

Bulletin to Branches 2010-06

June 30, 2010

Congress 2010 report – a growing family of volunteers: a resounding success

The Congress 2010 evaluations are in! We received 138 written evaluations (see results chart enclosed) and they all point in one direction: Congress 2010 was a resounding success!

Aside from the minor glitches that can be expected in an event of this size, it seems that everyone involved came away with a positive opinion. I received many words of thanks for a job well done. I thank all of those who took the time to come see me or write to congratulate the National Office staff.

Personally, I was very pleased with the results of my first-ever Congress and I am already looking forward to next year's here in Ottawa.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Nova Scotia branches for their input and their generosity. I also would like to thank all the delegates and observers for your efforts and for being part of such a successful event! I look forward to welcoming you to Ottawa in 2011.

A few of the testimonies I have received:

I am left with a very positive impression of the congress that took place in Halifax . I feel invigorated about things to come. I would like to thank you and congratulate you for your performance as the MC for the banquet and for the way in which you led your team. Your colleagues at the National Office were very effective and professional. I particularly would like to point out the very pleasant manner in which they dealt with the volunteers. A big thank you to all!

Yvan (Vigneault) PAO Quebec



Well what an interesting conference for me! As I thought, you have a tough battle ahead but I think a good new board to work with. That should make a huge job manageable. I thought everything went for the most part quite smoothly so good planning and good hotel so my compliments.

Jean Graham, President, Red Deer Branch, Alberta

On behalf of the branches' delegates to the 2010 Convention, please convey to all of your staff our thanks for a great job under very demanding conditions. It is amazing what is done and how often we forget the sacrifice that is made beyond just doing "a job".

Graham Weber, RSO Western ON

I would also like to thank our affinity partners, who sponsored social events and participated in the mini tradeshow. Another reason that Congress was a success was because of their involvement and generosity.

FSNA's new National Board of Directors (NBOD)

Delegates to Congress 2010 elected Hélian Lizotte (Que.) as National President; Gary Oberg (Alta.) as First National Vice-President; Les Chipperfield (P.E.I.) as Second National Vice-President and Julie Spencer (B.C.) as Third National Vice-President. Stan Hrabarchuk became the Immediate Past National President.

As of June 18, 2010, the national directors were as follows:

Newfoundland and Labrador - Derm Coady
Nova Scotia - Allan MacIntyre
New Brunswick - Robert Kirkpatrick
Prince Edward Island – Vacant
Québec – Vacant
Ontario/Nunavut - Richard Poersch
Manitoba/North Western Ontario - Joe Sanderson
Saskatchewan - Bill Taylor
Alberta/NWT - Valerie Katarey
British Columbia/Yukon - John Finn

Non-voting director ex officio: Sylvia Ceacero, Executive Director.

Leaving NBOD after great service to FSNA and with our deep appreciation were: Dennis Jackson (Immediate Past National President), Pat King (First National Vice-President), Allan Fenske (Third National Vice-President) and Paul Cadeau (Director, Nova Scotia).



Sitting, from left to right: Julie Spencer, Stan Hrabarchuk, Hélian Lizotte, Gary Oberg, and Les Chipperfield. Standing, from left to right: Allan MacIntyre, Robert Kirkpatrick, Joe Sanderson, Derm Coady, Richard Poersch, John Finn, Valerie Katarey, Bill Taylor, and Sylvia Ceacero.

In accordance with our by-laws, Gary Oberg, First National Vice-President and Chair of the Governance and Nominations Committee, is calling for elections in PEI and Quebec. We are hoping to have the two National Directors for these provinces elected by August, so they can join the NBOD in September.

Insurance coverage for branches

In response to some of the questions raised at Congress, a description of the insurance coverage for branches is enclosed for your information. The National Office annual insurance policy provides some coverage for all non-incorporated branches. A copy of the policy that is in effect until October 1, 2010, was mailed to all non-incorporated branches late last year.

Changes to the Pensioners' Dental Service Plan (PDSP)

On June 1, the President of the Treasury Board (TB) of Canada announced that pensioners' contributions to the Pensioners' Dental Service Plan will increase from their current rate, beginning with the deduction from pension payments for September 2010.

FSNA's National President at the time, as well as Charlotte Roy, Research and Communications Officer and I were informed of this news via teleconference a few hours prior to the public announcement by Stockwell Day, President of TB.

Pensioners' contributions to the PDSP are increasing to a 50-50% cost-sharing ratio of PDSP costs (see table below). This is a change from the 60%-40% cost-sharing arrangement in effect from the inception of this Plan on January 1, 2001.

Pensioners' monthly contributions that had been reduced as of March 2006 will be brought back to their 2001 level, beginning this fall.

Members who joined the PDSP between January 2001 and February 2006 have already paid contributions at rates similar to the contributions coming into effect for October 2010 coverage.

A secondary part of this news is the possibility for pensioners who have joined the Plan in the last three years to cancel their membership before completing the normal mandatory three-year participation in the PDSP. It must be noted that a member who terminates his membership in the PDSP at any time may not join the Plan again at a later date.

Category of coverage	From	To
Pensioner only	\$12.50 monthly	\$16.00 monthly
Pensioner and one eligible family member	\$25.50 monthly	\$31.96 monthly
Pensioner and more than one eligible family member	\$36.20 monthly	\$47.96 monthly

Since PDSP contributions are due the month preceding the month of coverage, the higher contributions will be deducted from pension payments in September 2010 for the increased cost of coverage starting on October 1, 2010.

The reasons given by government representatives for the need to increase pensioners' contributions to the PDSP are the higher cost of the Plan due to increased membership and the higher cost of dental services and technologies. It must be noted that a number of new members also have eligible dependants, whether spouse or children.

In this instance, the results of research conducted by staff are consistent with the research results cited by Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS). In particular, it must be noted that many employers, both in the public and private sector, do not provide a dental plan for their retirees. In fact, the provision of post-retirement benefits by employers has been declining in recent years.

Both, the Immediate Past National President and I have been speaking to our members about the advocacy discussions we had with TBS officials in November and January. Both times, the TBS's Assistant Secretary Pensions and Benefits Sector made verbal references to program reviews, especially following the 2009 federal budget. No details were provided to FSNA nor could any be expected until government decisions had been made, as officials cannot divulge details of the budget cuts in advance of the government's announcements.

On hearing about the increase from TBS representatives, FSNA requested the data on the growth in members and Plan costs since 2001. Other than through an entry in the Public Accounts of Canada, the costs of this Plan have not been made public.

There is no annual report on the PDSP, such as for the federal pension plans. The PDSP is managed by the TBS and administered by Sun Life Financial, on contract to the Government of Canada.

FSNA has proposed candidates for appointment to the Board of Management of the Plan but, otherwise, FSNA does not participate in the management of the Plan.

Data on PDSP usage and costs are reported to TBS by Sun Life on a regular basis but, in spite of early and frequent requests to TB Ministers by successive presidents of FSNA, those data have not been shared with plan members nor have they been discussed with FSNA in their specifics.

Following the announcement of a contribution increase, FSNA is communicating with members to help them ensure that they do not make a hasty, and potentially costly decision to leave the Plan.

Members must analyze their current situation versus the situation in September to assess whether remaining or withdrawing from the Plan is advisable for their particular circumstances.

FSNA will intensify its advocacy efforts with the TB Ministers and senior officials to obtain timely data on PDSP growth in members and covered dependants, as well data on the rise in costs due to other factors (usage, increases in the cost of dental goods and services, new technologies, administration) and the impact of these factors on Plan costs.

It is important to note that the Pensioners Dental Services Plan is not a negotiated agreement. It is a plan that the government put into place for federal retirees in January 2001, following years of advocating by the FSNA. The PDSP is funded by the Government of Canada and by federal retirees who participate in the Plan voluntarily and pay the required monthly contributions.

The PDSP is not an insurer's plan. The only role played in this plan by an insurer is the provision of administrative services. Currently, Sun Life Financial administers the PDSP under contract to the Government of Canada. Under this contract, the PDSP Administrator applies the provisions of the Plan but does not determine those provisions. These provisions are entirely within the purview of the Government of Canada, although the FSNA may advocate for improvements. The results of advocating are generally uncertain and require sustained effort over time.

Despite its past successes, the Association is not a bargaining agent, nor are federal pensioners eligible to form a certified bargaining unit under federal labour legislation.

FSNA represents federal pensioners within the Advisory Committees on the federal pension plans and in the governance of the Public Service Health Care Plan. Through these bodies and otherwise, representatives of the Association are informed and consulted by senior government officials about changes to pensioners' benefits.

FSNA advocates on behalf of pensioners for better benefits for federal retirees, and it succeeds only through open discussion based on sound, reliable research. Further, the results of such efforts are subject to the government's judgment of its interest in increasing federal pensioners' benefits and the government's assessment of the willingness of Canadian taxpayers to fund these benefits in some measure.

As well, efforts need to be deployed to assess the immediate and future costs of any improvements FSNA may seek. In this respect, FSNA has sought and will continue to seek a more open exchange of information from the President of the Treasury Board of Canada about the costs of the PDSP and the factors that affect PDSP costs.

Further, to succeed in improving pensioners' dental benefits or in keeping costs low, FSNA needs to find allies who will support its efforts in this regard. Such allies might be found among Canada's political parties, other retiree groups, bargaining agents for the public sector or other interested Canadians. Establishing and cultivating these relationships will require a sustained effort over time.

FSNA is always aware of the tightrope it must walk when seeking improvements to federal pensioners' benefits, since Canadian taxpayers are often resentful of the benefits available to federal pensioners that are not widely available to other Canadian retirees.

Despite the challenges, FSNA will continue its advocating efforts for the protection and enhancement of federal pensioners' interests.

Meetings with stakeholders

Following the PDSP announcement by TBS, I, as executive director, was entrusted by the NBOD to approach Treasury Board officials to obtain detailed information on why the government had decided to change the contribution of pensioners' from 40% to 50%. As well, I will be meeting in early July with the presidents of the three major unions: PIPSC, PSAC and CAPE to discuss this issue, as well as the PSHCP negotiations. An update will be provided in the July Bulletin to Branches.

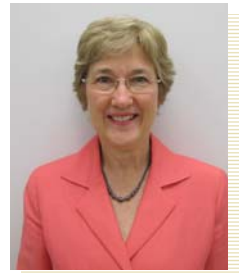
Advocacy initiatives

Please find attached the summary of advocacy initiatives undertaken in May.

Vera Yuzyk – Director, Government Relations

Vera Yuzyk was hired as the Director, Government Relations on June 14th.

With over 20 years expertise in politics, government relations/ advocacy, partnership building, communications, event planning, fundraising and research, Vera’s experience and qualifications are extensive. She brings to this position a sound understanding of parliamentary and government relations having worked for federal and provincial parliamentarians and senior government officials, and a passion for politics and public affairs, which will serve FSNA well in this time of transition and evolution.



Vera also has an impressive record in advocacy on behalf of local, national and international groups representing cancer, gender, human rights, cultural, educational and charitable interests. Further, she has a demonstrated track record in communications and media relations. She has organized media events (TV, radio and print) and developed communications’ materials such as invitations, pamphlets, newsletters, position papers, reports, articles, speech and briefing notes and web content.

Vera holds a Master’s Degree in History from Ottawa University and a certificate in Public Relations from Algonquin College., Some of her responsibilities will be to present current, in-depth information on FSNA’s priority issues to the appropriate stakeholders, internally and externally and will work to obtain their cooperation , by identifying common interests and issues and by developing an action plan to pursue them in a manner that is beneficial to our membership. Vera will also raise awareness among members of FSNA’s advocacy efforts and results. As such, she will develop and implement an overall member advocacy awareness and communication plan.

We are looking forward to having a government relations expert on our team who will assist FSNA in achieving its overall strategic goals and objectives.

Vera can be reached at vyuzyk@fsna.com

Gathoni Njuguna – Supervisor, IT Membership

Please welcome Gathoni Njuguna to FSNA. Gathoni accepted our offer of employment and started on June 14th as our new Supervisor, IT Membership.

Gathoni will lead our team of membership clerks and take ownership of the day-to-day administrative tasks performed in reference to FSNA membership.



Reporting to Kevin Armstrong, Manager IT Membership, she will also provide Web-based Membership System (WMS) support to FSNA branch users.

Gathoni joins us from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada where she was responsible for administering the operations of three not-for-profit member associations. This role allowed her to gain experience in the areas of membership , Web site maintenance, event planning, project management, database administration and client service. Gathoni is a graduate of Trent University and is currently enrolled in the CAE (Canadian Association Executive) program.

Gathoni can be reached at gnjuguna@fsna.com

National Board of Directors Minutes

The minutes of the June 14 and 18 2010 NBOD meetings will be available in July.

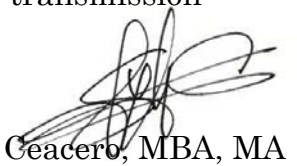
ON GUARD fall 2010 deadlines

Action The deadlines for the fall 2010 branch report information to arrive at the National Office are: Friday 20 August Membership changes (for non WMS branches)
Friday 27 August Branch Reports

The expected delivery period to members is 27 September – 8 October 2010.

Reports can be sent by e-mail to Françoise Gauthier (gauthier@fsna.com). Please include the **branch code** (i.e. NB64) as well as the **branch name** (i.e. Moncton) in the message **subject** window.

If you have not received an acknowledgement reply within two working days, call her or send her another e-mail, as this could indicate there was a transmission problem.


Sylvia Ceacero, MBA, MA
Executive Director

Attachments:

Congress 2010 evaluation
Insurance coverage for branches
Summary of advocacy initiatives undertaken in May

FSNA Congress 2010 - Attendee Evaluation						
	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Average Score/5
Q1: Congress 2010 was well organized						
# of respondents: 138						
# of answers:	2	5	23	55	53	4.1
Q2: Time periods allotted per subject matter were appropriate						
# of respondents: 132						
# of answers:	8	19	37	56	12	3.3
Q3: Questions were answered adequately						
# of respondents: 132						
# of answers:	1	9	19	80	23	3.9
Q4: Audience participation was constructive and helpful						
# of respondents: 129						
# of answers:	1	9	36	62	21	3.7
Q5: The workshop on governance was informative						
# of respondents: 131						
# of answers:	12	24	36	43	16	3.2
Q6: I appreciated meeting the affinity partners						
# of respondents: 135						
# of answers:	0	9	25	67	34	3.9
Q7: The meeting space, catering and hotel service were satisfactory						
# of respondents: 136						
# of answers:	4	11	26	60	35	3.8
Q8: Overall, I was satisfied with the results achieved at Congress						
# of respondents: 138						
# of answers:	0	8	15	85	30	4.0

Insurance Coverage for Branches

A copy of FSNA's declaration of insurance from the Lombard General Insurance Company was recently mailed to all non-incorporated branches. This policy provides protection to branches in three different areas: Part III Commercial General Liability, Part IV Non Owned Automobile Liability, and Part VIII Non-Profit Directors and Officers Liability. Each section provides coverage up to \$2 million shared between National Office and the unincorporated branches.

The first area, Commercial General Liability (CGL), provides protection in case of a lawsuit from a third party resulting from the negligent actions of a director, officer, employee, or volunteer. This includes coverage for: libel, slander or defamation of character; invasion of privacy; payment of third party medical expenses; and, damage to premises that are rented in the course of activities. Activities covered under this policy must have less than fifty (50) attendees and cannot include the serving of alcohol.

The second coverage is called Non Owned Automobile Liability. Lombard's policy protects FSNA's legal liability for bodily injury or property damages to third parties as a result of staff or volunteers using their own vehicles while on FSNA business. In the unfortunate event of a claim, the volunteer's own vehicle insurance would be primary and the Lombard policy would be secondary, once the first insurance coverage was fully claimed. Note that only third party claims are covered under this section, not volunteers and/or their vehicles. Furthermore, another volunteer riding as a passenger would not be covered under the Lombard policy, but would be referred to the Accident Benefits portion of the personal vehicle insurance policy.

The third type of coverage is Directors and Officers Liability (D&O) insurance. This protects board members from personal liability for decisions made or actions taken on behalf of the Association above and beyond the CGL.

Please note that property insurance and special events insurance are not covered under the Lombard policy. Branches wishing to obtain these additional types of coverage are encouraged to contact our insurance broker, LMS ProLink, at 1-800-NO-DOUBT. Premiums for additional coverage are not reimbursed by FSNA National.

Incorporated branches, as separate legal entities, must arrange for their own coverage in all these areas. However, FSNA will reimburse CGL and D&O premiums up to the same coverage limits provided to non-incorporated branches.

For additional information, please contact Paula Gilmore at the National Office, 613-745-2559 ext. 225 or gilmore@fsna.com.

**Tracking FSNA's Advocacy across Canada
May 2010**

ED = Executive Director
LTC = Long Term Care
NBOD = National Board of Directors
ND = National Director

PAO = Provincial Advocacy Officer
PDSP = Pensioner's Dental Service Plan
PS = Public Service
PSHCP = Public Service Health Care Plan

RSO = Regional Services Officer
SDB = Supplementary Death Benefit
SR = Standing Resolution

Date	Issue	Means	Stakeholders	FSNA Advocate	Outcome
May 3	Provincial seniors' drug cost assistance program and the National Pharmaceutical Strategy	Letter	Minister of Health and Wellness, PE	PAO for PE	10 new drugs added to the Seniors drug formula, including Lucentis, which we had previously requested to the Minister.
May 5	Expanding the provincial drug formulary to include Lucentis or drug to treat wet age-related macular degeneration	Letter	Minister of Health	PAO for NS as representative on the Group of IX	
May 6	Alberta pharmaceutical strategy	Letter	Minister of Health and Wellness	ND for AB & NT	
May 6	Request a meeting	Letter	Minister of Seniors and Community Supports	ND for AB & NT	Met with the Minister on June 1st
May 10	Counsel of Elders	Meeting	Minister for Seniors	PAO for QC	This group has disbanded – no longer a political voice for seniors.

Date	Issue	Means	Stakeholders	FSNA Advocate	Outcome
May 13	Seniors Housing – supportive living, retirement homes act, older women’s network housing forum network	Meeting	Ontario Advisory Committee on Seniors Housing	ND for ON	
May 18	End of life, seniors abuse	Meeting	Minister of Health	PAO for QC and section representative	
May 26	Invitation to attend a CNSO meeting	Letter	Minister of State (Seniors)	ED	
May 26	World Elder Abuse Awareness Day	Co-Chaired meeting	Senior’s Secretariat	PAO PE	
May 27	Proposed changes to the Supplementary Health Benefits	Letter	Minister of Health and Social Services and Minister of Finance	ND for AB & NT and NT Coordinator, MLAs	