



President's Message – March 2016

Gerry Graham

It's March already and the temperature here is 52 degrees!! However your USCO board has been busy. Our convention is August 8th to 10th in Cambridge. We expect a great turnout this year with the convention committee lining up great speakers and presenters.

Most importantly we are getting together with other clubs and sharing conversations on what they are doing. This is what the USCO is all about. Now is a good time for our clubs to have discussions on resolutions to put forth to the provincial government.

We also send our Federal resolutions directly to the federal government as well as the National Pensioner Federation to keep them informed as they keep us informed. The government of the day wants to know what seniors are saying and what better way than through the USCO. With the provincial government we always get a response to our brief and now expect to get a response from the new Federal Government.

The annual Walk-A-Thon fundraiser is in May and we really need all the support we can get for this event. This helps us with our ongoing business at the USCO. Your USCO had a lot of meetings getting Hug a Senior up and running and we appreciate donations no matter how small or large.

We have been pushing for over a year to get free parking at our hospitals and as you have probably heard the Ontario government is now freezing the cost of parking at all hospitals at \$10 a day. The USCO believes fees should not be a barrier to health care. The announcement stated that any charges over \$10 will be reduced by 50%. This will start October 1st.

All hospitals that charge over \$10 must offer 5, 10 and 30 passes at 50% of the daily rate with in and out privileges. This according to Eric Hoskins will benefit 900,000 people. There are 150 hospitals across Ontario. This does not help folks that live in small communities, cities and towns; although it is a start we were looking for a formula that would help all low income and seniors in Ontario.

Many of us have heard or seen commercials on shingles and it is horrible. A vaccination is all it takes to keep a senior out of a hospital. Shingles causes terrible suffering to its victims.

We have been meeting with Catherine Paquette from Merck Canada Inc. and we urge the free vaccine prevention for those who cannot afford it. We have already agreed to this through our resolutions at last year's convention.

We are constantly reminding our seniors on how to stay healthy, connected and active in their communities. In 2012 the number of car drivers injured or killed on our roads decreased; however, the same was not true for vulnerable road users. The present laws do not adequately penalize the death or injury of vulnerable road users. (People who use the road, but are not in vehicles). We have

a growing population of seniors and in order to protect them we are suggesting increasing penalties by using the demerit point system, taking away licenses and significantly increasing fines.

The information I have is the average careless driver was fined and their insurance company paid for any injury or fatality of the vulnerable road user. By increasing the penalty, we increase the safety of vulnerable road users and make drivers have second thoughts about driving safer and slower. If everyone respects the Vulnerable Road User Law, insurance, health care and hospital cost will be reduced saving the tax payers as well as the government of Ontario. The USCO is firmly on side with the Vulnerable Road User Law. We just want to stay healthy and ride our bikes in a safe environment.

There are 12 of us on the USCO Board and we are all volunteers - we do not get paid like some other organizations. We also donate to the USCO. Make a donation to a good cause and great organization.

Take care.

Enjoy Life Today, Yesterday Is Gone & Tomorrow May Never Come



President Gerry Graham

