



## BRANCH REPORT

### MB91 | Eastern Manitoba Branch

#### President's message

It seems only yesterday that we composed a branch newsletter. Actually, it was more than a month ago already. A fair bit has happened since then, enough to end this year by providing a brief update.

#### Changes to our Branch Board

After many years of faithful service to our branch, most recently as our HBO (Health Benefits Officer), **Donna Wuschke** has decided to retire. She assisted members who had questions related to health care and benefits, including MEDOC travel insurance and the PSHCP (Public Service Health Care Plan). On behalf of the board and of our members, I thank her for her contributions during the years.

I am pleased to announce that **Alanna Wilcox** has agreed to join our board as the new HBO. As a Human Resources expert, Alanna brings a lot of experience to the board and to our branch.

#### Provincial Election

Although the provincial election resulted in a change of government, the Lac du Bonnet electoral district, where most of our members live, remained Progressive Conservative. Wayne Ewasko remains our elected Member of the Legislative Assembly, but now in opposition. The new NDP government appears to keen to address some of the Provincial health care challenges. In his new role as member of the opposition, Mr Ewasko is now free to criticize, hopefully constructively, the actions of the new government as they pertain to the interests of our members and other seniors.

#### Advocacy

The Association has appointed Advocacy Program Officers (APOs) in each province. Our previous APO, Cynthia Foreman, has retired from this position and has been replaced by Glenn Armstrong. I met with Glenn in Pinawa in October where we discussed some initiatives for the future, both at the provincial as well as at the federal level. I have written a letter to our MLA, Waye Ewasko, to remind him that our Association has close to 600 members in his electoral district, the priorities of our Association, and that seniors tend to vote in proportionally larger number than other age groups... As we now come closer to the next federal election that has to be held before 2025 October, you can expect to see increased advocacy activity at that level.

#### Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) has been scheduled for Tuesday, April 23, 2024 at the Pinawa Alliance Church. It will start with the traditional buffet lunch at 12:00, followed by a presentation by an invited speaker and concluding with a business meeting. Our Branch Services Coordinator, Paula Nygaard, has tentatively arranged for a speaker from the travel industry, most likely a speaker from Collette Travel. Please pencil in this information in your calendar. The AGM will again be a recruitment meeting, meaning you should try to bring a guest who is eligible for membership.

Please contact Evelyn Vandergraaf at [nafr-mb91@hotmail.com](mailto:nafr-mb91@hotmail.com) or at 204-753-8402 if you plan to attend the 2024 AGM, so that the folks at the Pinawa Alliance Church can plan the meals accordingly.

### **Preferred Partners**

As most of you are aware, the Association has contracted with selected vendors to give discounts to NAFR members. A list of these vendors is available on the NAFR website and includes travel agencies, car rental agencies, and hotels. The Winnipeg & District branch has arranged with a car dealership in Winnipeg that gives a \$1,000 discount on the purchase of a car. You can find more information on the Winnipeg & District website. More recently, the Central Manitoba branch in Portage la Prairie has made arrangements with vendors in their area. Again, more information is available on their website. However, two words of caution, *caveat emptor* (let the buyer be aware) are in order. The discounts are not always the best ones you can get, so it pays to shop around.

### **Johnson Insurance**

Johnson Insurance is in the process of rebranding under the belairdirect insurance company name. Regrettably, belairdirect is not licenced to offer home insurance in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. However, their sister company will be able to offer home insurance in these two provinces. More details to come on how to obtain a new home quote, so stay tuned. If you require an immediate quote, I suggest you contact me, or Alanna, our HBO, and we can arrange for someone to contact you. Johnson Insurance still handles the MEDOC supplemental PSHCP travel insurance.

### **Branch Membership**

Despite the withdrawal of Atomic Energy of Canada, Ltd., our main source of new members, from our area, our membership is holding steady. This year, we welcomed 13 new members. Over the last five years, 55 new members have joined our Association in our catchment area. Part of this may be the result of having designated our two semi-annual meetings as recruiting events. This is also as good a time as any to put a plug in for the Association's Mega Recruitment Drive. What follows is the advertisement that was issued by the Association's National Office. I recognize that the time to recruit new members by December 31 is short but I'm sure that a new drive will be launched next year, in which case you have a whole year to enter the contest.

#### *Give the perfect gift for your chance to win*

Whether you're trying to find the perfect holiday gift for an eligible friend or family member or you're after a special present for a retirement party, we've got you covered. Federal Retirees is now ready to help you give the gift of membership.

Remember, you don't need to be retired to join!

To sweeten the deal, giving the gift of membership before Dec. 31, 2023, also enters you into our exciting Mega Recruitment Drive contest!

Good luck and happy recruiting!

### **Final Comments**

I end this last newsletter for 2023 with wishing you all a peaceful Christmas Season or, if you prefer, a peaceful Holiday Season, and a Happy New Year. I hope that you will find time to relax (I know, this sounds a bit odd when addressed to retirees), and enjoy the Manitoba winter or, if you are a snowbird, safe travels, and an enjoyable stay wherever you go. I hope to see many of you at the 2024 AGM.

