

In Memoriam

We have received word of the deaths of the following Elfuns: C.S. "Steve" Laughton on August 29, Richard Lang on October 6, and Harold Britton on October 31. For current Elfun members, a donation of \$50 is given to a charity selected by the family.

Elfun Holiday Party

This year's Holiday Party will be held on Saturday, December 3rd at Lakeshore Country Club. A fine dinner will be served following an open bar cocktail hour featuring hot and cold appetizers. The after dinner desert table will provide a delicious ending to the meal. Dance music provided by "The Strangers" will include a variety of music from the 50's through today's hits. Please read the enclosed flyer for meal selections. This is a great event at a bargain price and we encourage all members to take this opportunity to renew friendships as we start the holiday season. Please note that reservations and payment are due by Friday, November 25 to Dick Enright.

Syracuse Elfun Society Golf Outing 2016

Twelve Elfuns and eight guests participated in the 2016 Syracuse Elfun Society Golf Outing at Cazenovia Country Club on Monday September 19, 2016. Everyone enjoyed a box lunch prior to golf. Chuck Klaus, Bob Breyerton, Jim Petrie and Stuart Schwartz won the event with a net score of 68. Jim Petrie had the longest drive on hole number 15 and Carl Chermak won the closest to the pin contest on hole number 3 with a distance of 5 feet 1 inch. A barbeque dinner and awards followed the golf. Thanks to Ken Hines for coordinating the event.

Carl Chermak

Community Service Projects

Please contact Marv Hahn at 315-699-2621 or at marvh@twcny.rr.com if you are interested in working on future projects.

Membership report-October 2016

We have 293 paid memberships for 2016-2017 which compares to 343 memberships in the same period last year. 15 of the 293 renewals were from Elfuns that did not pay dues last year. 224 of the 293 paid members have provided e-mail addresses.

Social Activities Report for 2016

We are concluding another busy social year, with activities as varied as a tour and lunch at the Onondaga Lake Visitor Center, Lunch Cruise on The Canandaigua Lady and a visit to Sonnenberg Gardens, "Oklahoma" at Merry-Go-Round Playhouse with a post-performance dinner at The Sherwood Inn, a Fall Foliage train ride by 50 members and guests on the Adirondack Scenic Railroad with dinner in Utica's Union Station, and we were one of the first groups to lunch and tour at the Marriott Syracuse Downtown. Our Family Day at the Ballpark rained out, but everyone received a really nice Chiefs baseball cap and had the opportunity to use their rain check. Dick Enright coordinated the Senior Lunch and Carl Chermak and Ken Hines coordinated the Golf Outing. Whew! We hope everyone enjoyed an outing and a good meal with fellow Elfuns.

2017 Tentative Plans

April 23 Onondaga Civic Symphony Orchestra Concert with lunch or dinner; Erie Canal Boat Cruise with Lunch; Merry-Go-Round Playhouse and dinner at the Sherwood Inn (Guys and Dolls June 17-28 or Always Patsy Cline September 21-October 7) please let me know your preference; Elfun Family Day at the Ballpark; One or two tours with lunch; IMAX with lunch; Senior Lunch, Golf Outing and Holiday Party. And, if all goes well, another try at a Clambake. Cindy Chermak.

Road Scholar Program

Information we receive about the Road Scholar Program is posted on the News page of our website.

Syracuse Elfun Society Board Of Directors			
syracuseelfunsociety.org			
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Social Events	Cindy Chermak	chermak@msn.com	637-0380
Work Projects	Marv Hahn	marvh@twcny.rr.com	699-2621
GE Volunteers	Carl Chermak	carl.chermak@ge.com	637-0380
Benefits	Mal Clark	clarkm2c3@gmail.com	214-5236
Board Member	Fred Wenthon	fred.wenthon@gmail.com	



Elfuns touring Downtown Marriott Hotel Grand Ballroom



Elfuns volunteers updated the lights on the Hope For Bereaved butterfly with LEDs



Elfuns at dinner at the Trackside Restaurant in the Utica



Elfuns had lunch in the Persian Terrace At the Downtown Marriott

Some Health Insurance Hints from Bob Ruth & Steve Auyer

It sure used to be easier back when General Electric took care of health coverage for you. You went to the doctor, he/she sent you a bill, you paid the bill, filed a claim with GE, and you'd get your reimbursement in the mail in several weeks. Of course, after the Medicare Act went into effect in 1966, if you were 65 or older, your payments, co-pays and reimbursements (if any) were handled by the government and that added a layer of complexity.

Medicare originally consisted of three parts: Part A, Hospital Coverage (no charge); Part B, Medical Insurance (added cost); and Prescription Drug Coverage (added cost). Because these three parts plus the standard GE Retiree Insurance did not cover 100% of expenses most GE retirees purchased supplemental insurance. Elfuns, in particular, found the Elfuns supplemental insurance their best buy.

In 2014 General Electric announced that they were discontinuing medical coverage for retirees including the Elfuns insurance and instead would provide a "retirement reimbursement account" with a yearly stipend that retirees could use to purchase supplemental coverage on the open market. The yearly stipend, which is not guaranteed, is currently set at \$1,000/each for a retiree and spouse. To assist retirees in making the transition from General Electric insurance to open market insurance, the services of OneExchange, a Towers Watson Company, were retained to: 1) help retirees select the plans that best meet their needs, and 2) manage reimbursements from the retiree's reimbursement account. If there is a balance in your account at the end of 2016, it will roll over into 2017.

Frankly, purchasing supplemental coverage on the open market was a bit of a shock for most of us as we were faced with choosing between a number of different supplemental benefit plans, at least two different insurers in this area, and coverage costs that could vary significantly from one ZIP code to another. While it was a struggle, most of us have adapted and now know how to use the new system. But there are still some special situations that apply to some of us and we'll discuss two of them.

Tiering Exception Form for prescription drugs. Prescription drugs are classed in four tiers ranging from Tier 1 – Preferred Generic (lowest cost) to Tier 4 – Non-Preferred Drug (highest cost). There's also a fifth tier for what can best be described as "high cost generic and brand drugs" that falls somewhere between Tier 3 and Tier 4 cost-wise. Not infrequently we will find that we have been prescribed a drug in a higher tier because our physician feels that the "same" drug in a lower tier is not as effective – and what might have been a \$3 co-pay is now much more costly, ranging from a \$46 co-pay up to 48% of the drug cost. If this happens to you, you should consider downloading a **Tiering Exception Form** from SilverScript at www.silverscript.com/pdf/tiering-exception-form.pdf. You and your physician fill out the form indicating the rationale for selecting a higher-priced drug over the lower cost "same" drug in a lower tier, submit the form to SilverScript, and then hold your breath while they evaluate your request. If it is approved, you should then be charged the lower-tier price for the higher-tier drug. This example is based on having prescription drug coverage with SilverScript. The tiering exception process may differ with other carriers.

Lockheed Martin Retirees. Former General Electric employees who had 25 or more years of service when GE Aerospace was sold to Martin Marietta in 1993, and who subsequently retired from Lockheed Martin, now receive an additional \$900 yearly stipend into a separate retirement reimbursement account from Lockheed Martin in addition to the \$1,000 yearly stipend from General Electric. Thus a retiree and spouse can be receiving \$2,000/year from General Electric and \$1,800/year from Lockheed Martin for a total of \$3,800. Both retirement reimbursement accounts are managed by OneExchange and this adds a bit of complexity to the reimbursements.

Individual Expenses. Depending on which supplemental plans you pick, some expenses may be reimbursed by one company but not by the other. Examples are Vision Care and Dental Care which are generally reimbursable from the Lockheed Martin stipend, but not from the General Electric stipend. It is up to you to make sure that you ask that an expense be reimbursed from the correct stipend. If you ask that an expense, not covered by General Electric for example, be reimbursed from the General Electric stipend, it will be denied. When you file reimbursement requests using the OneExchange Reimbursement Form, either on-line or by hard copy, the line asking for Former Employer Name determines which stipend you want used for that expense. If you list Lockheed Martin as the former employer, the Lockheed Martin stipend is used, and similarly for General Electric. Since the types of expenses reimbursed by GE is more narrow than for Lockheed Martin, you may want to use up your GE reimbursement first so that your Lockheed Martin can be used for dental or vision expenses.

Recurring Premiums. Most of us are in plans that require a monthly premium payment that exceeds \$200 per month and want to have the monthly premiums automatically reimbursed so that we don't have to file a claim every month. You do this by activating automatic premium reimbursement during the annual enrollment period. This can be done online or by using One Exchange's Recurring Premium Reimbursement Form which can be downloaded from the website, filled out and mailed (or FAXed). So, if you use this form which stipend is used? We've been told that the company that was last paying reimbursements from the previous year will carry over to start the next year. We've also been told that it defaults to the Lockheed Martin stipend at the beginning of a new year. If you see that the wrong stipend is being used for your recurring expenses, you can change this by submitting the Recurring Premium Reimbursement Form. Again, you use the Former Employer Name entry to select which stipend is used.

You also have to list a start and end date for reimbursements from this employer's stipend. Suppose you filled out this form and showed General Electric as the employer and January 1st as the start date. Any valid expenses on or after January 1st would be reimbursed from the General Electric stipend. What happens when the General Electric stipend is used up? You stop getting reimbursements. OneExchange does not automatically shift to the other employer's stipend. You have to resubmit the Recurring Premium Reimbursement Form: this time showing Lockheed Martin as the employer, and then OneExchange will begin reimbursing you from the Lockheed Martin stipend. But be careful – when you submit the second form the "Start Date" cannot include a date when a reimbursement was made from the General Electric stipend. If there is an overlap this will be considered a duplicate claim and the form will be rejected. So, for example, suppose your last reimbursement from the General Electric stipend was in June, then the start date for Lockheed Martin should be something like July 1st.

Our experience has been that information on the OneExchange website is correct, although sometimes difficult to find. This is not always the case when you call in to talk to a representative – usually correct but not always. As noted above we've been given different answers about which stipend is the default choice at the beginning of each year. And when trying to find out which tier a prescription drug fell into, we've found that not only aren't all drugs listed in the SilverScript formulary, but depending on who you talk to at SilverScript you may be given conflicting information.

The good news is that Lockheed Martin retirees may be receiving two stipends. The bad news is that with the additional funds comes additional complexity in managing how they are used. But after a while it all begins to make sense. Hang in there.