



National Association of Federal Retirees Association nationale des retraités fédéraux

WINNIPEG & DISTRICT

October 2021

NEWSLETTER – Fall 2021

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FEDERAL RETIREES (NAFR)

WINNIPEG AND DISTRICT BRANCH

President's message

I sincerely hope that this newsletter finds you all safe, healthy and happy. We have zipped through Summer and are now starting the fall season. In Winnipeg it has started with bright beautiful clear blue skies. Although I am sorry to see summer go, I do love this time of year. I had hoped that at this time we would be through the pandemic and instead we are heading into the 4th wave. Stay vigilant, wash your hands, wear a mask and please be careful with your health.

Unfortunately, we are still not able to have in-person meetings which is making me feel very disconnected from all of you. We did have an annual general meeting in April this year which we held virtually. We accomplished a couple of very important things – the first being the election of new board members; creation of reserve funds to guide us through the next couple of years and a plan to dissolve our Defense of Benefit reserve fund over the next two years (2021/2022 and 2022/2023) by remitting the funds to the National Office to be used for advocacy initiatives at the national level.

Our meeting in September 2021 was cancelled but in November we plan to have a virtual meeting which I'm hoping members will attend. As always, the safety and health of our members will determine when it is safe to again hold in-person meetings.

Earlier this fall we had another federal election. Although not much has changed in Winnipeg and throughout the country, it has given us another opportunity to connect with both our current members of parliament and to the candidates who ran against them. There is more information later on in the newsletter to address what actions we have taken to advocate on behalf of all members.

Branch Board of Directors

At the annual general meeting in April, we held elections and the board is now comprised of the following people:

Ceci O’Flaherty – President

Lionel Guerard – Vice-President

Donna Dobson – Secretary

Gwen Schentag – Treasurer

Naomi Ashton – Director, Membership

Denise Galbraith – Director-at-Large

Paula Nygaard – Director-at-Large; and Branch Services Coordinator Manitoba and Saskatchewan

Cynthia Foreman – Director, Advocacy; and Advocacy Programs Officer - Manitoba

We still have the following positions on the Board of Directors that are vacant

Director – Equipment

Responsible for set-up and maintaining equipment; ordering name tags; printing; ordering promotional material (swag) and assisting at events such as speaker series, general meetings and other recruitment initiatives.

Director – Special events

Responsible for working with a group of volunteers to organize the speaker series; survey members for topics of interest; identify and book speakers and organize the logistics of the event.

Director – Social media

Responsible for maintaining our social media presence (Facebook); posting information on our branch website (meeting minutes, upcoming events, etc) and working with True North Sports and Entertainment to update events offered to our members at a discounted rate.

If you are interested in volunteering for our Board of Directors, please send us an email at nafwpg@mymts.net.

Annual Meeting of Members (AMM) – December 2020, June 2021

December 2020 - National Board of Directors

Elections were held for Board positions across the country including an opening for the Prairie and Northwest Territories District for the position vacated by Cynthia Foreman. Connie Kehler from our Branch put her name forward for the position. There were very good candidates that put their names forward for all positions and I am happy to say that Connie was successful in her bid for the seat on the National Board. It has now been almost a year since the election and Connie has been an active Board member and with Rick Brick has provided the District and the Association with strong leadership. With Connie's election, it has created another vacancy on our local Board of Directors. If you have an expertise in website and social media management, please consider volunteering for the board.

June 2021

Among other things the AMM in June highlighted several interesting and key initiatives for the ongoing sustainability of our Association. One advantage of having virtual meetings is that they are recorded and available for viewing. Both the AMM in June and the Special Meeting of Members in September (see below) were available for viewing by all members in real time. Two of the areas I wanted to highlight from the AMM are elections for related to Association and Branch finances.

Finances

Nikki Dignard, Director of Finances and CFO presented a detailed multi-year financial statement for the Association finances. We are currently in a very comfortable financial position, due mostly to the decrease in expenditures because of the pandemic and the revenues we received from the tenant in our building. Detailed information on the Association finances can be found on the federal retirees website.

Proposal related to Branch Finances

A proposal was put forward at the June AMM which will ensure consistency across the country related to Branch reserve funds including the naming of and dollar amount of reserves that branches can establish. This proposal was put forward by the co-chairs of the President's forum and was supported by the National Office.

Special Meeting of Members (SMM) – September 2021

A Special Meeting of Members (SMM) was held virtually on September 8 and 15. There were several resolutions of interest that were discussed. You can find more detail on all the proposals and resolutions on the website at www.federalretirees.ca. To highlight a few, here are some details:

- A proposal to restore membership fees to 20% share (from 18%) for branches starting in 2022 was passed
- Proposal to Amend Regulation 4.3 re: Branch Reserves (as discussed in June meeting) was passed
- Proposal to Establish a Special Committee to Review the Financial Needs of Branches and Recommend Actions to Ensure Adequate Funding for Branches to Succeed was passed. The Special Committee will be established in the near future and will conduct a comprehensive review of the financial needs of the Branches and prepare a report for review by the National Board of Directors and Branch Presidents Forum prior to the 2023 Annual Members Meeting. The report will recommend changes to current financial arrangements to resolve discrepancies to ensure that Branches can succeed, which will be presented in the form of proposals for approval by members at the 2023 AMM.

You and Your Survivor

The You and Your Survivor booklet is now updated and ready for use by members. This is an estate-planning workbook published by the Association in partnership with Arbor Memorial and was produced to serve as a resource for members and their survivors. Please note that the information provided in the workbook is general in nature and does not replace professional advice or a legal will.

A digital copy of this booklet is available on-line in an easy to download format on the Association website under publications or by clicking on this link [You and Your Survivors | Federal Retirees](#). A limited supply of printed copies are also available for members without computer access. You can get a copy by contacting our branch by email nafrwpg@mymts.net or by phone (204) 989-2061.

Golf 2021 and 2022

Unfortunately, we had to cancel the golf tournament again in 2021 but we are cautiously optimistic that we will be able to host one in 2022. We have tentatively booked **Scotswood Links in Elm Creek on Tuesday, 16 August, 2022.**

There will be a few exciting changes this year, so start watching the website for additional information and registration details later in the Spring 2022.

Membership

As of August 2021, we have a total of 5774 members in the Winnipeg and District Branch. This is a significant loss since the pandemic started in February/March 2020. Our organization is only as strong as our membership so, if you know of anyone eligible to join, please encourage them to do so. If you refer a member, there are incentives detailed below that could result in BIG PRIZES for you.

Branch Initiative

The first recruitment incentive I want to outline is the sponsored by the Winnipeg and District Branch. We will send you a \$25 gift card for a new referral or \$15 gift card for a change from a single membership to a double membership. Simply send an email to the branch stating that you have referred a new member, give us their name, and tell us what store/retailer you would like the gift certificate from.

National Initiative – Mega Recruitment Drive is back

Here is an excerpt from information from the National Office. For more information, please refer to the full article in the SAGE magazine.

The **Mega Recruitment Drive** (MRD) is back, which means that from September 1 to December 31 members will again be rewarded for promoting the benefits of a Federal Retirees membership. Each successful word-of-mouth referral will get you a \$5 gift card and a ballot for our fantastic slate of prizes, including our \$10,000 cash grand prize, courtesy of Johnson Insurance. There are 14 prizes in total, including an early bird worth \$500, courtesy of SimplyConnect, to be drawn at the end of October. There is no limit to the number of gift cards and ballots you can acquire, so start recruiting early and often.

Remember, you don't have to be retired to join Federal Retirees. You can recruit anyone who is currently paying into or receiving a pension from Canada's public service, the RCMP or the Canadian Armed Forces. Federally appointed judges, honourably discharged non-pensioned veterans and anyone receiving a survivor benefit from the pensions mentioned above is also eligible for membership.

Website/Social Media

Website: <https://www.federalretirees.ca/en/branches/manitoba/winnipeg-district-branch>

Our website continues to be a great source of information on our local branch events and promotions, and on deals with our local preferred partners. On this site, you will find detailed descriptions of upcoming events and descriptions of past events, membership referral incentives, who your board members are, how to contact us, etc. You'll also find discounts offered by True North Sports + Entertainment on many events, such as Jets games, concerts,

and other special events. (Note that due to COVID-19, TSN+E events are limited or not being held at this time.)

Speaker Series

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our Speaker Series event in May 2020 on travelling due to the Covid 19 pandemic. In February 2021 we did hold a virtual event on Zoom with Dara Maternick from Health Partners doing a presentation on Older Canadians and the Pandemic. Because this was our first attempt at a virtual meeting, we limited registration to 50 participants. The presentation went well but only 17 of the 30 participants who registered attended the session. We will again hold speaker series events when we are able to again have in-person meetings so stay tuned for announcements in 2022.

Advocacy

Reach 338

The Reach 338 initiative, led by National Office, is an initiative to contact all 338 Members of Parliament across Canada. Since January 2021, I led a team with Paula Nygaard in her role as Branch Services Coordinator; Cynthia Foreman in her role as Manitoba Advocacy Program Officer and we were able to meet with 8 out of 9 members of parliament that represent members of the Winnipeg and District Branch. The meetings were very informative and our message was well received. Some of our key messages included:

- Promote awareness of our organization
- Ensure that our key messages are clearly understood
- Advocate on behalf of our members promoting our key pillars including
 - Pharmacare;
 - Retirement Income Security;
 - National Senior Strategy; and
 - Veterans

In addition to the meetings in February we also followed up through email in the summer to reiterate our message as we wanted to ensure our messages were well delivered if we went into an election which, as we all know, is what happened.

Federal Election 2021

As I'm preparing shortly after the federal election, I can tell you, not much has changed from a seat count perspective. We again have a minority liberal government so it is important to keep our messages front and centre with the members of parliament as well as candidates who stood for election. To this end, we sent email messages to the majority of candidates, regardless of which party they represented, to outline the priorities of the Association.

Over the next few months, we will again reach out to all members of parliament in Winnipeg to ensure our priorities are well known. As individual members of the organization, you can also help with this initiative by keeping informed of the priorities and speak to your members of parliament about our key priorities.

Preferred Partner – local

All Seniors Care Living Centres Inc

Our preferred partner agreement with All Seniors Care Living Centres Inc. includes the following residences:

- Shaftesbury Park
- Seine River
- Victoria Landing (Brandon)
- Sturgeon Creek I
- Sturgeon Creek II
- River Ridge I
- River Ridge II

Provisions of the memorandum of understanding changed in February 2021 and now include the following provisions for NAFR members who become new residents:

- A discount equivalent to one month of the first year (to be applied against the 12th month of the lease)
- In the event a lease is terminated due to death, prior to the completions of the first rental year, the discount will be applied on a pro-rated basis to the last month of residence
- Immediate family (parents) of a NAFR member are eligible for the discount if a NAFR member is a guarantor for the applicant
- The discount will not apply to those NAFR members or family who are currently residents with All Seniors
- The discount will not apply to those NAFR members or family who are currently residents with All Seniors. **And all previous discount agreement will continue to be honoured as long as the lease remains in good standing and until termination.**

The last clause of the agreement ensures that all NAFR members or their family member who were entitled to a discount of one month per year of residency (prior to February 2021) will continue to have that benefit for the length of their residency.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held virtually by Zoom on November 24, 2021 at 1:00 pm. More details will be distributed by email in the next few weeks. You can attend by either Zoom or by

phone. To register, please email the branch office using the information below. We hope to have as many members participate as possible.

Please make sure we have your email address on file. If you are getting this newsletter by regular mail, it means that we don't have your email address. To update it please contact the branch office by email at nafrwpg@mymts.net or by phone (204) 989-2061. Meeting announcements and reminders including Speaker Series are distributed electronically so it is a much easier way for you to stay informed.

In closing, on behalf of myself, the Board of Directors and the Association, I would like to wish all our members a happy and safe holiday season. Wear a mask, wash your hands, stay safe, stay healthy.

Thanks
Ceci O'Flaherty
President, Winnipeg and District Branch (MB31)