**Pension Committee Report**

**Members:** JoAnn Lauber, (empty at the moment) , Gerry Tiede (Chair)

The challenge for the coming year, as I see it, will be to make the protection of pensions a prominent issue in the coming election campaign. This will be difficult because:

1. The wedge issues of the election are likely to be immigration policy, economy (NAFTA/no-NAFTA?) and a national Pharmacare plan. Of course, this could change in an instant but pension issues are currently getting no press at all.
2. The two largest political parties support target benefit plans in principle and would benefit if the issue got no play time. Neither party is likely to win any new votes from anywhere by promoting target benefit plans so they won’t raise the issue.
3. Most Canadian workers don’t have an employment pension, so they really don’t care about the loss of a few benefits to the lucky minority that have pensions.
4. Our opposition to target benefit plans requires an understanding of how different pension plans work and most citizens lack this understanding. Even when we talk to our own members there is a large education element necessary before you can talk about the unfairness of target benefit plans.

Keeping this in mind we will have to focus on a simple concept as we develop the pension section of our election issues resource.

I don’t know really know how the opposition campaign to C-27 is working out in other provinces since our meeting in Ottawa. However, the BC program, under the leadership of JoAnn and Dale Lauber, is progressing well. About 28 of our 48 branches have reported their actions in collecting petitions and submitting them to MPs, some of whom have agreed to read them into the parliamentary record. We will again provide information and encouragement to our branch leadership at our annual AGM in September.

Gerry Tiede (Chair)