

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 2008

MARIE M. SMITH

Along the lines of smoky hills
The crimson forests stand
And all the day the blue jay calls
Throughout the autumn land.

Do you remember this poem? October, what a colourful, beautiful month. To me it is one of the most enjoyable seasons as long as I enjoy each brilliant day and not think of winter. When it snows I look at the trees and picture them in their crimson glory. It does help me!

First I must apologize about PSA testing. I was told all tests were covered. This is the schedule of payment for PSA testing in Ontario from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care:

- When a man *has been diagnosed with prostate cancer* and is receiving treatment, or is being followed after treatment for the disease, the PSA test is available at no charge to the patient through the hospital laboratory service. *
- When a doctor *suspects prostate cancer* because of a man's history and/or the results of his physical examination (including digital rectal examination), PSA testing is available at no charge to the patient through the hospital laboratory service. *



- In *men without symptoms* (screening), PSA testing is *not* paid for by the provincial health plan. A man can have the PSA test if he is willing to pay for the test himself. However, it is hoped he will make this decision only after discussion with his doctor.

*Men must attend a hospital to have the specimen drawn to avoid a charge.

For the members that did not attend our 50th convention, here is an MPAC update:

- ✓ Each year the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) prepares an assessment roll for every Ontario municipality. The roll provides the assessed value of all the properties in a municipality or in the jurisdiction of a school board with taxing authority.
- ✓ MPAC also prepares supplementary assessment lists, which municipalities use to add in-year tax revenue from new construction or major alterations to properties.
- ✓ MPAC also sends Property Assessment Notices to property owners every year. Property owners can call MPAC at 1.866.296. MPAC (6722) if they need help understanding their assessed value or any other information included on the Notice. They can also ask MPAC to review the assessed value through a process called Request for Reconsideration.
- ✓ In Addition, property owners have the option to file a Notice of Complaint to an independent tribunal, the Assessment Review Board of the Ministry of the Attorney General of the Province of Ontario.



- ✓ The 2006 and 2007 assessment updates of properties in Ontario were cancelled. As a result, assessments continue to be based on current value as of January 1, 2005. Municipalities are using the January 1, 2005 values to calculate property taxes for 2006, 2007, and 2008. Education tax rates, which are not set by the Provincial Government, are also being applied to the January 1, 2005 assessed values.

- ✓ Every four years, to coincide with municipal elections, MPAC conducts a province-wide municipal enumeration. During this process, MPAC records the name, birth date, school support information and other related data for every person in Ontario. This information is used to prepare voters' lists for each municipality and is also provided to school boards.

- ✓ In conjunction with its enumeration activities, MPAC also reports the population of each municipality in Ontario. Municipalities and school boards use this information for planning and reporting purposes. For example, if a school board knows which areas of a community have high concentrations of school-aged children, they can predict where new schools should be built. Similarly, information about which neighbourhoods have a high proportion of elderly persons will indicate to a municipality where they should establish seniors' centres.

I just returned from the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation Convention in Surrey, BC. The first two days we were in Richmond, BC at a Health Conference. The Keynote speaker was the Honourable Roy Romanow on the *Royal Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada*. If the government follows their suggestions, our health care will improve in each province. But as you know, the federal government turns the money over to each province to run their own health care!



At the NPSCF conference the following credential report was given by Joyce Mitchell:

Newfoundland – 6	Executives – 6
Nova Scotia – 3	Delegates – 89
Prince Edward Island – 1	Visitors – 1
Ontario – 32	
Saskatchewan – 4	
Alberta – 4	
British Colombia – 47	
North West Territories – 1	Total 96

As you can see, New Brunswick and Quebec were not there this year. All our Ontario resolutions were passed. If you have any questions about resolutions, please call our office.

It was a busy exciting week with a lot of educational information. The new Executive is as follows:

President: Art Kube – BC	3 rd Vice: Mary Fleck – NB
Ist Vice: John Gaten – ON	Secretary: Ferne Haight – SK
2 nd Vice: Sheila Righi – SK	Treasurer: Sandy Carricato - ON

Please remember to keep your members up to date on what the USCO is doing. If you know of a club that doesn't belong to the USCO, please have your Field Rep or one of the Board speak to them on all we are accomplishing. We need to hear from each club and every Field Rep so we can learn from each other. I am looking forward to hearing from you or visiting your club. Keep up the great work each club is doing. Our thanks.

*Enjoy each day
and
God bless.*