

# OUTREACH

To The Superannuated Teachers  
of Saskatchewan

## President's Report

Sunil Pandila

The transition from fall to winter is always a much talked about time of year. While the first few days of cold temperatures are not much fun, it is just time to get acclimatized for what lies in store for the next six months of the year. It also signals to many of us to get ready for a trip to warmer climates! No matter what your plans are for winter, I hope that all your activities are full of fun with family and friends as we head into a new decade.

World Teacher Day on Saturday, October 5 was a unique experience this year. For most of us during our teaching career this day came and went, as we were busy in our classrooms and schools. This year educators gathered as a collective in Regina to celebrate the work of our profession. There were many superannuates in attendance as approximately 2,000 teachers and their families and community members took the time to recognize the work of teachers in our province. It was a wonderful time to connect and network with teachers and to get a better understanding of the challenges they are facing in their classrooms. A big thank you goes out to the STF staff for making the arrangements, providing lunch and organizing the guest speakers. They spoke with conviction and emotion of how teachers make a positive difference in the lives of their children. It truly was a great day with a strong message to decision

makers about the importance of education as a priority.

The Executive just completed the October meetings and as you read through the various reports, you will get updates on the work of our Committees. The current enrolment in the STS is 11,706 members. October also brings around our annual meeting of STS Chapter Presidents. We had approximately 60 members attend a very successful day. We had many first-time participants in attendance. On behalf of the Executive we hope that you enjoyed the day and learned many things to take back to your Chapters. During the planning stage, our goal was to ensure that this day is productive for participants. Chapter Presidents came prepared for the round table discussions on a variety of topics of relevance to our members. A special thank you is extended to Chapter Delegates for your participation and sharing of ideas. This is the value of teamwork at its best! Other parts of the day included information updates from all the STS Committee Chairs and an opportunity to ask questions to help guide the work over the rest of the year. There was a presentation from the Saskatchewan Senior Fitness Association on the fun side of keeping fit through a wide variety of sport activities, which are offered in locations throughout the province. These activities are offered very economically and assist older adults in keeping healthy and

making new friends at the same time. The day ended with an opportunity to tour our newly renovated STS offices.

For those who recently retired, welcome to the STS. I know you are exploring your newfound freedom, but remember to take the time to participate in Chapter activities and to strengthen ties with fellow superannuates. This will be an invaluable connection as you start the next chapter in your lives. For more information, you may contact your local Chapter.

One of the key issues facing our organization is that of member involvement and engagement at the Chapter level. While Chapters continue to offer luncheons, interesting presentations, and opportunities to participate in a variety of fun and entertaining activities, membership attendance by recent retirees is low. We need to continue our efforts to encourage members to attend. I would also like to encourage superannuates to consider running for our Provincial STS Executive. It is a wonderful opportunity to provide leadership for our members and get a better understanding of STS operations.

Now that the Federal election is over, we need to think about the upcoming provincial election. The SSM Seniors' Strategy will be out on

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*President's Message continued*

November 13. This may help guide our efforts as we deal with a new Minister of Seniors on issues older adults continue to face across the province.

I appreciate Chapter Presidents inviting me to visit their Chapter meetings. It is a great opportunity to update our members on the Committee work of the Executive and also a time to ask questions and, more importantly for me, an opportunity to meet new members.

As we prepare for the onset of winter, best wishes to everyone in

all your endeavours. Soon we will be celebrating a festive time of year and the Executive would like to wish you and your families a wonderful Holiday Season and Happy New Year in 2020.

Our next Executive meeting dates are January 8-9, 2020. For more information about any of our programs, initiatives, or how we can support you in your Chapters, please do not hesitate to call the STS Office at 306-373-3879 or visit our website at [www.sts.sk.ca](http://www.sts.sk.ca). You can also contact me at [sunil.pandila@sasktel.net](mailto:sunil.pandila@sasktel.net) or 306-630-8866

## Budget, Finance and Audit

**Don Gabel**

The Committee met on October 22 in order to review the Operating and the current financial position of the STS Operating and the STS Extended Health Fund. We reviewed the Statement of Operations as of September 30, 2019. We continue to have a good financial position in the Operating Fund showing Net Revenues of \$156,456.60. This is an increase of \$15,000 from a year ago. This healthy surplus is due to the performance of surpluses from the Extended Health and Dental Plan. All expenditures are below budget.

Our Extended Health and Dental Plan is doing very well in year two of the agreement. We have a surplus of \$896,454.06 for the period ending September 30, 2019. More details will be provided in that report.

The Contingency Fund had investment income of \$14,979.10 for a fund balance of \$1,246,133.10.

As of September 30, 2019, STS Membership is 11,706.

The Committee will continue to provide oversight to budget expenditures.

## Group Benefits

**Maxine Stinka**

The Committee reviewed the Summary of Health Revenue and Claims for the Extended Health Fund for the first three months of the second year of the contract with Saskatchewan Blue Cross (July 1, 2019 – September 30, 2019). The report indicated that our Benefit Plan is in very good shape. The Health revenue was approximately \$2.5 million; claims approximately \$1.8 million; and, administration charges about \$93,000 for a surplus of about \$600,000. Drug costs were almost \$1 million. Revenue for the Dental Plan was approximately \$1.5 million; claims approximately \$1.2 million; and administration approximately \$58,000 for a surplus of approximately \$270,000. The total surplus for the first three months was almost \$900,000. The results are better than expected and will be ahead of schedule by the end of the fiscal year, if this continues.

Total membership in one or both of the Health and Dental Plans as of November 1, 2019, was 8,140 down from 8,151 as of September 1, 2019, but up from 7,894 November 1, 2018.

### Superannuates Make A Difference

**Adeline Wuschenny**

Twenty STS Regina Chapter members volunteered their time to help the Regina Public School teachers with registration at their Teachers' Conference held at the International Trade Centre in Regina on October 18, 2019. This provided teachers time to attend the sessions that interested them.



### Assistant Executive Secretary

The STS Executive would like to announce that Mr. Murray Wall, a recently retired STF Senior Administrative Staff member, has been hired as the STS Assistant Executive Secretary for the period from January 1, 2020, to June 30, 2020.

The STS office will be closed for the holidays at noon on December 20, 2019, and will reopen January 6, 2020.

# ACER-CART

Marie LeBlanc-Warick

## ACER-CART Priorities 2019-2020

1. ACER-CART will, in collaboration with like-minded organizations as appropriate,
  - a. monitor the federal government's implementation of a universal, public, comprehensive, accessible and portable Pharmacare program,
  - b. closely monitor the 10-year bilateral health funding agreements with the provinces and territories,
  - c. oppose privatization of health-care services by monitoring the federal government's support of the provisions of the Canada Health Act to ensure that Canadians receive universal accessibility of medical care without extra charges.
2. ACER-CART will monitor and continue to collaborate with like-minded organizations to oppose any federal legislation that would lead to the demise of defined benefit pension plans.
3. ACER-CART will collaborate with like-minded organizations to encourage the development and the implementation a National Seniors Strategy.
4. ACER-CART will seek to elevate the profile and the value of a national Association in our provincial associations.
5. ACER-CART will seek to extend our relationships with CTF-FCE.

## National Pharmacare Program

Background documents released by the Liberal party during the federal election promised they would negotiate with the provinces and territories "to seek a mandate to design and implement universal Pharmacare". The Liberal party platform said they would be "guided" by the recommendations of Dr. Eric Hoskins Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare, but they did not explicitly endorse them. Will the government contemplate a more limited plan designed to "fill in the

gaps" in existing drug coverage, as favoured by the Conservative Opposition, or will the exigencies of a minority government affect the outcome?

At issue are costs for the program, if established. The Liberal platform said all of the health promises – including money for mental health, better access to family physicians, as well as Pharmacare – will cost the federal treasury \$6 billion over the next four years. Dr. Hoskins final report proposed an initial list of common and essential drugs by January 1, 2022, at a cost of \$3.5 billion per year.

The Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Innovative Medicines of Canada, who represent the pharmaceutical industry, have and will lobby heavily to diminish or eliminate a comprehensive, universal single payer public pharmacare program.

## Advocacy

Sue Amundrud

Discussions at our October Committee meeting focused on two of our goals: to monitor and identify ongoing issues that may affect our membership and to collaborate with ACER-CART, SSM and STF to provide leadership for issues that could impact our membership.

With respect to the first goal, our discussions centered on the challenges each Chapter is facing in getting new retirees involved in the organization. Are new retirees volunteering in other ways in the community? Are we, as individual

Chapters, providing activities or initiatives that meet the needs of new retirees? What might we do differently? We encourage you to have similar discussions in your Chapter. We would be interested to hear your conclusions.

We see the collaboration with SSM and STF coming into play as we move towards a provincial election in October of 2020. With the STF report on their Re-Imagine Education initiative due to be released on November 4 and SSM Seniors' Strategy to follow in mid-November,

we decided to leave our discussion on specific advocacy initiatives of the STS until we have had an opportunity to review those reports and determine how we can best match up with and/or support the initiatives of those partners. We expect to have more to report after our January 2020 meeting.

In the meantime, if you have thoughts about specific areas where you think the STS should be playing an advocacy role, we encourage you to email the STS Office at sts@sts.sk.ca with your suggestions.

# Annual General Meeting

Jane Isinger and Doug Still

The STS Annual General Meeting will be held at the Travelodge Hotel in Saskatoon from May 12-14, 2020. The Committee continues to plan the event based on feedback from evaluations completed at the 2019 AGM.

The format is similar to last year, starting with the Tuesday evening registration and program. The mixer activity will see Delegates assigned to a table for the first part of the evening's events with some activities being planned this year as ice breakers. This is an excellent opportunity for Delegates from across the province to meet and interact with each other. Agenda items include candidates' presentations, followed by the presentation of Chapter Membership Growth Awards and the recognition of

Chapter Award Recipients. Stemming from Delegate feedback, there will be no entertainment Tuesday evening.

Much of the day Wednesday involves the five interest sessions. Planning continues and information will appear early in 2020 when the topics and presenters have been confirmed. For the banquet that evening we are awaiting confirmation regarding an entertainer. A key part of the evening is the presentation of Honorary Life Memberships. The deadline for submission of names is February 1.

The Thursday morning business session will see the presentation of the 2020-21 budget, Committee reports and resolutions. The deadline for resolutions is March 1. As part of the

reporting process, Chapter Presidents are reminded to consult the template for completing their annual Chapter activity reports, copies of which were provided at the Chapter Presidents' Meeting on October 24. If you do not have a template, please check with your STS Executive liaison.

If you have never been a Delegate, please consider contacting your local Chapter to advise of your interest. The AGM is a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the organization and to energize members at the local level.

Please note that the formula for Delegate numbers changed last year: two Delegates for the first sixty-five members or portion thereof and one delegate for each additional sixty-five paid members or portion thereof. The information accompanying the Chapter rebate cheques sent recently to Chapter Treasurers will have the most recent information about membership numbers.

## Councillors

**Maxine Stinka**

The STS was represented at the STF Councillor Conference in Saskatoon October 24-26, 2019, by eight councillors. One of the first items of business was the introduction of the new STF logo along with its meaning. Those wanting to see this new logo can find it on the STF website ([www.stf.sk.ca](http://www.stf.sk.ca)). It will replace the "tree of knowledge" that has been used for many years.

The keynote speaker on Friday was Annie Kidder, Executive Director of People for Education. Her presentation was followed by six different breakout sessions: "Using Evidence for Advocacy and Policy Change", "In Hindsight . . . Pension and Benefits Insights You Should Have Now", "The Future of Public Education",

"Teachers Support Well Teachers From Within", "What if They Had a Council Meeting and Nobody Attended?" and "Indigenous Resources". Councillors had the opportunity to attend three different sessions. The day ended with an Open Forum where a variety of questions were answered by members of the STF Executive and Staff.

The last day consisted of a Re-Imagine Education Session, Strategic Plan Consultations (Executive Vision and Strategic Planning), and a Provincial Collective Bargaining Update. There was also a discussion on the possible amendment of Bylaw 9 (Officers) and the rescinding of Policy 4.8 (Staffing).

## Resolutions

**Alan Laughlin**

Submitting resolutions to be debated at the AGM is a key part in affecting the decision-making process of the organization. Issues that are pertinent to superannuated teachers specifically and to seniors in general, need to be debated and acted upon. The deadline for resolutions is March 1, however they may be submitted at any time. If Chapters need assistance with wording a resolution, please contact the STS Office or the Resolutions Committee members.

# Recreation

Don Gabel, Alan Laughlin



The Recreation Committee is pleased to report that in 2019 all events except fishing were hosted. It is great to have that sort of enthusiasm for STS recreational events. For 2020 all event slots have been filled except fishing and Kaiser. These are one-day events that are fun to host. Please consider doing so. Over the last two years, Executive members have been attached to various events as liaison personnel. If a Chapter is interested in hosting an event, the liaison is ready and willing to assist in any way that they can.

## Executive Liaisons

**Art** – Alan Laughlin

**Bowling** – Terri Mitchell

**Bridge** – Fred Herron and Adeline Wuschenny

**Curling** – Sunil Pandila

**Fishing** – Alan Laughlin and Don Gabel

**Golf** – Maxine Stinka

**Kaiser** – Don Gabel

**Mah Jongg** – Helen Sukovieff

**Stitch 'N Quilt** – Sue Amundrud

Some interest has been expressed in pickleball becoming a provincial activity. If a Chapter is interested in hosting pickleball, please contact the STS Office.

Finally, thank you to the Yorkton Chapter for donating a beautiful banner to be displayed by Chapters who host the bowling event.

<p><b>Bowling 2020</b> Date: April 23-24, 2020 Host: Regina Chapter</p>	<p><b>Mah Jongg 2020</b> Date: May 7, 2020 Host: Northwest Chapter Location: Meadow Lake Seniors Activity Centre 406 – 5th Ave. West Meadow Lake Contact: Evie Danilkewich Email: eve.d@sasktel.net</p>	<p><b>Stitch 'N Quilt</b> Date: September 29-30, October 1, 2020 Host: Wakaw Chapter Location: Wakaw Recreational Centre, Wakaw Contact: Brenda Gabel Email: b_gabel@hotmail.com</p> <p>Hosts for Fishing and Kaiser are needed for 2020.</p>
<p><b>Bridge 2020</b> Date: April Host: Swift Current Chapter</p>	<p><b>Multi-Genre Art Workshop</b> Date: April 16-17, 2020 Host: Lloydminster Chapter Location: Legacy Centre 5101 46 St. Lloydminster, AB Contact: Huguette Kitchen Email: huguettekitchen@hotmail.com</p>	<p><i>If Chapters are interested in hosting provincial events please contact the STS office. We would also be open to any proposals for new events.</i></p>
<p><b>Curling 2020</b> Date: November 2-4, 2020 Host: Yorkton Chapter</p>		
<p><b>Golf 2020</b> Date: June 8-9, 2020 Host: Parkland Chapter Location: Canwood and Shellbrook Contact: Robert Hryniuk Email: dudley.hryniuk@sasktel.net</p>		

# Kaiser 2019

Alan Laughlin

Sixteen players gathered in North Battleford on October 8, 2019, to play Kaiser. Of the sixteen, eleven were teachers, one was a spouse of a teacher and four were guests. The winners for the women's teachers' division were Stella Ewanchuk (North Battleford) Brenda Gabel (Wakaw) and Mary Paladwar (Prince Albert). The winners of the men's division were Bill Dovell (Cudworth), Nestor Fransoo (North Battleford) and Don Gabel (Wakaw). It was a good day with good fun and good food!



Kaiser participants



Men's Division (l-r): Don Gabel, Bill Dovell, Alan Laughlin



Women's Division (l-r): Don Gabel, Stella Ewanchuk, Alan Laughlin

## Multi-Genre Art Workshop Registration

Hosted by Lloydminster Chapter

Date: Thursday, April 16 and Friday, April 17, 2020

Location: Legacy Center, 5101 46 St., Lloydminster

You will participate in a total of three sessions. All participants will partake in a Multi-media painting session on Thursday evening. On Thursday afternoon and Friday morning there will be three different art sessions offered. **Please indicate below your order of preference to attend.** You will be attending two of the three sessions. First registered, first served. Maximum number of participants is 45 people for entire workshop.

**Stencil** (samples on Facebook: Daysville Designs) \_\_\_\_\_

**Jewellery-making** \_\_\_\_\_

**Live Floral Arrangements** (Flowers on the Fly by Audina on Facebook) \_\_\_\_\_

Meals: (Thursday supper and Friday lunch) and supplies are included in cost.

Total Cost: \$165.00 (\$50.00 deposit required with registration form by March 6th. Balance required at workshop registration)

Cheques payable to: Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan Lloydminster Chapter

Please complete contact information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ STS Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email address (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Mail registration form and cheques to:

Madeline Robson

5908 24 Street Close • Lloydminster, AB, T9V 3J5

Block of rooms (2 queen beds) have been booked at the Holiday Inn and Suites in Lloydminster at \$105.00 plus tax. Offer expires March 1st. Phone number is 780-870-5050. Booking code is SRT. State the code when booking room, please.

# STS Special Support Process

The Drug Plan Integration process for STS has changed. Moving forward, Saskatchewan Blue Cross now requires a copy of your Special Support Program letter from the Provincial Government, when you have been requested to apply. This will ensure that STS is able to provide the maximum benefits under your Group Benefit Plan.

The Government of Saskatchewan has various programs in place

that provide reimbursement for certain health related expenses. Your Group Benefit Plan with STS provides reimbursement for Eligible Expenses after payment has been provided to you by such government programs. This includes the “Special Support Program” provided by the Government of Saskatchewan which provides reimbursement for drug costs for families who have high drug costs relative to their income.

This program is available to you once your drug expenses exceed 3.4% of your family income. Additional information on this program can be found on the Government of Saskatchewan web site at <http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/special-support>.

Saskatchewan Blue Cross provides assistance in ensuring that retirees, whose families may be eligible for this program, apply once family drug costs submitted exceed \$800 in any given year. When your drug claims submitted exceed this threshold in any given year, you will receive a letter from Saskatchewan Blue Cross with information on how to apply for this program.

Once you have applied to the Special Support Program and your application has been processed, Saskatchewan Health will send you a response to your application. A copy of this letter should be provided to Saskatchewan Blue Cross so they can update your records. You can mail in a copy, send a copy through the website or the mobile app.

If Saskatchewan Blue Cross has not received your response from Saskatchewan Health before your level of drug claims reach \$2,000 in the year, assessment of your drug claims will be pended until a copy of this letter is received. Once this information is received by Saskatchewan Blue Cross, pended drug claim payments that are eligible will then be processed.

Should you have any questions regarding the Special Support Program application process, you are invited to contact Saskatchewan Blue Cross at 1-800-667-6853.



## From The Editor's Desk

Joyce Hoffman

Another successful Chapter Presidents' Meeting is completed. Now it is time for you to consider contributing to *Outreach* by sharing events or happenings in your area. We are looking for submissions to "Spotlight on Superannuates" and "Superannuates Make a Difference". These reports can tell about the successes and/or achievements of individual Superannuates or accomplishments in your STS Chapter. Please send your submissions to the STS Office. I look forward to hearing from you.

## STS Executive 2019-20

President/Councillor	Sunil Pandila, Moose Jaw Chapter
Past-President/Councillor:	Maxine Stinka, Assiniboine Chapter
Vice-President/Councillor:	Don Gabel, Wakaw Chapter
ACER-CART Representative:	Marie LeBlanc-Warick, Wakaw Chapter
Executive Secretary	Fred Herron, Saskatoon Chapter
<i>Outreach</i> Editor	Joyce Hoffman, Regina Chapter
Councillors:	
Sue Amundrud	Carrot River Valley (Melfort & District) Chapter
Joyce Hoffman	Regina Chapter
Jane Isinger	Saskatoon Chapter
Alan Laughlin	The Battlefords and District Chapter
Doug Still	Regina Chapter
Members-At-Large:	
Diane Marchand	South Central Chapter
Lyle Markowski	Saskatoon Chapter
Terri Mitchell	Yorkton Chapter
Devona Putland	Moosomin Chapter
Helen Sukovieff	Regina Chapter
Anna Wehrkamp	Carrot River Valley (Melfort & District) Chapter
Adeline Wuschenny	Regina Chapter

## STS Office Reminders

- Saskatchewan residents who are 65 years or older can apply for the Saskatchewan Seniors' Drug Plan. If you are approved by the Seniors' Drug Plan, you will receive a confirmation letter from the Ministry of Health. STS Group Benefit Planholders who are eligible for the Saskatchewan Seniors' Drug Plan may be eligible for a reduced premium by providing the STS Office with a copy of the Seniors' Drug Plan confirmation letter.

For information on the Saskatchewan Seniors' Drug Plan, please speak with your pharmacist or contact the Seniors' Drug Plan office at 1-800-667-7581. If you live in Regina please call 306-787-3317.

- For any changes to your address and/or Group Benefits coverage, please contact the STS Office directly at 306-373-3879 or [sts@sts.sk.ca](mailto:sts@sts.sk.ca).
- If you are on a temporary contract and wish to suspend your STS Group Benefits, please contact the STS Office via email prior to the 15th of the month to be effective the 1st of the following month.
- Please make sure that you are using the correct email address for the STS: [sts@sts.sk.ca](mailto:sts@sts.sk.ca).



To control costs, one copy is sent to households where both spouses are members. If this is not satisfactory, please contact the STS Office in Saskatoon.

Please email the STS Office if you wish to receive notification when it is posted on the website instead of receiving a hard copy.

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