

## **UNDE VP AB and North Report for Fall 2014**

Since being elected at the 2014 UNDE triennial convention in Quebec City, there have been some big changes in our region.

I would like to thank the members of the region for their support, and congratulate all who were elected as representatives to various committees and the PSAC convention taking place in April 2015. The UNDE could not exist without the ongoing support from members such as yourselves. I wish to specifically acknowledge Sister Brenda Ebear from Cold Lake who was elected Deputy VP of the region, and Sister Robyn Westgarth from Suffield who was elected as alternate.

In September, I met with TB as part of the PSAC SV Bargaining team. The sole focus of the employer was around their short term disability (STD) scheme. This is a bad scheme, poorly presented with many obvious gaps, which really doesn't matter, in that we have no interest in gutting the present sick leave provisions. The teams meet again the week of November 16-20.

In mid-October I was offered an assignment in the Canadian Forces Fire Marshall's office, which I have accepted, as this will allow me to reside with my spouse in Ottawa. This created a gap on the FR Steering Committee, which will be filled by Brother Bill McKeown from Wainwright, which marks the first time that the Wainwright firefighters have had a rep from their hall on one of the national firefighter committees.

Obviously, the acceptance of a position in Ottawa required me to step down as VP of the region. This was not a decision that I made lightly, as I truly enjoy meeting and working with the members of our region. Sister Brenda Ebear has agreed to step forward as VP of the AB and the North, and Sister Robyn Westgarth has agreed to be Deputy VP. The region will be well-served with these two sisters, as they bring a breadth of experiences and knowledge to their roles. Sister Ebear has already made her presence known by attending the 3rd Division (formerly LFWA) UMCC along with Sister Mona Simcoe UNDE VP of Manitoba-Saskatchewan.

Most of the locals in the region seem to be operating well, but the stresses of WFA and the drive to cut everywhere, is definitely taking a toll on the members, physically and emotionally. Hopefully these ill-advised, ill-conceived cuts are nearly done, and the members can get on with providing support to the Canadian Armed Forces.

Blair Winger  
former UNDE VP AB and North