

THE ADVISOR

SPRING ISSUE

SRA TODAY

The Saskatchewan Retirees Association (formerly known as the Saskatchewan Government Superannuates Association (SGSA), incorporated in 1975, is celebrating 45 years of “strength together”! The SRA was formed by volunteers who had interest in ensuring public sector retirees had quality pensions and had an active voice with government in the event any changes were considered for the future.

Over the 45 years, the SRA has developed, added new members, advocated and succeeded in obtaining partial indexing for defined benefit pensioners. In 1998, a new health and dental plan was added for members to increase the services available to members.

SRA now has about 3500 active members, spanning retirees from their early 50s to some over 90 years of age. Record growth has occurred over the last three years with almost 1000 new members joining the association from the crown corporations, executive government, the new health authority and various boards, agencies and commissions.

To celebrate 2020, plans are being developed for member meetings to congratulate members and thank them for their support over the years. Much of the focus will be focused on building awareness of the “positive aging” campaign of SSM as the SRA members responded in large numbers to the SSM



Left: Linda Tate. Right: Jack Peterson. Back: Chuck Ames.

survey about the need for a comprehensive plan for older adults in Saskatchewan. The meetings will be an opportunity to dialogue with members, discuss recent developments related to pensions and financial security, key themes in the positive aging campaign.

The SRA is committed to providing “leadership to meet the interests of public sector retirees” across Saskatchewan. We have adopted a three-year action plan with substantial effort to engage members, learn more about their needs and then act on them with our partnership with SSM and directly with other stakeholders as needed. The SRA is committed to being the voice of public sector retirees from all government organizations and all levels of employees.

Together with SSM, the SRA will continue to take a more active role, raise our collective profile and represent all members’ needs and interests into the future.

The SGSA Gazette

A Newsletter for the Members of the Saskatchewan Government Superannuates Association
Walter Scott Building 3085 Albert Street Regina, Saskatchewan S4S 0B1



Pictured are local members, taken at the group's 2000 annual general meeting in Regina. Back row: George Wise, Bob Walker, George Haynes, Brian Clark, Matt Kaip, Alf Zimmerman, Lynn McCaslin and Chuck Ames. Front row: Linda Clark, Joseph Hnatiuk (President), Marian Brown, Frank May and Alex Ostoroff.

WHEN I LOOK BACK 25 YEARS... IT SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY WHEN...

We had no designated space to hold regular and ad-hoc meetings in any of the Government buildings. We had no secure spots to store important documents.

- Access to Government buildings after business hours was limited
- Close parking spots were unavailable to retirees
- Committee members were responsible to store important documents at home that were often stored in garages and basements
- Carting boxes to and from meetings became cumbersome
- Retiree membership was growing

It was at this point that the Membership Committee decided that something had to be done to alleviate our situation. As a recent retiree, I was approached to start looking for space that would accommodate our members. Board Room style rental space was available in many locations in Regina, however the thought of having meetings in different locations would only confuse our membership.

The idea of renting an apartment came to mind. I happened to know an apartment manager that was willing to rent us the space to accommodate our needs. After consulting with other members, the idea was accepted and the fun began in creating a workable environment. Some purchases were

made but many members donated items that served a valuable purpose. In no time the apartment concept with all the amenities was well received and has served the membership for many years. At age 84, I still treasure the memories of "the good ole days" serving on different committees and getting to know so many wonderful people that gave so freely of their time and energy to keep our organization strong. To all current members, keep up the good work.

Joseph (Joe) Hnatiuk
Former President

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A TRIBUTE: WHAT WOULD THEY THINK?

Back in 1975, a group of government retirees saw a need to develop an organization that would have the dual purpose of providing a social network and a way to group together to promote and protect their pensions.

As founders, those women and men had a vision that they believed and acted upon to create the Saskatchewan Government Superannuates Association (SGSA). They saw the value of working together towards common goals and understood that collective action could create a greater voice than each retiree speaking individually.

Over the forty-five years that have passed, the SGSA has changed its name to the Saskatchewan Retirees Association (SRA) and dreamed of a bigger organization with broader goals to meet the emerging needs of public sector retirees. Over that time, the SRA has grown and slipped back at times while continuing to provide support to retirees.

Gone are the days when members may have looked to the SRA for re-employment support when governments changed direction resulting in job change for employees. The social side of the organization is no longer seen as a top priority, though members often speak of past regional meetings, good conversations and opportunities to meet and visit.

Geographic chapters were considered, planned for, started and then dropped, as the workload on the leadership team was greater than their ambition to take the SRA to a different type of organization.

Today's members are more independent, younger and see the SRA as a service provider, mostly for group benefits. Talk about pension indexing no longer dominates conversations as newer members are in pension plans that have no defined benefits.

So, there has been record growth, with nearly 1,000 new members joining the SRA over the last three years. Old barriers of reaching retirees are being replaced by the reach of the website and social media. Word of mouth referrals have become the best testimonials to recruit new members.

At the same time, today's members are looking for leadership from the

SRA. They want involvement; maybe not like the founders through face-to-face dialogue and maybe they don't volunteer in the same way. They do want the SRA to provide good services, raise issues and take on a visible leadership role with government and other similar minded organizations.

Many of the founding members, having passed on, may wonder about what happened to their organization and their vision. While it may be different, that vision has not been lost. It continues through a new generation of leaders that want to look forward while continuing to remember that there was purpose, energy and goals that need attention, renewal and ongoing enthusiasm for continue success. "Strength Together" still means collective action to achieve those dreams and to honour those that believed that retirees from government would "take up their torch" and continue to build an organization for the benefit of future generations.



March 2002

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

May 28, 2020 | 10:30 am

**Wesley United Church
3913 Hillsdale Street | Regina, SK**

**Honorary Lifetime Members Recognized
2019 Annual Reporting
Director Elections
Update on Positive Aging Campaign**

Lunch provided

All SRA members are welcome!



MEMBER COMMENTS

Have a question? Suggestion? Need Information?

Let us know:

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SRA

SASKATCHEWAN RETIREES ASSOCIATION

**CELEBRATING
45 YEARS**

1975-2020