

Happy Holidays from your Branch

We hope this update finds you well and enjoying life, whether that's appreciating the wildlife out your window, visiting with those around you, doing puzzles, reading a book or just enjoying our Manitoba sunshine.

This fall we held our Fall General Meeting once again being treated to the amazing soups, sandwiches and dainties from the Pinawa Alliance Church members; benefitting from [speakers](#) Kristen Ticknor and Kathy Picard ("The Importance of Nutrition and Exercise as we age"); and honouring Chuck Vandergraaf for his dedication and commitment to our Branch serving as our long-time President. At the time of reading, we will also have hosted a fall Coffee House in Lac du Bonnet (December 4) and will be planning our spring activities including a spring Coffee House in Beausejour and our AGM in April.



On a separate note, we are so grateful and excited to have Marg Stokes join our team as our new Secretary. If you're interested, we are always on the lookout for new Board Members and Friends of the Board. We have an amazing Association working hard to [advocate](#) on our behalf and we want to ensure our members are aware of what is going on and have the opportunity to be involved. Please don't hesitate to send us an email or phone call telling us what you think and what you would like to see. We also encourage you to take advantage of the information available on our [webpage](#).

At our Fall General Meeting we were asked by our members who have Belairdirect (MEDOC) travel insurance about replacement Belairdirect cards. We have investigated this issue and received the following update.

- Your Belairdirect (MEDOC) cards are sent out along with your annual Belairdirect (MEDOC) renewal information. Once you receive the card, you will need to write your policy number on it. Your policy number remains unchanged from your previous MEDOC number.
- For members who opted to receive their renewal electronically, Belairdirect sent an email titled "IMPORTANT information about your Belairdirect travel insurance policy." Inside this email, you will find a link labeled "Travel Insurance Card." Clicking this link opens a PDF document displaying a generic Belairdirect travel insurance card. You may print this card and manually write your policy number on it. Please remember that your policy number is the same as the MEDOC number you have used previously.
- If you do not have access to a printer, you can contact Belairdirect at 1-866-606-3362 to mail you a travel insurance card. Once you receive the card, ensure you write your policy number on it. Your policy number remains unchanged from your previous MEDOC number.

For additional questions or concerns, please contact Karen Ross at easternmanitoba@federalretirees.ca.

Another concern that has been raised is regarding payment of eyeglasses under our Public Service Health Care Plan (PSHCP). For those who are age 65 or over, and are residents of the Province of Manitoba, members have been required to submit claims to MB Health first and then to the PSHCP. Without this, the claim is denied based on the lack of submitted documentation about a Province of Manitoba [medical device subsidy program](#). The concern is that the service standards for the processing of claims is 8 weeks, however 3-to-6-month delays are not unusual imposing a burden on our members during the delayed period prior to payment of the claim by the PSHCP. A request has been submitted to our National Office to examine the situation for a resolution.

If you know of current or retired members of the federal public service, Canadian Armed Forces or RCMP, please **encourage them to come to an event** or check out our branch page at federalretirees.ca/easternmanitoba. Eligible members can also sign up to receive the latest news and resources from Federal Retirees? If you know of someone who may be interested, please [refer them to the Federal Retirees website](#) to get the following member benefits free of charge:

- Breaking news
- Monthly newsletter
- Branch invites
- A subscription to *Sage60*, our quarterly online magazine

We wish you a safe Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. Take care.

Your Eastern Manitoba Branch Board:

Alanna Wilcox, President

Marg Stokes, Secretary

Bob McCamis, Treasurer, WebMaster

Karen Ross, Advocacy Liaison Officer, Health & Benefits Officer

Alice Young, Membership