

STS, REGINA CHAPTER MAY 2021 ANNOUNCEMENTS



According to T. S. Eliot, April is the cruelest month. May arrived (without April showers) and with it, a sense of renewal and one more month closer to emergence from the pandemic.

If you are a member of the STS Group Benefits Plan, there is a great deal of information below about the new Health Spending Account.

Stay well. Doug Still, Chapter President
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STS GROUP BENEFITS UPDATE

Since 1996 the STS has operated an Extended Health and Dental Plan. Approximately 8,500 members participate in one or both of the plans.

The plans are self-funded by participating superannuates, and unlike workplace plans, there are no contributions from an employer or government.

As has been reported in *Outreach* recently, COVID-19 has resulted in some reduction of utilization of benefits. In the past year, unforeseen surpluses have resulted which have allowed for enhancements in vision care and hearing aids as of July 1, 2020.

Typically, our contract with Saskatchewan Blue Cross is based on a three-year cycle with the current contract set to expire June 30, 2021. A year ago, the STS and Blue Cross agreed to extend the contract an additional year with no additional premiums to June 30, 2022. Services provided by audiologists, dieticians, social workers and counsellors were added to the list of Paramedical/Health Practitioners effective January 1, 2021.

While the use of the plans is beginning to pick up again, there is still an unanticipated one-time surplus that remains. After considerable discussion, the Provincial Executive has authorized the implementation of a \$250 Health Spending Account per Extended Health and Dental Plan member to be used between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2023.

Planholders have recently received a letter from the STS which explains the changes. *Eligible medical expenses and frequently asked questions are explained more fully on the sts.sk.ca website.* Because a written letter cannot fully cover all the details, you will find the website to be much more helpful. The link to the Canada Revenue Agency will be very helpful as it has 14 pages of eligible medical expenses.

Should a member choose to have the \$250 rebated directly, that is also possible.

CHAPTER ANNIVERSARY UPDATE

The fifth in a series of archival photographs was posted May 1 on the Chapter website bringing the total number of captioned photographs to 79. The feature is popular as it continues to attract many visits on the website. More images will be posted with the final installment December 1.

The Chapter History for the 2010s was also posted on May 1. This concludes the series of five summaries which began in January with the 1970s. Both items can be accessed under the Fiftieth Anniversary tab on the website: www.stsregina.com.

Due to the popularity of the History series, another five documents will be rolled out for posting in June, and September to December.

Since its inception in the late 1990s, the Chapter Award of Merit has recognized over forty people. June's posting will highlight a brief history of the award and the list of recipients up to this year.

PROVINCIAL AGM

The virtual provincial AGMs (for May 2020 and 2021) have just concluded. Regina Chapter was very well-represented by 32 delegates and four members of the Provincial Executive. The June-July Monthly Newsletter will have more information on the AGM.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The last Chapter Executive meeting of the term is on May 26. This is when we finalize the Calendar of Events for the coming year. The June-July newsletter and the Annual Newsletter sent out in August will provide additional information about upcoming events. There is much uncertainty about whether or not conditions will permit gatherings—our plan is to let members know no later than the second week of August when the Annual Newsletter is published.