

Greetings from Terri Mitchell, STS Chapter Liaison
January 13, 2021

Happy 2021! The best news so far this year has been the mild temperatures, and I hope that you have all taken advantage of the opportunity to be outdoors in the fresh air. However, I write this as the freezing rain is dotting my windows and the wind is picking up, but let's hope that the "clipper" will be short-lived and we will enjoy more of these lovely, calm January days—each one is a bonus getting us closer to spring.

Recently, I have had more to ponder than the weather as the Provincial STS Executive met via Zoom on January 11 and 12. Of most significant note to us all is the decision to proceed with a virtual AGM format to be held this spring. Chapter Presidents will be receiving communications from the STS Office in this regard, and the process will be set in motion for the selection of delegates and all manner of preparation for a virtual AGM. Honorary Life Member nominations are being accepted with the usual deadline of February 1 and Resolutions for March 1. While we are unable to meet in person, it is hoped that Chapters can engage with members via technology as best as is possible.

Highlights from the Group Benefits committee include the appointment of Megan Douglas from Blue Cross who joins Bob Wilhelms as our plan representatives. In the upcoming issue of *Outreach*, details will be outlined of an upgrade to our paramedical services to reflect industry standards as well as other information regarding our group benefits plan.

You may have noticed that Honorary Life Members Stella Ewanchuk and Mike Kaminski were featured in the previous *Outreach*, and we can look forward to feature articles highlighting Doris McDougall and Albert Waldbauer in the next edition. The official award presentation for Albert Waldbauer from the Yorkton Chapter will be made at some time in the future when it safe to gather again in person. Of note as well is that presently about 2100 members receive *Outreach* electronically and the numbers are slowly increasing. If you are interested in receiving the *Outreach* electronically, simply contact the STS Office.

Since the Executive meetings in November, the newly formed Governance and Handbook Review Committee has met twice and embarked on a detailed review of the *STS Policy Handbook*. I am pleased to share that I accepted the position of the committee chair and look forward to learning about the evolution of our organization and to helping shape our future. We will continue our work via Zoom next week, and as I suggested in *Outreach*, this is major undertaking that will require much consultation on many levels.

On November 18, 2020 I attended the Saskatchewan Senior's Mechanism Member Organizations Consultation (via Zoom) focusing on building age friendly

communities. An overview of the presentations and discussions as prepared by Adeline Wuschenny is attached as are two other documents, “What are the benefits of home care?” and “Supporting Older Adults with Practical Affordable Services”. It was an interesting and profitable day with timely discussions considering the issues raised by Covid 19 with reference to older adults and how we might influence the future positively in that regard.

As part of their Salon Series, The McDowell Foundation is sponsoring a free webinar on January 21 from 7-8:30 pm titled “Women in Educational Leadership”. More information and a link to the registration are found in the email forwarded from Jane Isinger, our STS McDowell Foundation Representative.

In my musings regarding the pandemic, I have recently been reminded of the Stanford Marshmallow Experiment done in 1972 by Walter Mischel, and his more recent book titled The Marshmallow Test: Mastering Self Control (2014). (I know I am dating myself in making this reference). We all remember the deal—if you can resist eating the marshmallow, at the end of fifteen minutes, you will earn two marshmallows for your efforts. The more recent book follows the original children into their adult lives, analyzing the correlation between success or failure in the marshmallow test, to success or failure in life choices involving the ability to delay gratification in order to achieve a future goal. So here we are in this massive marshmallow test called Covid 19. The health experts predict that even with vaccines the next few months will be challenging, but if we stay the course and resist the marshmallow, maybe by the summer we will earn the whole bag of marshmallows—not just for ourselves, but for everyone. That certainly is a worthy goal that we can all help to achieve.

I wish you a wonderful start to the New Year and encourage you to embrace activities that support your wellness in all regards. I look forward to a time when we can all share marshmallows together, safely in person. In the meantime, if you have any questions or feel I can be of assistance to you please email me at tlmitchell@sasaktel.net or call 306-621-7506.