The NPF encourages progressive housing policies, which develop innovative solutions to address the housing crisis. All levels of government need to be involved in providing housing funds for affordable housing, to preserve and re-invest in existing affordable housing units for seniors.
- b. The NPF urges all provincial or territorial governments to use best practices to enable seniors to access housing options, including Land Trust, co-ops, co-housing, and using rehabilitated buildings to ease the shortage of housing.
- c. The NPF supports the efforts of all governments to end homelessness by adopting "Housing First" or similar policies that house citizens, then address their health issues.
- d. The NPF supports the availability of program IAH "Increasing Affordable Housing for Seniors," which improves senior housing conditions (provided through the IAH and delivered by provinces and territories).

Barb Mikulec, NPF Housing Chair

1st Vice-President's Report

An Introduction

Greetings to each of you and your families as we head into the festive time of the year! I know we all look forward to spending quality time with our friends and family but keep in our hearts those who are vulnerable to these difficult and sometimes lonely times. I join you in mindfulness and serenity.

As the newly acclaimed Vice-President of NPF, I want to express my hope to continue with building the capacities of our membership, outreach, and

organizational growth. The first order of business is to bring together a communication and outreach team. Your input and participation across Canada will help to ensure our voice is heard and our work is advanced through important initiatives. Thank you to a few of the delegates at the last conference for signing up! Our team should be comprised of at least five persons, so a few seats remain to be filled. Also, please pass on any information you may have on local seniors' groups in your community or province that are like-minded in advocacy, as we are certainly interested in joining forces. Seniors are today's highest demographic population and should, therefore, be strong advocates for social justice and responsible public policy. Together, we WILL accomplish.

Please continue to direct your interests and help to coordinate our communication team from coast to coast to coast. I am open and interested to hear from you. Reach out anytime with your ideas to help our organization grow!

Trish.mcauliffe@npfmail.ca

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/politicsispersonal/?ref=bookmarks>

I can also be found on Twitter and LinkedIn.

This past quarter has been a marathon for those of us protecting public Medicare in Ontario with the introduction of legislation to open up private "health communities." The Ontario Health Coalition (OHC) and supporting organizations have been steadfast in reporting on and fighting back Schedule 9 and 10 of *Bill 160 Strengthening Quality and Accountability for Patients Act, 2017* (http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=5096). To date, there has been some success as the Minister has agreed to make some amendments, but the bill still contains some major threats to the overhaul of publically delivered services. Bill 160 is an omnibus bill that enacts or repeals seven entire acts and amends another 30+ acts. You can read the OHC submission to the public hearings here:

<http://www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca/index.php/urgent-action-alert-new-bill-allows-private-for-profit-hospitals-more-private-for-profit-clinics/>

Province-wide hearings on "protecting hospital services" were conducted by the OHC and I put forward all of our recommendations from the NPF Health Committee Report. The document was well received and thanks to all who worked so hard on our behalf. This document will be very useful in the challenging times ahead as the health funding cuts begin to take effect in all of our communities.

Bill 33 in Ontario Legislature has passed second reading: "Time to Care Act" *An Act to amend the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007* to establish a minimum standard of daily care (http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=4195). The details will be in the regulations, so we must remain diligent in advocacy to ensure that it is quality hands on time that is increased versus total staffing dollars. Please consider meeting with your MPP to share stories and concerns to make them aware of patient care needs. As you know, some patients have little or no family to advocate for them.



...continued from 1st Vice-President's Report

Lastly, I feel this is a good time to share a little about myself. I know my involvement with NPF is a great fit that aligns with my passion for social justice education and leadership. I have a long history of interacting with workers in diverse sectors of our economy on a wide range of political and social issues. As a former adult education facilitator, I actively engaged in a wide range of debates pertaining to international affairs, the economy, politics, human rights, women's issues, and the realities of globalization. I look forward to continue to lean on those experiences and skills while advocating together with NPF.

During my 30 years of employment with General Motors and UNIFOR, I have held various leadership positions and helped support the many difficult struggles that workers and families faced every day in and out of the workplace. As a well-respected member of the labour movement, I was asked by Jack Layton to run in the federal election of 2014 to advocate for and promote the rights of workers and their families across the country. I eagerly worked within my community to support Jack and the NDP to support a new kind of politics that represented the vast issues facing middle class and marginalized families that should be central within a peoples' government. I see the National Pensioners Federation advocacy like Jack, a steadfast contributor to the betterment of society that is deeply rooted in education, participation, and action to ensure that change IS possible.

Today, as a volunteer, I continue to serve my community within a broad scope of political activism and I am pleased to extend that work for the National Pensioners Federation.

- **Co-Chair of the Durham Chapter of the Ontario Health Coalition** & recipient of the 2012 Dan Benedict Award, organizing local informational forums, hosting rallies, and lobbying government
- **President, Board Member of Parkview Place Seniors Housing;** (Non-Profit, Oshawa), overseeing the operation of a 105-resident, high-rise in downtown Oshawa
- **Executive Member, Unifor Local 222 Retired Workers Chapter** & Health Care Committee
- **Former Executive Member, Congress of Union Retirees of Canada - South Central Council,** facilitator of work shops; Retirement Planning and How to Lobby
- **2013 Woman of Recognition Award Recipient** – Unifor Local 222 Women's Committee
- Labour Studies Certificate from McMaster University and post-grad certificate in ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution)

As an NPF Executive Member and Vice-President, I will commit to work diligently as the liaison of the **Communication and Outreach Committee** on your behalf. Please join me in ensuring the continued successes of our organization.

Trish McAuliffe

Highlights of the 73rd Annual NPF Convention

For more photos, visit the NPF website at
<https://nationalpensionersfederation.ca/2017-convention-resources/>.



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\$0

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Treasurer's Report

NPF's 73rd Convention Automation Process

Thank you all for a very successful 73rd National Pensioners Federation Convention. Thanks to the efforts of our President, Herb John, we were able to maintain a fairly stable financial position for the first time in several years. Herb had secured a number of excellent presenters, free of charge. Also, due to his efforts, we were able to make use of the majority of discounts offered by the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel where the convention was held.

I also wish to thank all who made donations to our funds. This will help us to continue to communicate with our members and to advocate on their behalf.

For the first time, we were able to fully utilize the online registration on the website. That went rather well and I was able to print name tags off the website rather than type them, allowing me to issue receipts automatically. There were still some delegates who registered by mail, which is still okay, but the website saves so much time and is certainly worth the money.

We still have some items to iron out. Automatic emails appear to be problematic as some emails continue to bounce back. Please check the email we have entered on the website for your club and verify correctness. If we do not have your email, please send it to mary.forbes@npfmail.ca. Not only do emails save on postage, but this is a very fast and easy way to communicate.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and a healthy, happy, and prosperous 2018.

Mary Forbes

The year 2017 is fast drawing to a close. The National Pensioners Federation (NPF) relies on your membership and financial support in order to continue our advocacy efforts. If you have not paid your 2018 Membership dues, we would really appreciate if you would do so now.

Please visit the NPF website to view our activities and to submit your dues:
www.nationalpensionersfederation.ca

We thank you for your ongoing support. If you have already submitted your dues, we thank you and please ignore this reminder.

National Pensioners Federation
c/o Mary Forbes, Treasurer
2186 Stanfield Road
Mississauga, ON, L4Y 1R5



Clubs and Group Registration

Includes:

- Membership Certificate
- 1 Year Subscription to The National Newsletter (3 issues published per year)
- Important Mailings
- Invitation to Annual Convention
- Special insurance rates for members

Club Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Province: _____

Contact: _____ Email: _____ Phone# _____

Number of Club/Group Members: _____

Annual Club/Group Membership Dues:

Under 100 Members	\$35.00	\$ _____
101 to 500 Members	\$75.00	\$ _____
501 to 1,000 Members	\$125.00	\$ _____
1,001 Members and over	\$350.00	\$ _____
Donations gratefully accepted	\$	\$ _____
Total amount of cheque	\$	

Please register online at: <http://www.nationalpensionersfederation.ca>
(Online registration is less expensive and very convenient)

NPF c/o Mary Forbes, Treasurer - 2186 Stanfield Road, Mississauga, ON L4Y 1R5

mary.forbes@npfmail.ca Phone# 905-306-1830



National Pensioners
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Individual Membership Rate: \$25.00 _____

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Donations gratefully accepted \$

Total amount of cheque \$

Please register online at: <http://www.nationalpensionersfederation.ca>
(Online registration is less expensive and very convenient)

Registration forms and cheques can also be forwarded to:
National Pensioners Federation
c/o Mary Forbes, Treasurer
2186 Stanfield Road, Mississauga, ON L4Y 1R5
mary.forbes@npfmail.ca phone# 905-306-1830

2nd Vice-President's Report

Merry Christmas – Canada 150



As we approach the end of 2017 and the Christmas season with all its celebrations, NPF has its own reasons to celebrate. At the AGM in Halifax, the Health Committee, under the chair of Kathleen Jamieson, presented three reports: Tough Love: A History of the Health Accords in Canada, Responsive Primary Health Care, and Dental Care. All three reports were adopted at the AGM. Two reports, Tough Love: A History of

the Health Accords in Canada and Responsive Primary Health Care, were major research studies with recommendations for moving forward. The reports were forwarded to the Prime Minister, Minister of Health, government caucus, and premiers. A few of the contacts have responded. In addition, the delegates had the opportunity of hearing presentations by Josh Bizjak of the Broadbent Institute and Amy Fogarty on Mental Health First-Aid.

The Health Committee is comprised of four dedicated volunteers: Kathleen Jamieson (Chair), JoAnn Lauber, Winnie Fraser-McKay, and Alma Johnston-Tynes. I serve as the executive liaison for the Committee. The next step forward is that of advocacy – not only with the reports that were tabled, but also on pharmacare, deprescription of drugs, dental care, and mental health. In addition, the Committee is preparing executive summaries on the first two reports and identifying the key talking points for advocacy, and it is seeking representatives in each of the provinces to enable timely updates, better communications, and a broader base for advocacy actions in health care. An advocacy action plan will be developed over the course of the next year.

In Saskatchewan, I had the opportunity of meeting with Cathay Wagantall, MP for Yorkton. At this meeting, we were able to discuss most of the key issues in Canadian health care: the Seniors' Health Care Strategy, Tough Love, Primary Health Care, pharmacare and deprescription of drugs and dental care. The voice of NPF and seniors is slowly being carried forward across Canada. Positive changes will occur when seniors across Canada become engaged and speak to their elected representatives.

Provincially, Saskatchewan is undergoing transformational change. We are being transformed from 13 health districts to one Health Authority. This singular Health Authority began operations on December 4, 2017. Many changes are occurring. However, communications and collaborative decision-making with seniors leave a lot to be desired. The Saskatchewan Union of Nurses hosted the 2017 Health Innovation Summit. Health care providers were invited to share their frustrations over the lack of collaboration related to the formation of the Health Authority and resulting departments and services. Health care workers from Alberta shared their experiences with the transformational change of restructuring services from nine health districts and three regions to one, about eight and a half years prior. The plan made it "difficult to connect with people across the province, to provide them with information, to provide updates," said Sean Chilton, Vice-President, Alberta Health Services Collaborative Practices. After five years, the government re-established five geographic regions, each with a clinical and operational leader for the delivery of health care in the province. Saskatchewan has taken note of these experiences. At the end of November, I also had the opportunity to participate in a meeting with the Rural Minister of Health Greg Ottenbreit and MLA's Terry Dennis and Warren Kaeding. They provided some reassurance on trying to improve communications.

...continued from 2nd Vice-President's Report

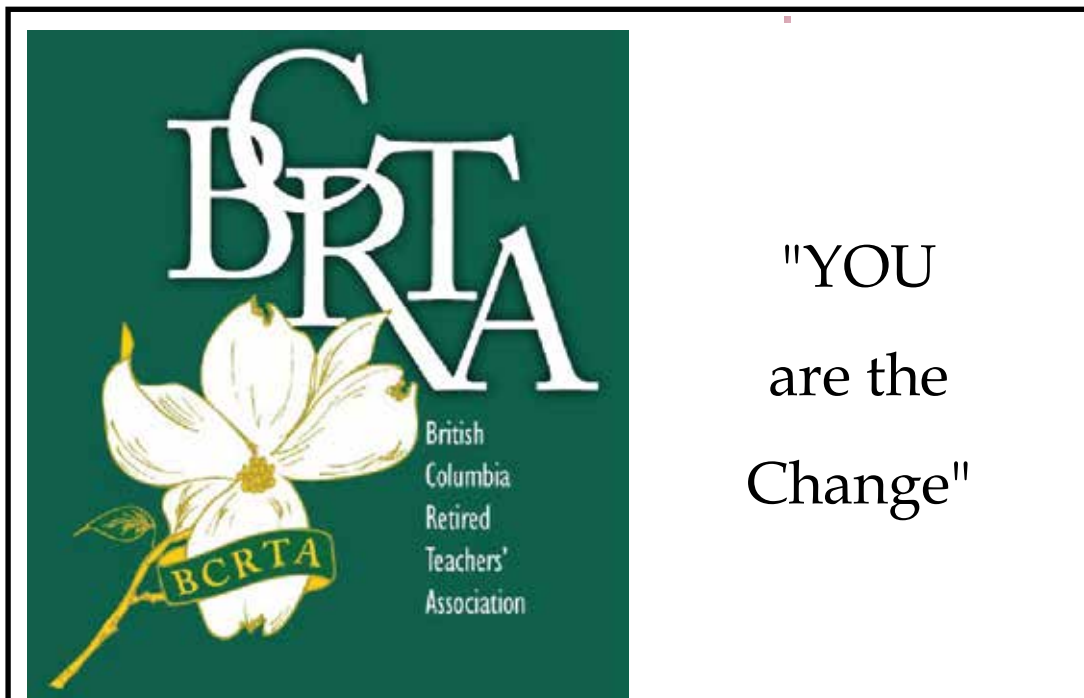
The previous three provincial budgets have impacted very seriously on the lives of seniors, especially those on fixed incomes. For many, living in dignity is becoming a serious challenge. The one bright light is the Senior's House Call program. It was created to support seniors' wellness in the comfort of their own homes. The team approach includes nurse practitioners, paramedics, and pharmacists.

In British Columbia, our Health Committee chair will be making a presentation on behalf of the BC Health Coalition to the federal Pre-budget Consultation Committee in Vancouver on the bilateral agreements, the need for a national pharmacare program, and a seniors' health care strategy.

We all have heard the phrase "A Canadian is a Canadian is a Canadian." While the substance of this phrase may be very productive politically, it doesn't seem to have the same effect on providing health care. The inconsistent provision of health care services across Canada is illustrated in the variance in the services of Health Accord agreements and program. The 150th birthday of Canada has witnessed many apologies and actions to correct historical wrongs by governments, perhaps it is time to make the same progress in health care.

Merry Christmas.

Mike Kaminski



Beware of Phantom Loads in Your Household

Phantom load, vampire power, standby power, ghost load, or leaking electricity are all the same: electricity consumed by an electronic device while it is turned off or on standby mode. This is the power that maintains your TV settings and keeps the clock going on your VCR and microwave. This comes at a price. Studies have been made globally putting that price at a full 10% of your monthly energy bill.

Are phantom loads contributing to an extra 10% of your energy bill?

Common phantoms are TVs, VCRs, DVD players, DVRs, cell phone chargers (and any other battery chargers), clock radios, computers, printers, coffeemakers, power strips, microwave ovens, and answering machines. In addition, any device with a remote control, any device with a clock, any device that is programmable, and any device with a power light or standby indicator light are also common phantoms. If you are like me, you probably have many of these items in your household.

Never fear. There are some changes that you can make to eliminate them.

You can unplug things, like chargers, which continue to draw electricity while not in use. Consider leaving your microwave and VCR unplugged while not in use. Plug all your computer components into a power strip. Flip the power strip off when you are done using your computer. Do the same for your TV, DVD player, and other home entertainment devices. Set your computer to sleep mode when not in use and invest in smart power strips that will automatically cut power to devices that are not being used.

For information on save on energy programs, visit <https://saveonenergy.ca/Consumer.aspx>.

Mary Forbes

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Don't Plan for Seniors ...

Plan with Seniors

3rd Vice-President's Report

Housing and Health Care



This is my first correspondence with members since the NPF Convention in Dartmouth. Alma Johnson-Tynes, President of the Federation of Senior Citizens and Pensioners of Nova Scotia deserves congratulations as the sponsor of the event. In addition, NPF Treasurer Mary Forbes reports that this was the first convention in a number of years that the NPF did not go into debt. The smaller number of guest speakers at the

convention allowed the delegates to focus on the issues, as well as pick up on how such information could be developed. In that area, two presenters stood out: the Broadbent Institute presented by Josh Bizjak, and Mental Health First-Aid presented by Amy Fogarty.

Although somewhat political, the Institute's promotional ability can assist in organizing, developing, and training in areas involving outreach. NPF could utilize such involvement in organizing, developing, and training programs relating to housing (shelter) and health care (pharmacare). President Herb John recognized the need to open a dialogue with the Institute and we have now seen some progress as a result.

On the Broadbent Institute's website there is a detailed report about the strategies NPF could utilize, entitled "Webinar, Networked Change in Canada." To access this, click on Training and Leadership. Information about the presenters can be found there. This webinar is scheduled to take place on December 5, 2017, which will have already happened by the time you read this. The hope and intent is to develop, organize, and present a program that will be made available to the senior community of Canada with assistance from our housing and health affiliates in time for the next Federal election in two years. With planning, input, and cooperation, we will be ready.

Appropriate steps should be taken to develop a plan to move forward. We need to start thinking about engaging the senior community. Some provincial senior organizations with better resources have identified and began the development of similar topics. Seniors or pensioners, who are paying more than 30 per cent of their income for shelter when their income is not keeping pace with the cost of living, can be compared to marking time in quicksand. Adopting the model from the Broadbent Institute, both on housing and health care, could be put forward as one of the NPF's priorities in the next federal election.

Another noteworthy presentation at the convention was Mental Health First-Aid, as narrated from the perspective of a first responder. The presentation focused on how to recognize early mental health degeneration to assist in early diagnosis and treatment.

As mentioned earlier, provincial senior organizations have started development work on similar programs. As the NPF, we aim to take a leadership role in the two areas of housing and health care involving the senior community for Canada.

Lastly, my family and I would like to wish all a blessed Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Bernie LaRusic

Member at Large Report

Your Personal Legacy



Every individual has their own distinct tastes, styles, and abilities. If everyone were the same, there would be no need to make different flavours of gelato, cars of different colours or a variety of games and concerts. The question we must all ask ourselves is, “What makes me unique?” How do we want to be remembered? What will be our personal legacy?

When most people contemplate leaving a legacy behind, they think in legal terms, a gift of property, especially personal property, money, by will. However, there are other aspects to be considered. Over the years, there could be a number of things, tangible and intangible, that might have defined who you are. Is it possible for you to preserve your expertise? Is it possible to preserve your knowledge?

Years ago, I was talking to an older gentleman as he was creating a rock wall. Realizing that his was a lost art, I asked him if he had thought about who would carry on this trade when he was gone. He said he wished he had a son or an apprentice he could teach, but that was not to be. In the future, he said, rock walls will be made out of preformed plastic. In considering our own abilities, is there a mentoring program that you could use to pass on skills and knowledge as part of your legacy?

Legacies don't happen in the hours just before death; they are planned and created in advance. Do you have a focus? Do you want to preserve your family history? Who would best carry on your desire here? Are the associations and organizations that you belong to and work for important to you? What can you do to help ensure their viability into the future? Make a plan on what to donate now and to designate for the future. Can you donate those museum-quality tools now, and what should you designate for a later time? Realize too, that what you value as important may not have the same consideration by those handling your estate. Part of your planning should indicate gifts to be given now and bequests for the future, and that these directions be known. Once bequests are accepted, your ownership and control of tangible assets ceases, and the new possessor can choose whether to keep, donate, or sell these items.

For purely financial legacies, there are trusts and foundations that you can create, or you can contribute to an existing community foundation that supports organizations, usually charitable ones, in your community. As with any financial investment, be sure you know all the details. Are there any administrative fees involved? Who will be eligible to receive your largesse? When and how are benefits distributed? Planning, specific planning now, will pay dividends in the future.

As for any individual, their greatest personal legacy is to be remembered with respect by family and friends.

Doug Edgar



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National Pensioners Federation

Federation Nationale des Retraites

Website: www.nationalpensionersfederation.ca

The National Pensioners Federation is an organization devoted entirely to the welfare and best interests of Canada's elderly and as such supports these

GENERAL AIMS and LONG-TERM GOALS

1. To lobby the Canadian Federal Government to discuss and enact legislation that will provide a safe, economically just lifestyle, which would include provisions for housing, health care, pharmacare, transportation, and social inclusion.
2. 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 parties who are or might become interested in these concerns.
3. To provide education for people in the retired and senior citizens age group and other individuals interested in the aspects of aging and the status and wellbeing of seniors.
4. To assist in developing the knowledge that seniors should have about their aging process by promoting educational experiences.
5. To provide programs that promote healthy, active lifestyles for seniors, thus sustaining their mental and physical health.
6. To consult other private or public organizations that offer similar services in order to gather any educational information that will add to the knowledge base and be of use to seniors and the public.
7. To provide opportunities for seniors to utilize their volunteer and leadership skills for the benefit of all people.
8. To promote, establish, and foster seniors' centres and regional and provincial seniors' groups throughout Canada.
9. To reach out to seniors who are lonely, isolated, or at risk.

Saluting the National Pensioners Federation

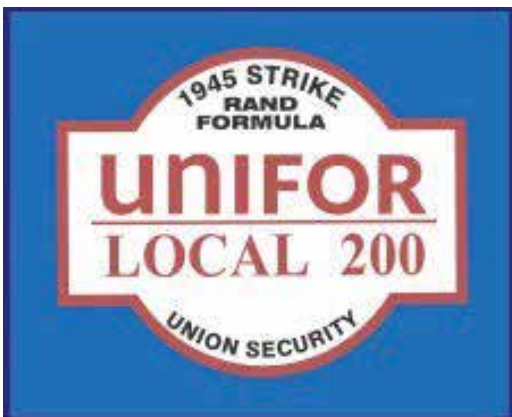
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