

# BRANCH REPORT

## AB16 | Calgary & District

### CONTACT US

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#### President:

Roloin Vetsch

#### Vice-President:

John Bakator

#### Secretary:

Carr McLeod

#### Treasurer:

Paula Fuerst

#### Directors:

Ron Beirnes  
Ian Blake  
Sandra Laye  
Bonnie Pratt  
Anne Prusakowski  
Gabrielle Simpson  
Bob Woods

#### Past President:

Pat Henderson

### President's message

Summer is too short in Alberta, and I hope you managed to take advantage of the season to relax, travel, explore and enjoy time with friends and family.

At our Branch Annual Meeting in April, we elected three new directors to the branch board. I'm pleased to welcome Ian Blake, Sandra Laye and Carr McLeod to the board. In October, the board will be holding a retreat to identify the roles and responsibilities of the directors, since there has been some re-assignment of portfolios. We will also be reviewing the final year of our branch operational plan, to determine local activities into April 2024.

We regretfully said goodbye to our Branch Vice-President, Maggie Smith, at the end of June. She has been a tireless and innovative member of our board for several years. Although Maggie is stepping down as a board member and active volunteer, I know she will be contributing to our activities when she can.

John Bakator has stepped into the role of Branch Vice-President, and the other executive posts have been filled by Carr McLeod as Secretary, and Paula Fuerst as Treasurer. A full listing of the board of directors is available on the Calgary and District Branch web page.

At the Prairies and NWT district meeting held in Winnipeg in May 2023, Branch Presidents and observers from our district met with National Office staff and our District Directors. It was an opportunity to discuss topics such as funding models, branch structures, service delivery models and advocacy activities. Information sharing is a valuable practice which helps our volunteers respond to our members concerns and needs.

PARTNER BANNER

The Association held its Annual Members Meeting in June 2023. Building on discussions from the May district meeting, your branch delegation was prepared to address a variety of resolutions presented at this meeting. Workshops were held to discuss how to tailor organizational structure to meet member needs, how to support branches in delivery of core functions, and how to engage all levels of government in supporting a national seniors' strategy. Since the core mandate of our association is advocacy, a detailed training session was provided to attendees.

The keynote speaker at the event, Perry Tsergas from [spark\\*advocacy](#), gave an engaging and thought-provoking talk on changing demographics and methods for gathering news and information. There is an increasing preference for the use of social media rather than traditional methods, such as newspapers and television ads. A generational change is occurring which will impact how our Association advocates for, and communicates with, its members.

At our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in June, we were successful in recruiting several new members to our branch. Recruitment and retention efforts are ongoing. We encourage current members to invite friends and colleagues to join our association. We continued with our efforts to meet with members outside of Calgary by hosting a Meet and Greet event in Cochrane at the end of August. Eight of our current branch directors and our past president enjoyed the opportunity to connect with members on an informal basis. [Cochrane meet & greet](#)

Our board has a busy agenda planned for the fall. We are reconvening board meetings in September, reviewing our branch operational plan and several directors will be attending a provincial meeting of NAFR branches in October. Our Board Development Committee (BDC) has continued its work over the summer, and has drafted reference materials for board members. The BDC is also finalizing details for a board retreat in October.

We have some anticipated turnover on our board in 2024. If you're interested in considering a board position, please contact our office for more information. We'd be glad to have you join us!



Sincerely,

**Roloin Vetsch**  
*Branch President*

## National Association of Federal Retirees 60th Anniversary Celebration

On June 29th, 2023, we celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the founding the National Association of Federal Retirees, formerly the Federal Superannuates National Association. We have a proud history of protecting pensioners' interests, seeking improvements to their benefits and participating in developing social policies for all seniors. While we started with a modest group of about 1,600 members, we now serve nearly 170,000. We are close to 4,000 members here in Calgary and in the district.

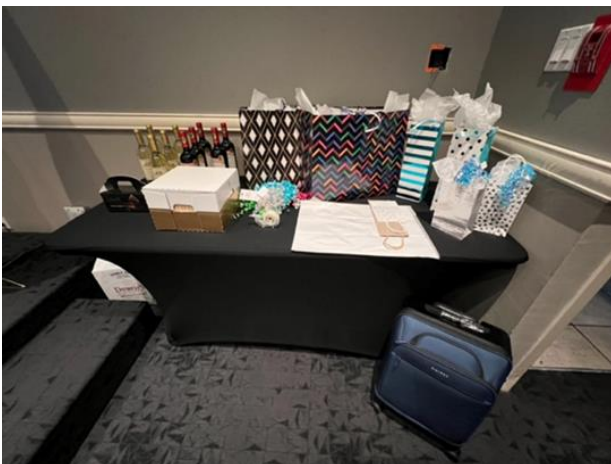
Joining about 85 members were Rick Brick and Connie Kehler, our District Directors, as well as our Provincial Advocacy Program Officer, Maria Fitzpatrick.

The planning committee was led by Maggie Smith and supported by John Bakator, Ian Blake, Paula Fuerst and Bob Woods. The festivities included music, great food and support from Johnson Insurance and Hearing Life Canada. After a NAFR-related trivia contest for the attendees there were some great door prizes which included:

- 3 large floral arrangements (Funky Petals)
- Ricardo carry-on luggage
- 2 bottles of champagne
- 2 gifts of 4 Luggage Tags
- Emergency car kit (Johnson insurance)
- Travel mugs and blankets (Johnson Insurance)
- A gift certificate from Hearing Life

Of course, there were some candid shots shared on our Facebook Page. Here is a link to see the full complement of pictures - [Photos from NAFR 60th Anniversary Celebration in Calgary](#)

Speaking of Facebook, your board of directors is looking at providing more exclusive content to our members. If you still need to do so, follow our page and be on the lookout for more information about new added value for our members.



Door prizes



balloon decoration in NAFR colours



large floral arrangement



Information posters on NAFR history on the walls around the room



Branch President Roloin Vetsch & District Director Rick Brick



District Director Connie Kehler

## **IMPORTANT MEMBERSHIP NOTICE**

According to recent publications regarding positive enrollment for Canada Life, we ask all members to ensure their member profiles are current. Please [login to your account](#) and ensure that your ***current address, email address and telephone numbers*** are correctly entered. Alternatively, you can **call or email our office**, and we will gladly assist.

We can be reached at [calgarybranch@federalretirees.ca](mailto:calgarybranch@federalretirees.ca) and (403) 265-0773.



### from our branch Advocacy director:

It was inspirational, and motivating, to be able to attend the 2023 Annual Meeting of Members in person. The President's Forum and Advocacy Presentations were not only presented by subject matter experts but were supplemented by interactive training sessions that were both instructive and thought provoking.

Especially valuable was the keynote address by Perry Tsergas, President and CEO of spark\*advocacy, an organization that promotes "use of advertising techniques to help accomplish public affairs goals, building reputation, open minds, shifting a mood, and - when needed - causing a stir". The topic covered the future of advocacy activities and which are likely to be most successful not just with our current but with potential new members of different generations. This presentation was then supplemented by discussion groups lead by experts from spark\*advocacy as well as NAFR staff and volunteers. The discussion topics centred around: Evolution of Governance and Organization Structure; Support to Branches in Delivery of Core Functions; and Strategy for engaging provinces to support a National Seniors Strategy. I also appreciated the presentation on health care priorities and information on certain current campaigns.

The meeting allowed Calgary attendees to network with other Federal Retirees from across the country and we will be bringing learning points back to share with the Branch Executive and our members.



The Mega Recruitment Drive is back, and this year, it's even bigger and better! Refer a member to the Association for your chance to win one of [14 great prizes](#), including the grand prize — **\$10,000 cash courtesy of Johnson Insurance**.

The early-bird prize is a \$500 pre-paid credit card, courtesy of IRIS Advantage. Oct. 31 is the deadline to be entered into our early-bird draw, so start getting your referrals in early and often! There are no limits to the number of entries you can submit. The more people you refer, the more chances you'll have to win!

## For Your Information:

2024 is Calgary & District's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary! We will be providing information on celebration activities scheduled as the event gets closer and events are finalized.

## General meeting, recruitment drive, Veterans & Volunteer recognition Christmas Lunch:

**Date:** Friday, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Venue:** The Carriage House Hotel & Conference Centre  
Windsor Ballroom  
9030 Macleod Trail, Calgary, AB T2H 0M4

**Time:** Doors open at 10:00AM

Please mark your calendars, plan to attend and bring a friend  
Know someone who is eligible to join Federal Retirees? Plan to bring that lucky person along!

Watch for notices with more details in coming weeks.

### Federal Retirees Members Information

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

Calgary & District: <https://federalretirees.ca/calgary>

Facebook - [National Association of Federal Retirees - Calgary YYC](#)

For questions or inquiries, please phone 403-265-0773 or email [calgarybranch@federalretirees.ca](mailto:calgarybranch@federalretirees.ca)