

Inside This Issue:

| mside mis issue. |
|------------------------|
| President's Message1 |
| Costs2 |
| "RailVets' News"2 |
| Tim Urbanovitch2 |
| Flower Fund3 |
| Marguerite Fisk3 |
| Norma Howard4 |
| Joyce Tilley4 |
| Joseph Gagne5 |
| Jim Leskewich5 |
| Muriel Hume5 |
| CN Pension Committee 6 |
| Vacant Positions7 |
| Belair Direct7 |
| Milestones8 |
| SCAMS8 |
| In Memorium9 |
| New Members9 |
| Save The Date10 |

I started this letter a couple of weeks ago but it was too cold - minus forty; I gave up and continued when it is a balmy plus nine - now too hot!

Lots has been happening. I attended the annual Directors' meeting in mid November in Montreal, the first in person meeting in four years thanks to covid. We also had the first session with most in person and eight or ten using video conference zoom.

The scholarship program requires a vote to continue every year. Scholarships will again be awarded in 2024 - five per region at \$1,500 each. Applications open mid April to August.

President's Message

As we are aware from their presentation at the meeting, there are discounts available for our members who purchase insurance through Belair Direct. They want to be sure our members know if they are currently Belair Direct policy holders and their renewal date isn't until later in the year they can call Belair now rather than wait for their renewal

until later in the year they can call Belair now, rather than wait for their renewal date, identify themselves as a CN pensioner and they may qualify for discounts starting immediately.

We have had a few changes in our executive ranks: Reg Hebert is now Past President; Bruce Anderson from Winnipeg is our current President; our very own one-of-three Mountain Regions Directors, Blake Olson is now First Vice-President; Wayne Greenland retired and now Ron Hewson is National Secretary. One position which recently became open is Editor for the national newsletter; if you or someone you know might be interested please contact me.

We had our election for the Edmonton council in November. Thanks Bruce Macdonald for doing the job of Vice-President for the last six years; he has stepped down and Cliff Gervais is our new Vice-President.

In December we had 196 attend our Christmas luncheon ... lots of visiting with past work mates!

Last year we honoured a few centenarians with five more expected this year.

Something I recently learned is if you want to get a message to someone in any Alberta hospital you can go to a link at Albertahealthservices.ca/info/wellwishes.aspx

You don't even need a room number, just type in the person's name and hospital and your message; then your message will be delivered.

Congratulations to Wanda and Evan who were honoured at the annual meeting of the Alberta Railway Museum. The museum is always looking for volunteers. Our thanks are extended to the museum for donating some door prizes to our organization.

I hope to see lots out for our February 14th general meeting and luncheon. More information on meetings can be found elsewhere in this newsletter. We also hope to maintain the current prices for our luncheons, picnics, etc. but the executive will need to make some hard decisions in the fall as prices continue to rise.

Enjoy the early spring!

Al Vodden

Page 2 Winter 2024

Your Executive

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General Meeting Luncheon Costs

This year the Railvets will again be hosting luncheons after the General Meetings on February 14th, April 10th, October 9th and our Christmas Gala on December 11th. In addition, we are planning to host our annual summer picnic in June, actual date and location to be confirmed. These events have been well received by our membership; it is great to see everyone come out and meet socially again, catching up on the news and events of our membership. Everybody is happy to see their retired buddies again. As you all know, providing a meal comes at a cost, we have kept our ticket prices for these luncheon meetings at \$10.00 per attendee, the exception is the Christmas Gala where tickets were priced at \$20.00 per attendee.

You are all aware that the cost of eating out has escalated quite a bit in the past few years. We are now at a point where we also have to address this cost issue. We want to make you aware that the executive will be reviewing this matter in the fall and will announce any changes then.

Receiving "RailVets' News"

This edition of "RailVets' News" is the first to be sent only to those who have informed us they still wish to receive the newsletter.

We understand, for various reasons, not everyone can receive their copy by email and printed copies will still be available. We will print and mail out to those who want to receive the newsletters by postal service but Peter Treloar must be advised, phone 587-338-6014 or email petertre76@gmail.com. Those who do not contact us for postal service or provide a current email address will not be receiving any future editions.

In our intent to cut costs of about \$6000 per year for postal-service newsletters, less than ten percent of our members have replied to our request for information regarding receipt of their newsletters. If you know of any members who do not have an email address or a <u>current</u> email address on file, and they did not receive this newsletter and still want to receive "RailVets' News", please advise them to contact Peter.

Tim Urbanovitch

Because of a conflict with personal obligations and commitments, Tim Urbanovitch has resigned from the RailVets executive and his roles with the National and Mountain Region Councils. During his tenure Tim was a real asset to our group, very much interested and involved and a vital part of our group. His contribution will be missed but we still hope to see him at our general meetings. Thanks for all your input and hard work Tim!



Winter 2024 Page 3

February Newsletter 2024 - Flower Fund Report

The Edmonton RailVets' likes to acknowledge members' milestone Birthdays and Anniversaries; we would like to send you flowers/gift card on your 85th, 90th, 95th, and 100th birthday and also on your 50th, 60th and 70th Wedding Anniversary. Between the months of September and December 2023, the Flower Fund had flowers delivered as follows:

| Month | Flowers | Gift Cards | No Contact | Birthdays | Anniversary |
|-----------|---------|------------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| September | 9 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 5 |
| October | 10 | 1 | 9 | 7 | 3 |
| November | 11 | 2 | 0 | 8 | 4 |
| December | 10 | 5 | 4 | 11 | 4 |



Note:

Recipients, No Contact - (not answering their phone, not responding to voicemail message, on vacation, contact information out of date, moved.)

Recipients, outside of the Edmonton area, will be sent a Gift Card in lieu of flowers, when their current address can be verified.

We cannot recognize your significant event unless we have the event data and your current address, please keep us informed – email Peter Treloar at petertre@gmail.com or phone 587-338-6014 to update your status.

Marguerite Fisk



Widow of Brian Fisk (CN Telecommunications [CNT], North Battleford, Calgary

briefly and Edmonton CN Tower). She was a CNT Teletype Operator in N. Battleford when she met Brian (he was the Station Manager) but had to resign when they were to marry as the CN policy at the time did not allow for any married women (think the 1940's here). When she wanted to return to the workforce, Marguerite applied to Air Canada for a Reservation Clerk position in their Ticket Office and was met with the same policy for married women only this time she persevered and became the first married woman to be hired for that, or any other position thus breaking that 'glass ceiling'. She was such a diligent worker, when she retired, three people were needed to fill

her shoes! She is truly an amaz-

ing Centenarian, very forward thinking and aware, keeping track of things with her iPad and smartphone, friendly and gracious.

BIRTHDAY

Another fun fact, in 2020 at age 96, Marguerite was offered a 2-year renewal for her Drivers' license! She declined saying she didn't want to drive with all the traffic in Calgary.

Wow, and I'm just hoping to be alive and well if I make it to 90!

Judy Woods

Norma Howard

Winter 2024

Mom had a wonderful 100th birthday, her sense of humor and wit were both evident. It was wonderful to hear her meet with long-time friends and reminisce.

Mom met her husband Lorne while working in a pulp mill in Powell River. Mom was active in different sport in Powell River and even coached a girls' basketball team. After the war, Dad found work on the railroad and they ended up in Jasper, where Lorne worked as a Locomotive Engineer. They were married in 1953 lived in Jasper there whole life, a great place as they both loved the outdoors. They enjoyed the outdoors, spent their free time developing their yard and garden as well as hiking the trails, camping and fishing. They both tried downhill and x-county skiing and enjoyed other sports including tennis, skating, swimming tobogganing, curling and bowling. They were very community minded, pitching in to help. Mom loved helping organize the plant sales and was on the seniors' bus committee, and helping with other activities in the town. They helped deliver meals, Mom's reasoning was this enabled her to check in on friends. She regularly called the ladies in her group, just a short chat to make sure they were okay, again checking in on friends. Active in the community without the need for recognition, we are so proud of our Mom.





Glenn and David Howard

Joyce Tilley

Joyce Tilley celebrated her 100th birthday with family and friends on August 12th (birthday Aug 14th) at the Strathmore Station Restaurant the Strathmore, AB. She was presented with a bouquet of flowers and the traditional CNPA crystal desk plaque to commemorate this special event. Joyce was pleased and surprised that the pensioners association had remembered her birthday. (Thank You to daughter Cheryl for making these presentation for us, the Edmonton Rail Vets)

Mom and her husband Howard (passed in 1994) started their CN career as an operator in Sunnynook, AB and his final job was as a train dispatcher in the Edmonton office. Unfortunately, Howard caught Polio which left him a paraplegic in a wheelchair for the rest of his life. Raising a family with your husband in a wheelchair in the fifties presented many obstacles and challenges. Mom bravely faced these challenges and overcame them with determination. Remarkably she was also a gardener, and in her "free" time she was active leader in church activities and sports that we siblings participated in a well as being the church secretary.



Every morning she dresses well, puts on her makeup and looks her best. Reading is her passion 9she still doesn't need glasses) and visiting with her family and grandchildren and great grandchildren highlights her day. Her memory is better than anyone's in the family. She still enjoys shopping, going out to restaurants, the mall and coming out to our farm. She has a full and busy life, and is dearly loved by her family.



Joyce is an inspiration to her family and everyone who meets her. We are so lucky to have her.

Cheryl Marshman,

Winter 2024 Page 5

Joseph Gagne



Joe was a heavy equipment operator heavily involved in the construction of the Alaska Highway while living in Ft. Nelson, BC. He also built the Westend Campground there, then owned and operated it from 1975-1988 with wife, Betty (the CN Telecommunications pensioner). Enjoyed his big day with family and friends.

The family sent a lot of information about Betty and her career (she trained most of the young ladies of that area to be telephone operators so that might be better for the National?) but not too much about Joe other than if it was a piece of

heavy equipment, he could operate it competently. If you want more I can possibly get them to send additional information.

Jim Leskewich

Diana and Andy Novak joined with family and friends at the Emerald Room Signature Sandman Hotel to celebrate Jim's 100th Birthday.

The flowers and the unique and lovely "Centenarian Crystal Train Plaque" presented by Diana, on behalf of the

CN Pensioners' Association and Alberta RailVets, are a wonderful and much appreciated gift for Jim.

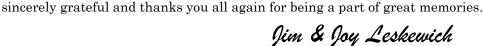
Many thanks to all the Executive Members of the CN Pensioners' Association and Edmonton Council RailVets for the lovely card and warm wishes.

Jim & his wife Joy took part in the CN 100th Celebrations and volunteered at NAR days at the Alberta Railway Museum for a few years in the NAR caboose where Jim had lots of stories to tell of his 27 years on the Northern Alberta Railway. Many of Jim's railway artifacts, books, and framed pictures have been donated to the Museum as well as his Conductor's uniform, hat, etc., and are showcased with his name. Also Jim & Joy were honoured to be selected as 'Railroaders in the Community' for donating hours of volunteering in the Community.

Jim has always been a very proud citizen of Canada having immigrated from Poland in 1929. Jim is a Veteran of WWII and served overseas. He is a 77 year member of the Kingsway Royal Canadian Legion # 175 & was still selling poppies before Covid; a Life Member of the RCAF; a Charter & Life Member #700 WING; a Charter & Life Member of Al

Shamal Shriners Association and Charter Member of the Legion of Honour.

100 years is a great Milestone for Jim and he has Miles of Memories. Jim is



Muriel Hume

Retired as head of Cost Analysis for the Atlantic Region after working out of the Moncton, NB office for 46 years. In addition to her (very accomplished) hobbies of painting and needlework, she played golf and was on a professional bowling team in Moncton. Her residence is filled with her talented piec-



es of art. She is a regular participant in the art classes offered to her community. She related, smiling, "I just loved working for CN!".





CN Pension Committee

The **CN Pension Committee** met in person for the first time in four years on November 22. Below are the highlights of the meeting and updates:

Indexation – (for those eligible) we approved the communications pensioners will receive explaining their 2024 indexation. The Canadian inflation rate last year was 6.8%, however the CN Pension Plan only allows for 50% of inflation for the previous year UP TO a maximum of 6% - so a 3% increase. Additionally, the 3% increase is only applied to the first \$3250 of your monthly pension. So, the maximum increase you can receive January 31, is \$97.50 (\$3250 x 3%) and a minimum of \$9.00 (\$4.50 for spouses). A letter explaining this will be included with the January pension statement. We are also monitoring the health of the Plans Escalation Account which is used to pay for these indexation increases.

Contributions to the Pension Plan - On April 1, the last 1800 CN managers and supervisors will be removed from this Plan and placed in the CN **Defined Contribution Plan (DC)**. This will leave only unionized employees as active participants in our Plan. The impact to Plan finances is negligible and has NO impact to our pensioners.

CNID Investment Update – While the current situation is positive, there is still global uncertainty and economic headwinds; interest rates are still high, which reduces the Plan liabilities. Accordingly, the Plan Solvency and Going Concern ratios continue to be very strong and the Plan is fully funded.

The **CNPA** held their first live **Directors' meeting** since 2019 in Montreal. Below is a brief overview of the key issues discussed and decisions taken:

Membership – In 2023 there were 285"new" pensioners and 426 new surviving spouses. The number of pensioners lost each year is climbing.

Johnson Insurance – In 2022 Johnson was acquired by Intact Insurance. **Belairdirect** Insurance, a subsidiary of **Intact**, has now taken over Johnson for Home and Auto Insurance. All of our members who use this service will receive direct communications from Belair at renewal time.

Health Care Report - The current financial status of the plan and strategies for reducing the surplus on the Atlantic rates, managing high claimants and balancing new benefits and provisions were discussed. There will be a refreshed brochure for 2024 available on the website in January.

Partnership Agreement—It is hoped that discussions with CN will produce meaningful discounts and benefits for our members. CN initiatives underway or being planned included tree planting events, Community Boards, an earth rangers' program and also CN annual anniversary celebrations each June 6.

National Website— The new revamped website has led to increased traffic and inquiries; more improvements and revisions will continue as it evolves.

CNPA Elections (effective January 1, 2024) and appointments of National officers for 2024:

- **President** Bruce Anderson, who will also continue as CN Interface Officer.
- Past President- Reg Hebert, who will also continue as Scholarship Chair.
- 1st Vice-President- Blake Olson, who will also continue as Health Care Chair.
- Executive Secretary- Ron Hewson.
- **Membership Co-chairs** Peter Moloney and Nancy Zajacz.
- **Treasurer** Ron Charles.
- Regional VP's- Earl Garland, Arthur St. Hillaire, Ron Hewson, Joanne Gaborieau, Blake Olson.
- **Communications Officer** vacant, associate Joanne Gaborieau.
- Federal Government Liaison Officer- Mike Mathews.
- **Health Care Chair** Blake Olson (elected by the HCC).
- Webmaster- George Rowan.

Winter 2024 Page 7

Your Pension Committee



VACANT Regional / National Positions

We are accepting applications from interested members for two vacant positions - Mountain Region Government Liaison Officer and National Communications Officer (responsible for our National newsletter and other communications). If interested please advise President Al as soon as possible

Belair Direct (Johnson Insurance)

As you are aware from previous communications, our CNPA partner **Johnson Insurance** has been merged with their fellow insurance company **BELAIR DIRECT**. Johnson provided specific discounts to CNPA Members for Home, Travel and Auto Insurance* and also a national rebate program for the CNPA. These discounts are continuing with the changeover to Belair Direct.

(*Johnson / Belair do not provide Auto Insurance in BC due to ICBC)

We have many members utilizing Johnson Insurance products, and they have or are being notified about policy transition to Belair.

There are also many of our members who may already be with **BELAIR DIRECT and** previous to this merger AND may have not received any discount.

Following recent discussion with BELAIR, they are now extending our CNPA negotiated discount to their CURRENT policy holders, even if they are not yet up for renewal.

<u>Please let your members know</u>, in the event they are currently using Belair Direct. They can contact Belair immediately - Identify as a CNPA Pensioner and ask for any available member discount to their current policy. Belair is also introducing a client advocate process for policy holders, in the event that there are issues with service that require investigation or assistance.

MILESTONES March 2024-June 2024

| 85 Years Old | | Helen Arseniuk | Apr 16 | · · | May 18 | |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------------------|--------|------------------------------------|--------|--|
| James D. Stroud | Mar 2 | Cecile Thibeault | May 1 | Martin & Sylvia M. Jennings May 24 | | |
| John Ciesla | Mar 6 | Nick Rogoza | May 23 | Wayne & Carolyn Jackson | Jun 15 | |
| Jenny Janvier | Mar 23 | Madelene Boston | May 25 | Conrad & Catherine Michael | | |
| Bruna A. Tambasco | Mar 29 | Doreen Brodeur | Jun 24 | Ken & Suzanne Threlfell | Jun 29 | |
| James Choo | Apr 6 | 95 Years Old | | John & Stephanie Krupicz | Jun 29 | |
| Monnie Moir | Apr 19 | Joaquim Dos Ramos | Mar 18 | Gilberto & Ana De Costa | Jun 30 | |
| Edward Yanitski | Apr 22 | Mary Leis | Apr 7 | 60 Years Married | | |
| David J. Horbay | Apr 26 | Sue Stumph | Apr 15 | Philip & Pamela Mapplebeck | Mar 14 | |
| Charles Matthews | May 3 | Katie Mary Anderson | Apr 24 | Ken L. & Isabel Skjersven | Apr 3 | |
| Nancy Semotiuk | May 11 | Linda Faoro | May 1 | Peter W. & Helena Boos | Apr 4 | |
| Marnie Daniel | May 13 | Jean Stoyko | May 2 | Richard & Annette Gaunt | May 9 | |
| Ruth Doris Kiel | May 18 | Vera Arnold | May 2 | R. Wayne & Gail Casemore | Jun 13 | |
| Elsie Anderson | May 27 | Nancy Lischuk | May 29 | Dale L. & Novella Allbee | Jun 26 | |
| Julie Heuman | Jun 1 | Frances Achtemichuk | Jun 3 | 70 Years Married | | |
| Joan Higgins | Jun 9 | N. Paul Swain | Jun 19 | | | |
| Garry Lank | Jun 14 | 100 Years | Old | Doris M. & Anton Small | Apr 24 | |
| Christa Begert | Jun 29 | | | Walter A. & Olga Footz | Jun 19 | |
| 90 Years Old | | Grant Bailey | Apr 21 | | | |
| Mohinder Bhardwaj | Mar 5 | Justine Trottier | Jun 3 | | | |
| Kathleen Howard | Mar 5 Mar 6 | 50 Years Married | | | | |
| Edie Kunkel | Mar 13 | Maurice & Anna Lefebvre | Mar 23 | | | |
| Roberta Bellerose | Mar 15 | James & Malitta Love | Apr 6 | | | |
| Patricia Uhrich | Mar 17 | Dennis & Michelle Herbison | _ | | | |

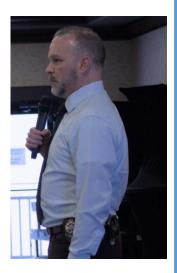


Grandparent Scam

For our January meeting we had detective Jason LaPointe, from the Edmonton Crime unit, present us with information on scams affecting the older population.

Advice included:

- Don't react to requests for money or information too quickly. Check out the validity of the request first
- Don't click on links provided in a request. Find them yourself independently.
- Check your credit score with a company like Equifax annually (its free). It will tell you if loans have been taken out in your name.



CN Pensioners' Help Line



For questions regarding your pension or rail pass and to report contact information including change of address, power of attorney or death involving a CN pensioner, please call CN Pension Administration at 1-800-361-0739. Have your CN PIN (SRB) number handy. As Pensions Administration does not pass along pensioner information to the RailVets please also advise Peter Treloar at 587-338-6014 of any changes.

Winter 2024 Page 9



Marion Bailey Tim Bihuniak Kenneth Bishop Anna Bojkewich

Roy Bossert

Frederick Brennan Shirley Brusnyk

Edward Buchmeier Robert L. Bunten

Donald B. Campbell Richard (Dick) Clarke Human Resources Officer,

Walter Daniels Brigid Desiarlais Catherine Ewasiuk

Helen Fedorchuk Shirley Feeley

James Franklin Josephine Hawley

Barbara Hoffman

Emily Hruba

Dushan Hull Michael Iwanyshyn Violet James

Zane Kelly Marguerite Kohut S & C Tech. - Walker Hump Switchman, Edmonton

Widow of Zenon, Store Attendant

Telecoms., Edmonton

Supervisor, Accounts Payable,

Edmonton

Train Movement Clerk, McLennan Widow of Machinist/Millwright

Calder Shop

Section Foreman, Stettler Manager, Merchandise Claims,

Edmonton

Locomotive Engineer, Edmonton

Edmonton

Section Foreman, Robb Widow of Jerry, Painter, Edmonton

Widow of Peter, Conductor,

Kamloops

Widow of Martin, Machinist Calder Widow of John, Sr. Cost Analyst

Western Canada

Widow of Wes. Production Foreman, Diesel Shop

Secretary to Reg. Chief Engineer,

Edmonton

Widow of William, Tracing Clerk,

Edmonton

Foreman Calder Yard

Widow of Charles, Carman, Calder

Yards

Conductor, Edmonton Widow of William, Rules Coordinator, Winnipeg

Timmie Latch

Zinnia Lischuk

Kenneth Lissack

Glvnn Lvons

William MacKenzie Jennie Marko

Bryan Martin Shirley McConaghy

Sandra McLean Wi**lliam Moe** Lynn Moroz Barbara Mortimer

Mary Myschuk

Jose Pacheco Alan Pasichnuk Wilmar Pergotski

Gwynne Rockwell Helena Sadler Joyce Tilley

William Wakaruk

Roger Walker Janet Wardrop Grace Weigl

Walter Zaplitny Brian Zawierucha Widow of Samuel, Carman,

Edmonton

Widow of Peter, Conductor,

Edmonton

Manager Invoicing, Recoverable

Expenses, Edmonton

Senior Transportation Officer,

Edmonton

Quality Assurance, Edmonton

Widow of Russel, Senior **Engineering Clerk**

Conductor, Edmonton Widow of Bert, Locomotive

Engineer

Yardmaster, Edmonton

Widow of George, Draftsman, Regional B&B, Edmonton Widow of Steve, Truck Driver,

Diesel Shop

extra gang Labourer Track Maintainer, Viking

Track Maintainer, Rocky Mountain

General Clerk, Walker yard

Widow of Howard, Train Dispatcher, Edmonton Signals & Comm. Material

Coordinator C.L.O., Calgary

Widow of Dave, Carman, Edmonton

Widow of Hubert, Repairman

Calder Car Shop

Train Dispatcher, Edmonton

Clerk, Edmonton

New Members

Terry Dunford Joanne Borges Gerard Harris Rob Brown Beverly Bunten Yvonne Lissack

Trevor Prosser George Rockwell Dianne Wakaruk

Ray Warren

<u>Save The Date!!!!</u> Future Meetings To Look Forward To

Wednesday February 14th – Luncheon Meeting starting at 11:00am HAPPY VALENTINES DAY! No Guest Speaker

Wednesday March 13th – General Meeting 1:30 pm Guest Speaker – Shawn Smith, Representative from The Camrose Museum. Alongside Jasper and Banff, Camrose is on the list of "the 9 most charming small towns in Alberta". This Museum and Park is a reminder of Camrose's historical connection to the rail that helped build the town to what it is today.

> Wednesday April 10th – Luncheon Meeting starting at 11:00am No Guest Speaker

Wednesday May 8th – General Meeting 1:30 pm
Guest Speaker – Representative from The Alzheimer's Society
You won't want to miss this one!!!!
Did you know that 1 in 3 people live with Dementia?
The difference between Alzheimer's and Dementia, preventive measures, warning signs, support resources.

Wednesday June 12th – General Meeting 1:30 pm Guest Speaker – Representative from the YMCA Let's discuss "Active Aging"! Strong body – strong mind!

Showcasing all the programs offered by the YMCA for seniors that help enhance your mental and physical wellbeing.

July & August - Summer Break - NO Meetings!!!



Al Vodden, Timothy Urbanovitch, Mary Jean Strachan, Tony Andrzejewski, Christine Randall, Peter Moloney, Diana Novak, Cliff Gervais, Andy Novak, John Wiebe & Peter Treloar. Missing is Bruce MacDonald