

NEWS FROM YOUR NB62 BRANCH

APRIL- 2021

Website: <http://federalretirees.ca/fredericton>

Email: nafrfred.nb62@gmail.com

Telephone: (506) 451-2111

Address: PO Box 30068 RPO Prospect Plaza Fredericton, NB

E3B 0H8

# President’s Message

Hello Members:

It has been a difficult year for your Board of Directors. We all enjoy the dinners and info-session

meetings we normally have throughout the year but, of course, all of those are cancelled now and likely won't be started again until the Covid-19 situation improves. There have been improvements and vaccines have begun, although it could be as late as September before they are completed. Given this situation your Board of Directors decided to produce a newsletter that will be circulated to our members. It will go out by email where we have an email address and it will go by Post Office to others. This is our first edition.

On the local scene, we spearheaded a health survey just before the Covid-19 struck. You can learn more about that in the article below.

As you know our Association's most important role is to advocate on your behalf to protect the pension and

benefits you have earned through your career in the public service. Together with our pension coalition partners, nationally we represent over six million pensioners advocating for pension security in retirement. Obviously, it is important to have as many members as possible. And

there is the added benefit of some great discounts through our preferred partner programs.

I hope all is well. I look forward to seeing you at a Branch event after the pandemic has eased.

Feedback is always appreciated. Elliott Keizer, Branch President elliottk.nb62@gmail.com

# Healthcare Survey

NB62 members’ views on the NB health care system – some preliminary results:

The state of the New Brunswick health system is one of the recurring topics with the gang at the coffee shop.

Generally there is great discussion about how things could improve and what needs to be fixed. And lots of opinions. But are these opinions accurate? Is the NB health care system working well for NAFR members? Where does it need to be improved?

We didn’t know the answer to these questions so our branch decided to ask its members about their experiences

with the NB health care system. We set up a team comprised of:

Cyril Theriault, Sandy Theriault, Peggy Powell, Evans Estabrooks and myself. Questions were hammered out and National Office (NO) was contacted for advice and help with logistics. After several meetings with NO we decided to make the survey provincial rather than branch- level and so a fairly-detailed survey was mailed to all NAFR members in New Brunswick. The results came in and were analyzed and then…. Covid struck.

Given the severity of the pandemic we decided to wait for a while before talking publicly about the survey results.

We felt it was important not to start a discussion about issues with the NB health system when the system was first grappling with managing the pandemic.

But now is the time, we think, to start talking about some of the findings of the survey.

Firstly, we had responses from over 1,300 NAFR members in NB and 334 from our Branch! This was a fabulous response rate and, because of it, we are confident that our survey reflects the sentiments of all 7,000 plus NAFR members in NB.

The survey indicates a level of frustration with the current health system with only one-half our members being satisfied with the current system. Accessibility to the system seems to be a problem; our branch singled out ER

wait times and time to see their family doctor as their number one priority (38 and 32% of the respondents ranked these as the number 1 priority respectively). About 29% of our branch members said that they have to wait at least 3 weeks to see their family doctor. And 8.7% of us were without a family physician compared to the provincial average of 4.8%.

Unsurprisingly, many members commented that more health care professionals are needed. One member said that they had been on the list for a hip replacement for 6 months and that they had been told that they would likely be waiting for years. Another member commented that they had been without a family physician for more than three years.

The survey also touched on telemedicine, long-term care, and availability of health care providers after hours, ambulance services and more. For those of you who are interested, we will be posting the results of the survey (in spreadsheet form) on our

Webpage for all to see. There is lots there and we will be discussing some of the findings in future branch bulletins.

So some of the coffee shop opinions were borne out by our survey. The question is, how do the survey results influence future NB62 activities? What do we need to do and say to represent our members’ concerns and ideas?

And this is where I am appealing to you, if you have ideas

about where we should go with the survey and/or if you would like to be involved as we go forward please let me know!

John Richards.

Advocacy Director johnrich.nb62@gmail.com

# Brats In The Battlefield Association Inc.

Brats Executive And Board Members Summary CFB Gagetown NB Chemical Pesticide Program

The views expressed in this article may not reflect the views of the officers or branch board of directors. This article is being presented to let members know that there are people still working on this issue.

Brats in the Battlefield Association Inc. (BITB) is made up of like-minded, surrounding Gagetown Community Members, Military Veterans, their Families and Supporters, who are concerned with the continued lack of transparency and accountability shown by consecutive Federal Governments dating back to the early nineteen fifties to this present day, regarding the CFB Gagetown Chemical Pesticide Program.

Consecutive Federal Governments continue to forcefully assert that only the US Military sprayed Agent Orange, Agent Purple and Agent White on CFB Gagetown. To the contrary, DND sprayed a total of 6504 barrels of the exact same (Dioxin

and Hexachlorobenezene laden Pesticides) over 181,038 acres of CFB Gagetown’s training area. This is a substantial amount of highly toxic pesticides

and herbicides bioaccumulating year after year at CFB Gagetown.

While in opposition, Stephen Harper and Greg Thompson continually promised, if elected, their Government would convene a Public Inquiry into the history of Gagetown’s Chemical Program, only to break that promise once elected. Instead, the Harper Government hired the (Chemical Industry itself) to conduct the Health Risk Assessment on the effects those chemicals may have had on Gagetown’s Military and civilians who used the training area. The company the Harper Government hired was called Cantox Environmental Inc., their name has since changed. This company was formed by past Health Canada employees. One of the founders branched off and continued his close ties with Cantox by Peer reviewing their work, as he did with the Health Risk Assessment of Gagetown’s Chemical History. Dr.

Wayne Dwernychuk, Canada’s foremost authority on

Agent Orange and the Rainbow Chemicals, has publicly stated that it makes no difference if these chemicals were registered for use by Health Canada or not, if they contained a 50/50 mixture of 2,4,D and 2,4,5T it was Agent Orange and never should have been used at Gagetown and anyone exposed would have been adversely affected.

The Brats and our supporters cannot and will not sit on the sidelines and allow this shameful level of Governance to continue at the expense of Gagetown’s Chemical victims. We are thankful for the opportunity to share our Quest for Justice with our Federal Retirees and we humbly ask for your support in our demand to Canada’s Liberal Government, that they convene a Full Judicial Public Inquiry into the Gagetown Atrocity. We are always looking for new members who wish to join in our Quest. We can be found on Facebook at, (Brats In The Battlefield Association Inc.)

Gary Goode gngoode@gmail.com

(250)423-0141

# BRANCH MEMBERSHIP APPEAL

As chairperson of the Branch Membership Growth Committee, I appeal to

you to help attract new members to the National Association of Federal Retirees (NAFR). We need your help!

As a consequence of the Covid-19 Pandemic, new memberships to the Federal Retirees have slowed down since March, 2020 both at the national and branch level. At the Fredericton & District Branch (NB62) active membership numbers have dropped to 1870 at the end of 2020 from 1930 at the end of last year. Covid-19 has got most of us thinking about how to stay healthy and has put a stop to most meetings and social events.

Over the past few years, we volunteers in the Branch and on the Membership Growth Committee have made progress at getting the message out as to the helpful information that the Federal Retirees are providing to its members and the public concerning protection of pensions and health plans, advocating for seniors, along with all the other benefits of belonging to our Association, including our preferred partners.

I ask you to consider what friends and acquaintances are eligible for membership and would benefit by becoming a Federal Retirees member? Membership is open to employees and retired members of the Public Service, Canadian Armed Forces and RCMP. Membership fees remain low at less than $6 per month or $70 per year for couples and less than that for a single membership. If you

need a handy one-page handout called “Why Should You Join NAFR?” please go to our website to see a copy.

What is in it for me, you might ask? Although the Mega Recruitment Drive (MRD) finished on December 31/2020, you can still help keep the membership fees at a reasonable level for future years by helping to increase the membership numbers. Don’t forget the “good feeling” of knowing that you have helped someone to become a member and better informed about senior issues. If each of us brought in one new member, we could keep the Federal Retirees growing and doing more for us and our senior community.

To learn more please refer to

website: [www.federalretirees.ca/Fredericton](http://www.federalretirees.ca/Fredericton) and look for more information on how to become a member under the heading – Joining Us.

Evans Estabrooks, chairperson,

Branch Membership Growth Committee evanse.nb62@gmail.com