



BRANCH REPORT

MB91 | Eastern Manitoba Branch

President's message

Chuck Vandergraaf

Welcome to the first and hopefully not last newsletter from your Eastern Manitoba Branch. Winter is officially over, and we look with anticipation to a pleasant spring and summer.

I will start off this brief newsletter with a "State of the Branch". As you know, our branch has been in a precarious situation for six years now because of lack of volunteers to fill some of the key board positions. In that, we are not alone: the Lakeland Branch in Alberta has had to be dissolved for lack of volunteers. The Ottawa Valley Branch had to have a "jolt" and other branches face similar challenges. It is clear that changes to the structure of the Association are needed. For this reason, a "Special Committee on Association Structure" has been struck. I had volunteered to serve on this committee but, since only one member from each district is selected, the outgoing president of the Winnipeg & District branch, Ceci O'Flaherty, who was also one of the main drivers of the formation of this committee, was selected. The expectation is that we will see changes soon that will address these challenges.

Considering this development, and the fact that our branch remains very much viable (six new members so far this year), I have agreed to continue to serve on the board. The preferred role would be past-president to assist a new president but, failing that, as the president for another year. I am pleased to announce that, except for Wendy Berry and Donna Wuschke, all current board members are willing to remain on the board. We badly need additional board members, especially a vice-president and a treasurer. Please email or phone me if you might be able to help in any way. We can provide

training, either in person, on-line, via Zoom, or at regional, district or annual meetings.

Alanna Wilcox, who now looks after health and benefits, has prepared an excellent recruiting document, *Ready to Retire – what you should know*. It is intended for CNL employees at Whiteshell (and Chalk River) who are eligible for even a partial Public Service Pension. We trust that this resource may entice retiring CNL employees to join our branch.

Serving on the Board as an elected officer or director-at-large can be an exciting opportunity. It is a chance to share your expertise and life experiences, add value in advancing the Association's goals and objectives, meet new people and make a difference. Time commitments are not onerous: we have two semi-annual branch meetings and try to limit our board meetings to four or five per year. With a large number of members now living in the Lac du Bonnet and Beausejour areas, we would welcome board members from these two communities. Board members that live outside Pinawa are allowed to charge travel costs to attend board meetings.

The purpose of the Association is to advocate on your behalf, reminding the government to honour the pension you were promised and to fulfill the commitments made to you during your employment. All it takes is a few hours periodically to keep our Branch viable and growing! I strongly encourage you to give some thought to volunteering on the branch board. You can make a difference!

Annual General Meeting

Our 2024 AGM (Annual General Meeting) has been scheduled for Tuesday, April 23 at the Pinawa Alliance Church. There will be a buffet lunch at noon, a presentation by Sherry Pretasko from Collette Travel, and our regular business meeting. This will again be a recruitment meeting and you are invited to bring guest who is eligible for membership. There is no cost for attending but, because space is limited, we are asking you to register preferably, by email at nafr-mb91@hotmail.com or by phone at 204-753-8402.

Preferred Partners

Some of the benefits of belonging to the Association include eligibility for MEDOC travel insurance and for discounts from a number of nation-wide companies. The Winnipeg & District Branch and, more recently, the Central Manitoba Branch, have made arrangements, with more local companies, including *Murray Chevrolet* and *Murray Hyundai* in Winnipeg. Our branch members can also use these discounts. More details are on the Winnipeg & District website. If you travel through Portage La Prairie and you want to stop for a meal, *Bills Sticky Fingers* is now a Federal Retirees Preferred Partner and will give you a 15% discount if you present your membership card.

Membership Report

Evelyn Vandergraaf

As of 2024 March 25, the status of our membership was as follows:

	2024 March 25	2023 Sept. 15
Total Double Households	219	219
Total Single Households	156	155
Total Regular Households	375	374
Total Non-DDS* Households	34	32
Total DDS Households	339	342
Total Active Members	594	593

*DDS: Deducted from Source

We saw an overall increase of one member. We had 12 members join our branch since our Fall General meeting, in part due to having made the AGM a recruitment meeting. As far as I am aware, we lost no members due to death since our last newsletter but lost some to transfer outside our catchment area or resignation.

