

BRANCH REPORT

NL87 | Avalon-Burin Peninsula Branch

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MEMBERSHIP

The National Association of Federal Retirees, or commonly **Federal Retirees**, is the largest organization representing active and retired members of the federal public service, Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and retired federally appointed judges, as well as their partners and survivors.

We believe every Canadian today and in the future should benefit from better retirement income security and a strong, sustainable health care system.

With your support, we can make retirement better for all Canadians.

President's Update

Hello everyone. As your Branch President I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a Happy New Year and wish you good health and happiness for 2025.



Your Board members worked hard during 2024 on your behalf, and we will continue to do the same in the coming year. For the past several months, we have been developing our Branch Operational Plan to guide us through the next few years. It's nearly complete and your Branch Committees- Member Services, Recruitment and Retention, Advocacy, and Communications, are all striving to finalize their respective priorities. In this issue of our Branch Report, we feature the planned priorities of the Recruitment and Retention Committee. Future issues will highlight the priorities of the remaining Committees. If you would like to join one of these Committees, your assistance would be most welcome.

After two years of collaboration with Branches, individually and collectively at District Meetings, our National Board has agreed on the 2025 to 2028 Strategic Plan. This plan will be circulated to all Branches for discussion at District meetings after it is divided into two documents: the single-page plan and the multi-page implementation plan. As agreed at the 2024 National Annual Members Meeting (AMM), the plan will be submitted to the delegates of the 2025 AMM in June for approval. Our Branch Operational Plan and priorities will be aligned with the National Strategic Plan once it receives approval.

Your Branch will continue to focus on the four national Advocacy priorities - Retirement Income Security, a national senior's strategy, veteran well-being and pharmacare. Discussions on our advocacy work should always relate to one or more of these four core topics.



BOARD AND VOLUNTEER LISTINGS

Leo O'Brien	President 769-6583
Vacant	Vice President
Frank Mackey	Treasurer
Ed Lutz	Secretary
Directors	
Joanne Morrissey	CBN, Advocacy Liaison
John Baker	Burin Peninsula
Leo O'Brien	RCMP
Len LeRiche	Recruitment & Retention
Steve Boulos	Information Technology
Val Linehan	Canadian Forces & CRM
Bonnie Fox	Communications
Marilyn Best	Provincial Advocacy

As many of you know we had our annual Christmas dinner and dance on December 6th, 2024. It was an overwhelming success with a great turnout. Thanks to everyone for coming out and to everyone who helped make it a success.

We have had a few new members join us over the past year, which is great, but I know there are many more eligible members out there. Our membership for the Avalon Burin Branch is more than 2300 members at this point. If you know of any Federal Retirees out there who are not a member, please encourage them to join.

Finally in April, 2024, we will be having our Branch Annual General Meeting, (AGM). This year we have a few vacancies coming open on the Board so please consider offering your services to keep the Branch functioning as effectively and efficiently as we can, for the good of all Seniors. Steve Boulos, who has been our IT Director for the past 10 years, has decided to step back. If you have any knowledge in this area, please consider stepping up. Also, Frank Mackey, who has been our Treasurer for the past three years, has decided to resign, so again, if you have any expertise in bookkeeping or accounting, your services would be welcome. Ed Lutz, who has been serving as our Secretary, would also like to retire. If you have any expertise in this area, your services would be appreciated. Detail on the roles and responsibilities of each of these positions are available from your Board.

Wishing you all a great 2025 and looking forward to seeing you at our meetings. In the meantime, take care,

Leo O'Brien

Advocacy Update

Public Service Pension Fund Surplus

Along with the four national Advocacy priorities previously mentioned, our National Association is concerned about the federal government's handling of non-permitted surplus funds. The rules that govern the Public Service Pension Plan, (PSPP), are contained in the Public Service Superannuation Act (PSSA). It is not permitted to carry a surplus of more than 125%. The Chief Actuary of Canada identified in February 2022 that the PSPP had a funded ratio of 126.3%, an equivalent of 9.4B which resulted in the transfer of \$1.9B from pension funds to the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Our Association is troubled by the potential appropriation of an additional \$7.4 B from pension funds. This represents deferred compensation of retirees and employees.



It is your Association's position that surplus funds should be reinvested in initiatives that benefit those who helped generate them, particularly retirees - and that could start with improving the Pensioners' Dental Services Plan. As an Association we are united in advocating for the rights and interests of retirees, especially when it comes to their retirement security. This issue will be monitored closely.

Pending Federal Election

National Office is working on speaking points/priorities to assist our members during the federal election. Members can share these points to question candidates who knock on their door to help determine where the candidates stand on these issues.

Atlantic District Meeting

The Atlantic District Meeting will be taking place April 23-24, 2024 in Dartmouth, NS. One of the topics to be discussed is the Public Service Health Care Plan. This plan is scheduled for a mid-term review this year by National Joint Council. Branch members are asked to provide any concerns you may have with the current plan to the members of your Board. Representatives attending the meeting will ensure these items are brought forward to the District meeting for discussion.

2025 Membership Fees

Our 2025 annual membership fees, effective Jan. 1, 2025, will be \$57.24 for a single membership and \$74.40 for a double membership. This represents a 2.4 per cent increase over the previous year. For members who pay by dues deducted at source (DDS), monthly deductions (one twelfth of the annual amount, which is \$4.77 for a single or \$6.20 for a double membership) will be calculated by the Pension Centre and reflected on the first pension statement of the new year. In the case of membership fees paid by cheque or by credit card, if the renewal date falls before Dec. 31, 2024, payment for membership renewal will be submitted based on the 2024 fees. Importantly, any credit card payments or cheques not postmarked before 11:59 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on Dec. 31, 2024, must be submitted at the 2025 rates.

January General Meeting



Our January meeting was held at the Legion on Blackmarsh Road. Our guest speaker was well known psychologist Dr. Janine Hubbard who spoke on the topic of loneliness and how it can affect our physical health. Her presentation was well received by the many members in attendance. In the photo, Len LeRiche is presenting Dr. Hubbard with a certificate of appreciation, pen, and federal retirees mug.

Recruitment & Retention Committee

Over the last several months, your hard-working executive has been refreshing and reinvigorating its working committees to make our Branch more efficient and effective. One of these committees is the Recruitment & Retention Committee. To start the process, the National Strategic plan for 2025-2028 (still in draft) and previous Branch documents were reviewed.

The draft National Strategic Plan for 2025 to 2028 presently includes the goal to enhance the sustainability of the Association. To accomplish this, Branches are called to: Develop a bold and ambitious member recruitment strategy to drive growth and expand our membership,

- Continue membership recruitment at all levels of the association including the annual Mega Recruitment Drive, and
- Identify federal work sites to facilitate recruitment events.

In updating existing Avalon-Burin Branch goals and actions, the following will be focused on:

- Identify federal employee work sites to engage by visiting or creating points of contact within the organizations and making information packages available,
- Promote membership at every opportunity and appropriate events through the year,
- Follow up on non-renewals of membership and provide welcome letters and information packages to new members,
- Promote the Mega Recruitment Drive, and
- Other actions as the Recruitment & Retention Committee may decide.

Our ask of you:

- Become a member of the Recruitment and Retention committee,
- Provide leads on opportunities to promote membership,
- Recruit a new member and invite her/him to a General Meeting.

Contact Valentine Linehan (Val) at val_linehan@hotmail.com to help.

Our present membership stands at 2312 members and is growing steadily!

Thank you! **Val**



Photos of Recent Events



Our board hold their meetings at Safety NL offices. Here, Leo O'Brien presents a certificate of appreciation to Sean Kelly, President and CEO, Safety NL



Christmas Dinner and Dance at the Legion in December

Upcoming Events

- **Annual General Meeting and election of officers for 2025-26:** Legion on Blackmarsh Road, Wednesday, April 16, 11:00 – 2:00. Soup and sandwich lunch will be provided.
- **May General Meeting:** Legion, Blackmarsh Road, May 14 at 2:00
- **Marystown General Meeting:** June 11, 11:00, St. Gabriel's Hall, (to be confirmed subject to adequate participation)