

BRANCH REPORT

ON55 | York Branch

CONTACT US

Contact information for York Branch Board members is on the last page.

BRANCH EMAIL

federalretirees.york@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP

In the coming months and years, a strong organization will be essential to defend the pension and benefits which you worked for. Please stay engaged. If you meet former work colleagues or know anyone retiring, please let them know about the National Association of Federal Retirees.

(Almost Past) President's message

I took over the presidency of York Branch from Joe Shaykewich in 2012. Soon after, the government changed the "Not for profit" legislation and we had to rewrite the bylaws for the Association and the Branch. Because you, as a member of York Branch, are represented through the President of the Branch, we decided that the President should be elected each year and for a maximum of four consecutive years. I apologize...I broke the rules. As no one was elected in the last few years, I volunteered to continue in the role. However, now is the time for a different perspective. My term will be complete at the end of July and I am pleased to say that Fred Conway will take over as President. Fred has been Treasurer throughout my term and this summer we switch roles. A hearty thank you to Fred and all the Board members for their dedication and energy supporting the Branch.

As I write this in early July, the cool air from the air conditioner is settling, so while sitting at my computer in the basement, I'm wearing a sweater. It was 37 degrees outside earlier today then a line of thunderstorms went by. There was lots of thunder and some places got downpours, but not a drop fell on my yard. My yard hasn't had rain for several weeks so watering the trees, flowers and garden is a daily chore...I say chore because if I don't get out early it is really hot to stand in the sun! There is at least one benefit to the generally clear skies...beautiful sun rises and sun sets.

The Board began experimenting with video meetings a couple of years ago. There were a few technical issues to get started but the technology has improved. This spring, when meeting face-to-face was not allowed, we decided to try to hold our Annual General Meeting via ZOOM. The

PARTNER BANNER





A board meeting held by Zoom. Sharon Carson wasn't able to connect by ZOOM so she joined by Facetime via my phone (see bottom left corner). I used two computers so I could see participants on one and more easily share documents on the other.

notice and instructions went out by email and a good number participated. While not everyone could attend, we had a good meeting and accomplished what needed to be done.

Unfortunately, a couple of people had technical problems which limited or prevented their participation. With these uncertain times continuing, we are likely going to need to use this method for meetings and information sessions. Before we do this, we will organize some practice sessions so that everyone who wants to participate can get connected. We miss out on the usual social time that accompanies the meetings but with a bit of ingenuity we might find a new way to get some of the same feeling. For example, if all the former staff of a department, say CRA or Environment, wanted a session, we could

arrange a ZOOM get together and former colleagues could see each other and catch up on events. If you are interested in trying a "departmental" get together, an information session or perhaps a travelogue, please let me or any Board member know. I would be happy to work on any suggestions that you provide. All of this is dependent on communicating via a computer, tablet, or smart phone although you can listen to the audio portion over a phone. The most effective means to communicate about any session is via email...please make sure we have your email address.

Stay healthy.

(P.S. My wife just read this and said "Who was out early to water the garden?")



Tom Nichols
905-505-2079

Fall Members Meeting Tuesday October 20, 2020

In these uncertain times, we do not yet know if we will be in a position to hold our Fall Membership Meeting in person at our usual venue. In the case we are not able to meet face to face, we are prepared to hold a virtual meeting via a ZOOM video conference. We used ZOOM at the Annual General Meeting this past April and it went relatively smoothly. So, whether it is our familiar social event or a video get together please keep the date of **Tuesday, October 20th** open for this meeting. Our guest speaker, from our long-time Association partner, Johnson Insurance, will provide us with an update on MEDOC insurance and answer any questions you may have. When travel restrictions lift, it will be important to be aware of any COVID-19 related changes that will impact our insurance plan coverage. Keep an eye out via your e-mails for any update with respect to our Fall meeting. As usual, a personal invite will be sent via email closer to the date of the meeting.



Incoming President's message

With some trepidation, I am taking over as President of York Branch from Tom Nichols, our President for so many years. I am very happy that he has agreed to continue on the Board, taking on the Treasurer role. I'm looking to the Board as a whole to help fill Tom's shoes.

We're having a different and difficult 2020 in face of the COVID-19 emergency. We can only hope that by next year at the latest we will be able to look back on our current isolated lifestyle as something over and done with. We are all missing our friends and the social activities - not to speak of the traveling - that give pleasure and even value to our lives. The Branch Board has been meeting via videoconference, and in the Branch videoconference spring meeting we did what we needed to do, but it was not the same. The social element is critical. We can't be sure how the Fall meeting will be run but are determined that a Fall Meeting of Members will happen.

We Federal Retirees need to be ready for the rebuilding phase coming out of the COVID-19 emergency.

Governments have been justifiably spending money over this emergency period, but the retrenchment time will come. The general view will be that Canadians with stable pensions have not suffered economically as much as others: we can expect a resurgence of attacks on our pensions and stable pensions in general. We and all Canadians will have to sacrifice for the rebuilding, but that should come through general taxes and not by targeting pensioners.

And there will be some rebuilding of the health system. We will want this to be done properly, to meet our current and future needs, and will have to be wary of fine words like "flexible" and "efficient".

I am delighted that we now have Sharon Carson on the Board as our Advocacy lead. We have our work cut out for us



Fred Conway
Branch President
905-669-4489

UPCOMING EVENTS**Board Meetings****September 15 9:15****October 06 9:15****November 03 9:15**

In-person meetings are held at the York Regional Police building in Richmond Hill. ZOOM is used as the alternate format

Members are welcome. For information contact Fred Conway 905-669-4489 or Tom Nichols 905-505-2079

Fall Members Meeting

October 20 10:30 to 12:30

If allowed, an in-person meeting will be held at the Richvale Community Centre
160 Avenue Road
Richmond Hill
(If in-person, the meeting will be followed by a hot lunch.)

Otherwise it will be held virtually via ZOOM.

Watch your email for details. If you don't have email and think in-person meetings might be allowed, please contact a Board member for information.

*Presentations:
An Association update
Johnson Insurance on
MEDOC – the impact of
provincial rule changes and of
course COVID 19*

A question:

Would you be interested in monthly ZOOM presentations to exchange ideas, get updates from the Association and hear from some of our partners? Please contact Fred or Tom or email the Branch with your suggestions

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FEDERAL RETIREES**York Branch Board 2020-2021****President:** Fred Conway**Director at Large:** Linda Laffree**Vice President:** Ken Ackles**Director at Large:** Sharon Paris**Secretary:** Ed Millar**Director at Large:** Joe Vettese**Past president and Treasurer:**
Tom Nichols**Director at Large:** Frank Froude**Membership:** Vasdev Sawhney**Director at Large - Advocacy Lead:**
Sharon Carson**Event Coordinator:** Marie MacPhee**VOLUNTEERING**

Please consider volunteering with the Branch or as a National Director.

The Branch would like:

- someone to put content on the Branch website.
- someone interested in updating the sound equipment.
- You to join the Board and learn about the issues affecting us as Federal Retirees

CONTACT US

For Membership renewal and payments and specific questions related to benefits, please contact the staff at the national office at:

865 Shefford Road
Ottawa,
Canada
K1J 1H9

1-855-304-4700

If you have questions or recommendations for the Branch, please contact a Board member or federalretirees.york@gmail.com

