



National Association of Federal Retirees Association nationale des retraités fédéraux

FRASER VALLEY WEST

BC04 Branch Report

for year ending 2016 12 31

Presented at 2017 03 09 AGM

- 2016 in Review
- Br. Financial Reports
- Br. Advocacy
- Membership Admin.
- Br. Communications
- Br. Social Events
- Br. Speaker Events
- Health & Benefits

• 2016 in Review

During 2016, Fraser Valley West Branch enjoyed a relatively calm year. The 2015 federal election and all that elections-Advocacy; a mere memory, giving us the opportunity to focus on our in-house governance and procedures.

Our Board of Directors worked diligently, respectfully, and cordially in a most pleasant team approach to Member services.

At our Dec 8th General Meeting, we strengthened and clarified matters pertaining to our Branch Reserves. We passed the Resolution for establishing a specific 'Defense of Benefits Fund', a specific 'Member Support Fund', and a 'Special Members Events Fund' - an important step forward, enabling our Branch to retain defined and limited access to the Branch Reserves.

With a view on continued volunteerism, our National Association is placing an increasing emphasis on training of volunteers at the Branch level; funded mostly by the Branch.

For our Board Directors, a rewarding highlight is participation at the Tri-Region NAFR Workshop, held annually at the RCMP training facility in Chilliwack. Here, we network with highly motivated Directors from the other (14) BC Branches and we hone our focus on effective NAFR Advocacy and Member Services through presentations from our National President, our National CEO, as well as our Regional Directors and Branch Service Coordinators. It is a most inspiring experience for all, as we learn via each other's successes and challenges.

A key strength of our Branch is our mix of social networking and effective communications. As such, our Branch Events will continue with enjoyable opportunities to mingle and exchange views. July BBQ and Christmas Buffet continue to be two of our social highlights.

The Directors of Fraser Valley West Branch thank our Branch Members for their support, and thank our many Volunteers for their invaluable, indeed critical, assistance and guidance at every step of the way. Collectively, we strive to remain a leading Force in matters Pension and Health Benefits. Our long-range challenge remains the defense of '**defined**' pension & benefits vs. 'targeted' plans which are deemed less 'secured'.

It has been a pleasure and an honour to have served on our Fraser Valley West Board.

Respectfully,

Bernd Hirsekorn, Branch President

• Branch Financial Reports

a) Treasurer's Report for 2016 year end

Branch 04 operates with three bank accounts. The funds in the accounts as of 31-12-2016 are as follows:

1. Checking Account	\$7386.93
2. Savings Account	\$956.06
3. GIC(s)	\$26,102.06

All revenue (our share of dues and interest from savings) are balanced with our expenditures for the year (see Balance Statement).

In 2016, based on the National Office's compliance with the "Not for Profit Act", Branch 04 was required to create Restricted (Allocated) Funds. These funds are available to pay for unanticipated and unbudgeted matters that may unexpectedly arise.

These funds are comprised of:

1. Defense of Benefits Fund. (Designated as Maintenance of Members Retirement Funds) for the future in the event The Association has to defend any reduction in our benefits the government may impose. Value of the fund: \$7,000.00.
2. Branch & District Volunteer Training (the Member Support Fund) to support Branch 04 operations. Value of the fund: \$7,000.00.
3. Branch and Volunteers appreciation (the Special Members Events Fund) for events that are not regularly scheduled. So far this fund is being used to hold the Branch 04's Fortieth Anniversary in 2018. Value of the fund: \$7,000.00.
4. A fourth fund will be created pending approval of a motion by the Branch Membership to be used as an equipment purchase fund. Value will be \$3,000.00

The four funds are supported by our Savings Account and GIC(s).

The Branch has two items purchased that are considered Capital Assets:

- Item 1. A Roll-Up Banner depicting the Association's Logo on display at our General Meetings. In 2015 the banner was purchased for \$897.79. After two years of depreciation the Banner is now valued at \$574.58.
- Item 2. A Computer System used the Branch Secretary to support the Branch's Administrative needs. In 2016 the item was purchased for \$1150.88. The item has depreciated to its current value of \$920.12.

In 2016, Branch 04 was required to repatriate (send back) to National Office \$5,638.69 of Branch Funds. The funds were removed from our accounts by taking \$4,000.00 from our Savings Account and \$1638.69 from our operational Chequing Account.

Glen (Rocky) Rockwell, Branch Treasurer



• **Branch Advocacy: 2016 Report from the Branch Advocacy Committee**

a) Contacts with MPs:

Attended a public meeting on Physician Assisted Dying in Langley, January 30, 2016 led by Langley MPs Mark Warawa and John Aldag, members of the Parliamentary Committee.

Met with Mark Warawa, MP, Langley-Aldergrove, and Opposition Critic on Seniors Issues to discuss protection of pensions on February 9, 2016. Mark also spoke at the March 16 meeting of the Langley Seniors Community Action Table where a petition was developed to go the House of Commons recommending the government to establish a Minister for Seniors with responsibility to develop a national seniors strategy. The petitions were presented in the House of Commons in the Fall of 2016.

Met with John Aldag, MP, Cloverdale Langley City at our July GM and BBQ; also attended an Open House for his new office, and attended an Election Reform public meeting organized by MP John Aldag in Cloverdale, August 2.

Attended a Seniors Health Care Summit in Langley organized by MP Mark Warawa as a panel discussion with Dr. Granger Avery, President, Canadian Medical Association and Dr. Alan Ruddiman, President, Doctors of BC.

b) Training/ Awareness of Issues/Collaboration with Other Groups:

Regional Training in Chilliwack in May 2016 included useful topics such as Advocacy, Volunteerism and CRM access. June attendance at AMM in Ottawa also supported Advocacy.

Attended COSCO Conference: Aging Well a Quest for All Generations; key topics were Seniors health, housing and transportation issues in September 2016.

Continued as Board member of the Council of Senior Citizens Organizations of BC (as an individual and not as an official NAFR rep) which supported:

- Participation on Organizing Committee for the Conference;
- Ongoing work with the Declaration for a Seniors Health Strategy (in collaboration with Vancouver Branch President, Jocelan Caldwell);
- Participation in the Annual Conference of the National Pensioners Federation in September 2016 – issues included pensions, health, and many others;
- Meeting with MP Carla Qualtrough, Minister for Sport and Persons with Disabilities;
- Meetings with Brian Dodd, Executive Director of Seniors Services Society (deals with seniors who are homeless) and Jay Chalke, BC Provincial Ombudsman;
- Representation on the Coalition for Retirement Security until November 2016;

Chaired the Federal Working Group for the Council of Advisors to the BC Seniors Advocate to produce a Federal Submission which outlined issues important for BC seniors where the federal government interventions were important and needed. Also worked with others to advocate (successfully) for better information on the BC Seniors Supplement for low income seniors.

Attended the March and September meetings of the Council and brought forward issues important to seniors in the Fraser Health Authority.

c) Other and related Activities:

- Developed Branch content for the leave-behind pamphlets produced by National Office.
- Produced BBQ event survey and compiled results to be used by Event coordinator; survey of membership to determine how Branch can meet needs is in progress.
- Prepared business cards for Branch Board of Directors.
- Monitored news articles and issues to determine if they would affect our members.

Submitted by Leslie Gaudette and Ilene Fika, Advocacy Committee



• **Membership Administration: 2017 Fraser Valley West Branch Membership Report**

The year 2016 has seen a growth in our Branch membership of 4%, 92 new members, giving us a total membership in the Fraser Valley West Branch of 2,152.

Over the last 5 years our branch grown by an average of 141 new members each year.

The Fraser Valley West Branch encompasses an area from White Rock to Maple Ridge with our members spread out accordingly.

Branch Members residence distribution within the BC04 boundaries:

Surrey leads the way with	58%
Langley has	22%
White Rock/ South Surrey have	9%
Delta has	2%
Maple Ridge/ Mission/ Pitt Meadows	4%
Aldergrove has	2%.

Additionally there are 3%, of our members who reside outside our area but prefer to keep Fraser Valley West as their home Branch.

Our membership is derived from 3 different branches of the Federal Government Service:

- 72 % from Public Service;
- 18 % from RCMP;
- 10 % from Canadian Forces.

(Note: These percentages pertain to all BC04 Primary Members and do not include their spouse's occupations.)

Steve Sawchuk, Dir. Branch Membership Administration

• **Branch Communications**

Communicating with our roughly 2,200 Branch Members has over the past few years switched from Canada Post mailed Quarterly Newsletters to mostly e-mailed Branch Correspondence. Additionally, generalized Branch Events info is included with each SAGE magazine issue and is being uploaded onto our National Association website <https://www.federalretirees.ca> .

Increasingly, it is left to each Branch Member to update their Membership Profile on this national website, especially whenever their private e-mail address is changed. For the foreseeable future, Steve, our Dir. Membership Administration, will strive to update Member information for those who cannot access their 'profile' on-line - simply contact Steve and advise of changes.

We are maintaining a full set of historical and up-to-date Branch information for public access on our Branch Website, <http://www.nafrraservalleywest.ca/> . More sensitive Branch files from our Branch Board of Directors are stored in the 'Office' tab, accessible only via Login and password. As we have no physical Office and no hardcopy files, this virtual 'office' contains our core of Branch information. It is always available to succeeding volunteers and directors, ensuring a smooth succession for new Board members. A contemporary Dir. Branch Communications, skilled in website administration, would be a great help in refining our Branch Website content – perhaps even building a grand 'picture gallery'. Advertising revenue potentials on our Branch Website are not currently being pursued.

Bernd Hirsekorn, acting Dir. Branch Communications



• Branch Social Events

We concluded another successful BBQ/GM in July at Peace Arch Provincial Park with in excess of 80 members.

Our first informal luncheon gathering in September drew 20 members and guests to the Italian function at Pasta Vino Restaurant in South Surrey. Look for further Specialty Lunches under the heading '*Let's do Lunch*' in subsequent newsletters.

The Christmas GM/Luncheon at Newlands Golf & Country Club drew 100 members to the meeting which helped in kick-starting the festive season for many.

For our upcoming 'Events', Lunches, BBQ, etc., please refer to our Branch website, or check the Quarterly Newsletters and e-mailed Monthly Branch News Updates.

Charles Louth, Dir. Social Activities

• Branch Speaker Events

On May 19th 2016, our first speaker event brought 25 Branch members to an informative talk by Laszlo Pinczesi, the Family Services Director of Valley View Memorial Gardens/ Arbor Memorial, one of our Preferred Partners. He spoke about the exclusive benefits and discounts on Pre-Planning of Cemetery and Funeral Services.

On October 19th 2016, our second Speaker event brought 30 Branch members to hear Patricia Lapena, the BC Regional Rep for LegalShield, talk on legal-services needs and challenges faced by retirees. She touched on a range of legal issues, from real estate to divorce advice, wills, estate-planning, small business protection, and identity theft.

Sharon Riches, Dir. Speaker Events

• Health & Benefits

The past year has been spent assisting members on various issues with pensions, travel insurance and extended health care coverage. An information session on survivor benefits is planned for March 15, 2017.

As your Director of Health and Benefits, some time has been spent watching for increased costs to coverage through increased premiums, deductibles and prescription costs shifting the financial burden to retirees from insurers and government. Suggestions for improvements to our coverage and problems that need addressing have been forwarded to our head office for consideration for future negotiations with the federal government.

Members are encouraged to remain vigilant and prepared to respond to calls from NAFR for support when issues are identified. Working together with our organization and partners we can have some influence on government policies and legislation that effect our pensions, benefits and income. For example, in December the federal government reported that they were considering taxing medical and dental benefit plans. In February, the government reported that given the response from Canadians that they would not be implementing these recommendations. Watch out for future requests from NAFR to contact your MP when these trial balloons that are sent to "test the waters".

Thelma Graham, Dir. Health and Benefits

