



President's Message – December 2013

Bernard Jordaan

October and November have been another busy two months. We traveled to visit Zone 3, Paris Ontario, Zone 9, Durham and Zone 40, in North Bay.

In between I had meetings with various government agencies, government representatives and fulfilled requests to speak to groups and clubs celebrating and promoting important events in their calendar. Setting up U.S.C.O. Booths and attending one day symposiums and conventions. All are of equal importance and duration in promoting our organization. To our members that organized all their very successful events, I say thank you. You did a tremendous job in keeping the U.S.C.O. the focus of these activities.

After our visit to Zone 3 in Paris, Lois and I had an opportunity to seek out and visit the "birthplace" of our Organization. It was a rain drenched afternoon and after getting lost, we finally found **Five Oaks**, where it all started. We had to navigate back roads, in "farm country" before we eventually found this landmark.

The building where 57 years ago our founding fathers and mothers got together to give birth to the best Volunteer Senior Organization, anywhere. This place, **Five Oaks**, is still very isolated, now used as a "retreat" for different groups and organizations. The original building still stands. I find it incredible that from such isolation, we now have clubs and groups in every part of Ontario. What gratitude and respect we owe to those pioneers of the U.S.C.O.

On October 23, 2013, I visited Queens Park for a meeting with Julia Munro, health critic for the P.C. I urged her and her party to support Bill 109, the appointment of an Ombudsman for Health and Long term care. She expressed reservations, as to whether this will not be another "pit" for tax payers money. My response was that it was up to them, the people that work for us, to ensure this does not happen. I again appeal to every one of our members to contact your M.P.P.'s and tell them to support this Bill, which is one of our 2013 resolutions in our BRIEF to the Provincial Government. The 2nd reading of this Bill is in February; you are all invited to go to Queens Park that day.

To all our members, whatever you are celebrating this time of year, Lois and I wish you Joy, Good Health and Happiness.

Merry Christmas and have a Happy New Year.

Bernard



Five Oaks today...where it all began for the USCO!



From Left to Right: Premier Kathleen Wynne, USCO President Bernard Jordaan, USCO Executive Member Lois Jordaan, Hon Mario Sergio and Hon John Milloy.

On November 13, 2013, in Waterloo, Premier Kathleen Wynne, Minister for Seniors, Hon Mario Sergio and Minister for Government services, Hon John Milloy, announced a New Grant program, to support seniors across the Province.

President Bernard was asked to represent the U.S.C.O, speak and be part of this announcement. This was a real honor for our organization, as we were the only senior representatives given center stage at this event. Vice President Gerry Graham and board member Lois Jordaan were also present, along with Leo Gallant, member from U.S.C.O. club # 1352.

The grant program will be administered by the Ontario Senior Secretariat. It is hoped that this new program will be ready in April / May 2014. Grants will range from \$500.00 to \$10,000.00. It was mentioned that we had brought continued pressure for some kind of financial assistance and they listened. A good day for seniors.