

# CALGARY BRANCH NEWSLETTER

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Roy Goodall

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## Presidents Report - Spring 2016



Hello Fellow NAFR Members. Your Calgary and District Board has been extremely busy communicating with our National Office on an almost daily basis as we plan for the National Annual Meeting to take place in Ottawa from June 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>. Please make note that, if you have any pressing issues you want discussed at the Annual Members' Meeting, all potential

Resolutions must be submitted before March 24<sup>th</sup>. There is a specific way that Resolutions must be submitted in order to be considered so we suggest you start by first sending them to our Board to review for you.

In the meantime, the Presidents from all the Branches across Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta will be meeting in Saskatoon May 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> so that, when we go to Ottawa, we can speak with a united Western perspective about what we want and deserve from our National Office. In doing this, we are happy to work with our Regional Director, Roy Goodall, who, I can tell you from previous meetings he has organized, runs a tight ship and keeps us on schedule.

Roy Chairs the Audit Committee for the National Board of Directors and has reported to us that their discussions are open and robust so it sounds like National Office got the message last year that we are asking for more transparency. Another thing he reports is that the National Board is hoping to attract nominations from across the country from both men and women.

In Calgary, our Volunteer Co-Ordinator, Sally Manchurek, is planning a Volunteer Training Session to be held at the Kerby Centre from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. This is your opportunity to become more familiar with what goes on in our office at 302 in the Kerby Centre every weekday

morning from 10 A.M. to Noon. We are looking at providing you with a computer to use in the outer office while you are there if you wish and, of course, we will have our computer specialist, Guy Lallier, there to check you out on using it.

Our volunteers are the essence of our Branch and are what keep us operating smoothly. We could not do this without you. As you know, all of us on the Board are volunteers as well and we welcome more of our members to come out on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March to find out what we do. If you are not able to attend on that date, please advise us and we will try to set up an individual date for you to come in and “learn the ropes”.

One of the main questions we receive on a regular basis is regarding membership renewal where some people are not sure if they have paid yet or when their membership expires. The easiest way for you to alleviate that problem for you and for us is to arrange to have your fee deducted from your cheque on a monthly basis. Personally, it costs me just \$3.19 each month which is much easier on my budget than paying the full amount annually. Spouses of RCMP are now able to take advantage of this easier method too.

You may recall, National Office changed the method in which renewal cards were sent out and they are still trying to sort out the problems that came with that change in the system. In the January 2016 issue of Bulletin to Branches, we were reminded that National Office is hearing from many members who have not yet received their renewal notices from their Branches. Normally, in Calgary, we have not sent out renewals until April but we are going to change our method and become part of what National Office calls a Branch Administration Support project to cut down on the work our own local volunteers have to do. We are always looking for ways to not only help you, our members, but also those who donate their time to help provide the service for which we received the 2015 Member Service Award last year. We invite you to come into the office and have a look at it and to have a visit with whoever is on duty that day. We will even offer you a free cup of coffee.

Just one final note, our next meeting will be our Annual Meeting so we invite Nominations to our Board before March 31<sup>st</sup> because our meeting will take place at Fort Calgary on April 15, 2016. Please come out and bring your friends.

### **Okotoks/Foothills Coffee Sessions:**

Please contact Michelle Lucia @ 403-938-7397, email [gmluchia@shaw.ca](mailto:gmluchia@shaw.ca)

or Doug Raynor at 403-9951786, email [draynor@shaw.ca](mailto:draynor@shaw.ca) for information.

### **Canmore Coffee Sessions:**

Please contact Jette Finsborg at 403-609-0598, email [jfinsborg@gmail.com](mailto:jfinsborg@gmail.com) for information.

**FYI** - Canada's inflation rate jumped 1.4 per cent in December – an increase that is being widely blamed on [soaring food prices](#). As *The Canadian Press* reports, skyrocketing produce prices increased more than 13 per cent last month compared to a year earlier.

## **Beware of scammers impersonating the Canada Revenue Agency**

RCMP and CRA raise awareness about ongoing email and phone scams

February 11, 2016 Ottawa, Ontario Canada Revenue Agency

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) are warning Canadians about an ongoing scam in which taxpayers across the country receive phone calls or emails from individuals impersonating CRA employees. These people are scammers.

The scammers tell taxpayers that they either owe money to the CRA or have a tax refund. Taxpayers are threatened with arrest or jail time if they do not take immediate action and provide money or personal or financial information.

### **Quick facts**

- The RCMP plays a crucial role in educating the public about scams, and has a number of programs in place to track fraud, including one run by the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC).
- The CAFC monitors all types of scams, and warns Canadians to be on the lookout for scammers during the upcoming tax season.
- The RCMP also works closely with the CRA to raise awareness about tax-related scams.
- When CRA employees call taxpayers, they follow established procedures to ensure personal information is protected.
- To confirm the authenticity of a call, contact the CRA by using its official telephone number for individual tax enquiries: 1-800-959-8281.
- You can also verify your individual tax account through a secure CRA portal: My Account.
- If you believe you may be the victim of fraud or have given personal or financial information in error, contact your local police service and your financial institution

### **Please check out our National Association of Federal Employees websites:**

National: <https://www.federalretirees.ca/>

Alberta Regional: <http://fsnaab.ca/about-calgary-branch/>

### **Tax season is upon us**

Just a reminder that we do not issue tax receipts for membership fees. Our membership fees are not tax deductible and members should not claim fees paid to us as deductions on their tax returns.

### **Census of Population Program**

The next Census of Population will take place in May 2016.

Starting May 2, 2016, Statistics Canada will send census letters and packages to all Canadian households.

You can complete your census questionnaire online or on paper.

### **Step training may reduce risk of falling for the elderly (Globe & Mail)**

Step training focused on improving gait and balance may help prevent falls among the elderly, a recent research review suggests.

The analysis of seven previous studies, with a combined total of 660 older adults, found that interventions to improve stepping skills cut the rate of falls roughly in half.

For fall prevention, elderly people may benefit from exercises designed to help maintain balance during everyday activities such as getting out of a chair or avoiding obstacles on a sidewalk, said senior study author Stephen Lord of the University of New South Wales in Sydney. Workouts that improve the ability to recover when balance is lost so that trips or slips don't turn into falls may also be beneficial, Lord added.

“Strength and balance are both important for physical functioning,” Lord said by e-mail. “In terms of fall prevention, the best evidence is for balance and step training.”

In addition to cutting the rate of falls, step training also helped cut the proportion of fallers across the studies roughly in half, Lord and colleagues report in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*. This is important with the elderly because after one tumble people are more likely to have repeat accidents.

A pooled analysis of data from five studies found stepping interventions significantly improved decision-making and stepping reaction time, single leg stance and the time it took people to rise up from seated position and start moving.

Limitations of the results include the wide variation among the step programs and in the outcomes measured across the studies analyzed, many of which were fairly small, the authors note.

Even so, the findings suggest that step training should be a major component of exercise interventions to prevent falls, the authors conclude.

So-called functional training or workouts tailored to skills needed for a very specific activity or sport, is becoming much more common in all age groups, not just the elderly, noted Dr. Elizabeth Joy, medical director for community health at Intermountain Healthcare in Salt Lake City, Utah.

“We are seeing training programs migrate into this ‘functional’ space, not only for older adults, but for others as well,” Joy, who wasn't involved in the study, said by e-mail.

“For an older adult trying to maintain independent living, they need function-specific training,” Joy added. “Walking, getting up out of a chair, getting up off the floor, those are the activities they need to do.”

While a wide variety of balance exercises is also important, exercises focused on walking are particularly crucial for fall prevention among the elderly, noted Saija Karinkanta, a scientist at the UKK Institute for Health Promotion Research in Tampere, Finland, who wasn't involved in the study.

“If you want to improve your walking ability, most of the exercises need to be done while walking – standing on one foot, reaching, shifting weight from one foot to the other, squatting, tandem walking, stair walking, walking on different surfaces and stepping,” Karinkanta said by e-mail.

“In addition, if you want to improve your reaction time, the exercises need to challenge your reactions,” Karinkanta added. “Volitional stepping using a dance mat or other target where you need to hit quickly is a good way to improve reaction time.”