

Excerpt from the May 2009 Edition of The Voice Newsletter



President's Message

By Marie M. Smith

The Voice Of The United Senior Citizens Of Ontario Since Sept. 10th, 1956.



Welcome to May. Now I have to decide what I'm going to plant in my garden. Yes, it is finally that beautiful month for preparing and planting for our summer and fall enjoyment.

April's *Voice* has our 51st Convention Call on page 14. We hope all clubs will send two delegates to vote on the resolutions and have a say with the government.

I am happy to tell you that the Trial Lawyers of Ontario and the Ontario Bar Association phoned to tell me that the compensation for seniors and threshold has been reduced. Thank you to Cliff Flavell of Zone 39 and Gravenhurst Club who heard Patrick Brown speak at the Convention and had all their clubs send letters to their MPPs. We need every zone and club to do this.

A reason to attend the convention is so that you hear speakers that bring you up to date on what is happening with the government. Otherwise seniors get what they deserve if they sit back and do nothing. The government needs to know that it is not just one person speaking on behalf of the USCO but also that the clubs are supporting the Board.

Do you realize that emergency room (ER) information is being posted on the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care's website at: www.ontariowaittimes.com. There are two categories being provided: patients with complex conditions and patients with minor or uncomplicated conditions. This time is measured from when a patient registers in ER until the patient leaves to go home or is admitted to a hospital bed. If you or someone you know has had an ER experience please let us know if your time coincides with the website time.

Also on the site, there is a link to the government's new Your Health Care Options website at www.health.gov.on.ca/ms/healthcareoptions/public/index.html. Here patients with uncomplicated conditions can find information on health care options outside of ER including urgent care centres and walk-in clinics that are within your community.

Health Care Connect is designed to help people find a family health care provider if they don't have one already. By calling 1.800.445.1822 Ontarians will be able to easily and quickly add their names and health information in order to refer patients to a family health care provider in their community. This is to ensure that people who need care most get it first. You should have a valid OHIP card to be part of the program. The USCO needs to know if these systems are working so please let us know. Apparently your constituency office (MPP) has more information if needed.

The Law Foundation of Ontario has launched a project on access to legal information and legal service by linguistic minorities and persons living in rural or remote areas. Access to justice is a vast subject. This project will focus on access to two components (legal information and legal services) by two groups who can face isolation in our communities (linguistic minorities and persons in rural or remote areas). If you would like to know more about the Linguistics and Rural Access to Justice Project, or you would like to provide input please contact Barb Stewart at the Law Foundation of Ontario at 416.598.1550 or bstewart@lawfoundation.on.ca. This service is for persons who do not speak English or French and persons living in rural or remote areas of the province.

Just a reminder that June is Seniors Month. Do you have something planned to celebrate your month? Celebrate Victoria Day on May 18th.

