

BRANCH NEWSLETTER

MB31 | Winnipeg & District Branch

President's message

Happy Spring everyone. It has been quite a while since the Branch sent out a newsletter. I hope everyone has had a good year so far and that if you were able to travel that you had a great vacation. This year marks the 60th Anniversary of the National Association of Federal Retirees. It is an honour to be part of such a strong Association that is working hard to protect our pension and benefits and is also committed to ensuring the financial and physical well-being for all of us as we age.

I am happy to say that we successfully hosted 3 in-person meetings in 2022. Member participation has been slowly returning to pre-pandemic levels which we are happy to see. I hope that you will join us as soon as you feel comfortable to do so.

We are hoping to re-instate our "Speaker Series" this year and hope that you will find the topics interesting and informative. If anyone has any suggestions for topics on health, travel, security, aging or any other topic that you think would be of interest to members, please let us know.

The current board of directors is comprised of the following people:

Ceci O'Flaherty — President
Lionel Guerard — Vice President
Donna Dobson — Secretary
Gwen Schentag — Treasurer
Naomi Ashton — Director, Membership
Paula Nygaard — Director-at-large; and Branch Services Coordinator Manitoba
Dorian Guerard — Director, Special Events
Glenn Schur — Director Equipment
Colleen Link — Director Communications
Pat Jarrett — Director Recruitment and Engagement
Cynthia Foreman — Director Advocacy Liaison and Advocacy Programs Officer Manitoba

At the annual general meeting in April, we will be holding elections to fill the following positions:

Director, Social Media (Vacant)

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.

Director, Communications — we have one candidate for this position

Responsible for the preparation and distribution of newsletters, e-blasts, notices of annual general meetings and special events.



Director of Recruitment and Engagement

Responsible for recruitment initiatives, setting up information booths at select community events and initiating new and innovative methods for recruitment of members.

Director, Special Events

Coordinating special events, undertaken by the Board of Directors. Organizing speaker series which includes things such as surveying the membership for topics of interest, arranging for speakers, meeting space, and refreshments.

Please consider volunteering for our Board of Directors, by sending us an email at

nafrwpg@mymts.net. The volunteers in the Association are dedicated to making a difference and would welcome you to the team!

Annual General Meeting

The next annual general meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 12, 2023 at the Masonic Memorial Centre, 420 Corydon Avenue. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. Lunch will follow at 12 noon and the meeting will commence at 1 p.m. Members must register by email for this event at nafrwpg@mymts.net.

Manitoba Advocacy Report — Spring 2023

by Cynthia Foreman, Director and Advocacy Programs Officer Manitoba

It is going to be a busy year for advocacy in Manitoba! With a provincial election slated for October 3, 2023, the Manitoba Branches will be working together on advocacy activities. Our three priority areas will be:

1. An independent, non-partisan and legislated Seniors Advocate;
2. Implementation and measurement of success of the Manitoba Seniors' Strategy;
3. Access to care involving supports and services to enable aging in place.

You may be aware that a Seniors' Strategy was recently released by the Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care. There are many opportunities in this document. You can find a copy of the Strategy at [Manitoba, A Great Place to Age: Provincial Seniors Strategy \(gov.mb.ca\)](http://gov.mb.ca).

Your Branch may be involved with will a variety of activities during the coming year such as a letter writing campaign to all candidates; opinion pieces for local newspapers; town hall meetings with candidates from all parties and/or small group meetings with candidates. In addition, we sent a budget submission to the Manitoba government to let them know what our priorities are for older adults in Manitoba as part of their pre-budget consultation. That letter was signed by the National Director of Advocacy and myself.

There is no federal election in sight at this point but there will be two by-elections in Manitoba this year — Winnipeg South and Portage-Lisgar. Once the by-elections are called, we will be looking to engage candidates and ensure they are aware of our national and provincial advocacy priorities. Also on the federal front, there will be efforts again this year to reach all Members of Parliament (MPs). In Manitoba, we have a priority to reach seven of our 14 MPs. Branch Presidents will likely be reaching out to all as we anticipate the release of a long-term care campaign in the coming months and an anti-ageism strategy later this year.



This will be my last year as your Advocacy Program Officer. I anticipate that recruitment efforts will be started in the next few weeks for my replacement. If you feel strongly that governments at all levels are ignoring the needs of older adults then this opportunity is for you.

Celebrations Dinner Theatre

Help us celebrate the 60th anniversary of NAFR. Our Branch is hosting a show at Celebrations Dinner Theatre for current and potential members of the Winnipeg and District Branch. Time is running out and **“seating is limited”!** Get your tickets now for Celebrations Dinner Theatre “The Office — A Rock Parody” being held on Wednesday, May 3, 2023. Doors open at 6 p.m. and tickets are \$40.00 per person. **Register by email at: nafrwpg@mymts.net. or in person at the Annual General Meeting on April 12, 2023.** Cheques or cash will be accepted and receipts issued.

The Branch is hosting a District Meeting that will coincide with our 60th Anniversary celebration so by joining us at Celebrations Dinner Theatre you can take advantage of the opportunity to meet representatives from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba branches as well as District Directors, our Association President, and members of the National Office staff.

Public Service Health Care Plan

As previously announced, effective July 1, 2023, changes will come into effect for all Public Service Health Care Plan (PSHCP) members.

Did you know you could pay a reduced premium for PSHCP?

Among other enhancements and improvements to the PSHCP, there is a significant change to the rules governing eligibility for the Relief Provision for retired members.

Under the current contribution rates the Retired Member monthly contribution rate: Relief Provision states: If you joined the PSHCP as a retired member on or before March 31, 2015, you may be eligible for the PSHCP relief provision if you are or become a recipient of a Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), or if your net or joint net income is lower than the GIS thresholds.

However, effective July 1, 2023 you may be eligible for the Pension Relief provision if you retired after April 1, 2015 extended until March 31, 2025 provided you are in receipt of a Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) benefit or, have a combined net income lower than the GIS thresholds. A completed “Public Service Health Care Plan Relief Provision Application Form” is required.

All details are outlined on the National Association of Federal Retirees website www.federalretirees.ca or in the **March PSHCP bulletin**. If you need additional information on this, please contact the Branch through email at nafrwpg@mymts.net.

Golf Tournament

The Golf Tournament will be held on Wednesday, August 16, 2023 at Scottswood Links in Elm Creek again this year. Stay tuned for more details coming out soon.

