

STAYING IN TOUCH



Newsletter No. 91 September 2021

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Message from your President

Hello again. Welcome to the third newsletter of the year, one I hope you will enjoy reading. I hope all of you are enjoying the summer although, I have to admit, I haven't been this hot since I helped my dad rake hay on our Saskatchewan farm. The rain we got over the weekend was very welcome and breathed new life into my plants. Unfortunately, the lawn is too far gone.

As a result of the lifting of travel restrictions I took the opportunity to do a two-week road trip with my grandson. Part of the trip was close to the fire area and smoke was difficult to deal with. We did not see any actual flames but as we drove through Barriere I was reminded of another trip through there in about 2003 when we saw the burnt out buildings in that town. It's green again now, but the stumps of fire ravaged trees still remain. Kudo's to all the brave fire fighters and other service personnel who work so hard in these dangerous conditions to save lives and property.

Thanks to all members who joined us in our second Zoom meeting which we held on June 9th. Following our usual reports from members of the Executive, our guest speaker, Leslie Gaudet, BC/Yukon Advocacy Representative presented an overview of the advocacy initiatives that are taking place both Regionally and Nationally. Thank you Leslie for your support to our branch and your insightful presentation to our members. We have been notified by National Office that we can commence holding in person meetings again but with a limited capacity. The Executive decided to go ahead and hold our September meeting via Zoom while we looked for a venue to hold meetings and research various catering options. Our next meeting will be held on September 15th at 1:00pm. Discussion on whether or not to hold an in person Christmas event will be part of the agenda.

In May the annual BC/Yukon District meeting was held via Zoom. Presidents and Advocacy Directors from all the branches in the British Columbia and the Yukon were invited to attend. Rick Devlieger, Branch Services Coordinator, welcomed all delegates and then introduced Jean-Guy Soulière National President who provided greetings from the National Office. Jean-Guy thanked all volunteers particularly those that worked so hard to keep up the advocacy pressure despite the unusual circumstances of the past year. He then introduced Anthony Pizzino, the new CEO who talked about his background and experiences prior to taking on this new challenge. He also gave his first impressions of the organization, and it seems he is quite impressed. An interesting presentation from Andrew McGillivray based on the current membership status highlighted the effects of the Pandemic on membership. Since March 2020 the Association has lost 9,829 or 5.59% members. Fortunately, there has been no increase in member deaths.



MEETING DATES

Meetings are on hold due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Stay tuned for further updates.

The stats up to the end of April for the BC/Yukon District are:

2019 - 26,400

2020 - 25,174

2021 - 24,609

This represents a drop of 1,791 members. The reason for the majority of non renewals is because COVID curtailed travel so there was less interest in utilizing the insurance provided through MEDOC.

The goal of National Communications and Marketing is to target membership retention and recruit new members to bring our numbers back up to 170,000. The *North Island-John Finn Branch* has put in place a five member working group to brainstorm, plan and implement membership recruitment for our area. So far, we have distributed copies of our newsletter and business cards to various federal offices, the Legions and RCMP depots along with information on NAFR with an invitation to join. Now that the restrictions around group gathering have been lifted, we will begin to research opportunities where we can be in the communities promoting the organization and inviting new members. In addition, Joan Sykes, one of our telephoners has taken on the task of calling any members who have not renewed their membership to find out why and urging them to think about rejoining. You can help out by inviting a potential member to one of our luncheons; talking about the benefits of belonging to the organization or maybe you would like to stand behind a table at an event in the future and tell people about us. Let me know if you have any other ideas or would like to help.

On the horizon, there is a Federal Election. Warren Kelley and myself will be busy trying to get in touch with all candidates to inform them of the focus areas of the NAFR. In case you are not aware of these areas, they are:

- Delivering strong representation for federal retirees on their pension, health and dental benefits and security;
- Standing up for retirement income security.
- Working with veterans on their well-being;
- Insuring that seniors voices are heard and recognized in federal cabinet;
- Delivering historic advocacy efforts on behalf of federal retirees and veterans.

Recently you may have received the following email that came from National Office.

Participants aged 55 plus needed for a study

Recently we were approached by the department of psychology at the University of Saskatchewan to let us know about a project entitled "Building bridges to positive aging among seniors" for which they are recruiting volunteers. They asked that we share their recruitment page with you.

The poster provided links to the survey. Please consider responding to this survey. It is one way we can make our voice heard on this important issue.

Well, I think I will go out and bask in the sun for a bit. Winter will come soon enough. Thanks to all our members for their support and dedication. You executive is looking forward to being able to see you in person in the very near future.

Norma Dean, President

Publisher

NORTH ISLAND JOHN FINN BRANCH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FEDERAL RETIREES (NAFR)

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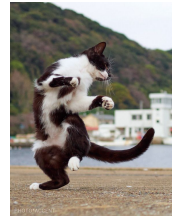
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Representing retired federal employees and spouses from the Public Service of Canada, the Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Federally Appointed Judges

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A burglar broke into my home. I put the red dot on his chest. And, I let my cat do the rest!



A Canadian goes into the bathroom and the Canadian walks out. What was he while he was in the bathroom?

- A European!

I was horrified when my wife told me that my six-year-old son wasn't actually mine. Apparently I need to pay more attention during school pick-up.

I got a PS5 for my little brother. Best trade I ever made.

Where do you find a cow with no legs? Right where you left it.

Never criticize someone until you have walked a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticize them, you'll be a mile away and have a new pair of shoes.

I want to die peacefully in my sleep like my grandfather did. Not screaming in terror like the passengers in his car.

Two cows are grazing in a field. One cow says to the other, "You ever worry about that mad cow disease?" The other cow says, Why would I care? I'm a helicopter

The 2021 Mega Recruitment Drive is almost here!

The 2021 Mega Recruitment Drive will officially launch on Sept. 1, 2021. For the third year running, this exciting initiative will provide all Federal Retirees members the chance to win several exciting prizes by recruiting new members to the Association. This contest is only available for members of the Association who recruit a new member, which means you will have terrific odds of winning. We would again ask that our recruiters abide by the COVID-19 guidelines of their local health authorities to stay safe while recruiting this year. To this effect, we will again be taking referrals primarily via online referral or by phone.

This year's grand prize is \$10,000 cash, courtesy of Johnson Insurance. Secondary prizes include a \$5,000 trip, courtesy of Collette; one of two brand new tablets, courtesy of SimplyConnect, and one of five \$100 prepaid AMEX cards. There is also an early bird draw for a \$500 pre-paid Visa card, courtesy of SimplyConnect, on Nov. 1, so get your referrals in early and often.

From Sept. 1 to Dec. 31, all members who successfully recruit a new member will receive a \$5 Tim Hortons gift card for each new recruit and will be entered into the draw for the prizes above. There is no limit to the number of ballots/coffee cards a member can receive, so the more people you successfully refer, the more chances you will have to win. We will again seek to reward members who go above-and-beyond to refer and recruit prospective members:

\$500 pre-paid credit card for the most new members recruited, courtesy of Arbor Memorial

\$250 pre-paid credit card for the most valid referrals, courtesy of Arbor Memorial

\$250 pre-paid credit card draw for new members who join by referral during the contest period, courtesy of Arbor Memorial

Even if an eligible prospective member only signs up for our electronic newsletter, the referring member will still get one entry into a draw for a \$250 pre-paid credit card, courtesy of HearingLife Canada. It costs nothing to sign up for the e-newsletter, so it's a no-risk option for those who are interested in the Association but may not be ready to join just yet.

The first mention of the 2021 Mega Recruitment Drive to members will be in the August e-newsletter, followed by an official launch e-blast on Sept. 1. At any time during the campaign, members will be able to fill out an online referral card at the Mega Recruitment Drive website or by calling the recruitment and member services team to refer someone by phone (1-855-304-4700). There will be no paper referral cards provided in Sage again this year. Each successful referral leads to one ballot in the prize draw and one \$5 Tim Hortons gift card. Members will also automatically receive a ballot when a new member gives their name as the person who referred them when signing up directly.

The success of this recruitment campaign will depend entirely on the engagement of our members. We encourage you — our volunteers — to create as much awareness as possible for the duration of the contest period. For example, you could include a blurb about the Mega Recruitment Drive in all branch communiques that are sent to your members during the contest period from September to December. If you hold any branch events over Zoom or in-person, remind members about the contest at the beginning and the end of the meeting. Branches can also stir up activity regionally by sharing success stories of members who have been able to recruit multiple members, along with some techniques and ideas to help others do the same.

Nothing leads to more new sign-ups to the association than word-of-mouth referrals from existing members. For this reason, we plan to repeat the Mega Recruitment Drive annually. Make sure you learn about all of the details of how it works by visiting federalretirees.ca/mrd as of Sept. 1, or call us at 1-855-304-4700, ext. 300.

Again, please keep physical distancing and other COVID-19-related considerations in mind when promoting the contest with members and remind them to do the same when recruiting.

MEMBERSHIP

My main functions are to keep the branch membership records up to date, provide any assistance I am able to, to our members regarding their membership status. For example, ensuring a surviving Partner membership continues if she/he wishes to remain a member because when the Regular member passes the Partner member's membership automatically becomes inactive as well and to produce the envelopes required for the hard copy of our Newsletter to be mailed to our members who do not receive the Newsletter via email.

Over the past two years our branch has lost approximately 140 members, dropping from a total of about 2135 members to our current total of about 1995 members. The two main causes of this membership loss has been the passing of our older members and the non-renewal by members who pay their membership on an annual basis vs using the Dues Deduction at Source (DDS) monthly payment method. The main reason for non-renewal appears to be because of Covid-19 travel restrictions that have prevented our members from doing their normal traveling, thus the extra insurance coverage provided by MEDOC is no longer required. It is hoped that once the restrictions are lifted that a majority of these inactive members will renew their membership as to get MEDOC coverage at our group rate - you must be a current active member.

As mentioned above, I keep our current members records as up-to-date as possible. Primarily your address, phone number and email which will enable us to contact you, This is particularly true for our members who we contact by phone for attendance at our quarterly luncheons. Also, if required, on a short notice the Executive needs to pass vital information to our members as going through National Office (NO) can take some time. So with this in mind any time you up date your own record or inform NO of any change will you please advise me that you have made a change, so I am able to make the corresponding change to my record. Sadly any changes to the NO data base do not automatically get passed on to me. My phone number and email are listed on the Branch Executive listing on page 3 of the Newsletter.

That is a brief description of what I do regarding branch membership. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding your membership status and I will do my best to resolve the question.

Have a safe and happy coming autumn and winter and let's hope this Covid-19 crisis will end soon and we can once again travel, visit family and friends and generally enjoy the fantastic life style we have here on the wet coast of BC.

Steve Bunyan, Membership

ADVOCACY and Our Priorities

The National Association of Federal Retirees (NAFR) is the largest national advocacy organization representing active and retired members of the federal public service, Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police and retired federally appointed judges, their partners and survivors. With our volunteers and members from coast-to-coast, we continue this tradition of strong, smart advocacy campaigns to protect our members' earned pensions and benefits, and to support good policy that improves the lives of all Canadians in retirement. Federal Retirees look forward to working with members of Parliament to advance the following important policy recommendations during this government's new mandate.

The last 15 months has been hard on everyone, with issues from the Pandemic affecting ones personal and family health, employment, fires, access to business's, ferries, air travel and many more issues. As many of us are retired the issue of pensions both at the present time and into the future is on most if not all our minds. This brings up a very serious topic the Federal Election that has been called for September 20, 2021. I as the Branch Advocacy Representative will be receiving Election materials from National Office and in turn will try and contact Local Party Officials to place our concerns squarely on their shoulders. Federal Elections are very important to us as they lay the ground work for our Health Care System, Pensions and Support for our Veterans. So as in past Elections get your vote in and counted, ether by mail, advance polls or in person.

Warren Kelley, Vice President and Advocacy

NAFR Branches Focus their efforts on the following items:

- Delivering strong representation for federal retirees on their pension, health and dental benefits and security;
- Standing up for retirement income security;
- Working with veterans' on their well-being;
- Insuring that seniors' voices are heard and recognized in federal cabinet;
- Delivering historic advocacy efforts on behalf of federal retirees and veterans.

People are curious and ask how many members the association has? Some approximate numbers from the year 2020. Across Canada we have approximately 176,000 Members. Here in BC we have 15 Branches with approximately 26,000 members. Our North Island John Finn Branch (BC06) has approximately 2000 Members. So you can see that if we proceed ahead as a focused group we can influence our Governments both at Federal and Provincial levels.

Luncheon News - September 2021

Hello

The National Board of Directors have revised their in-person meeting requirements, but we will continue for this September with a General Meeting via ZOOM.

We will be looking at a in-person meeting in December, and information on that will be in the next newsletter.

Of course, we are following all Provincial Health rules in regards to Covid 19 restrictions for the safety of all our members.

Our September General Meeting via ZOOM will be on Wednesday, September 15, 2021 from 1:00 pm to approx. 3 pm. Particulars of the ZOOM meeting follow:

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://fedretirees-retraitesfed.zoom.us/j/9401614850?pwd=cURHQXJmVFJPa1ZNUmRhcC9OT0V4dz09>

Meeting ID: 940 161 4850

Passcode: 5JVp89

Hope to see you at it.

We are looking forward to getting back to in-person meetings.

Best regards and stay safe.

Cecile Turnbull for Lorene Hill, Programs Director

NOTE OF INTEREST

Within the North Island John Finn Branch we had a member who celebrated this 100th birthday last June.

Mr. Stocky Edwards, who lives in Comox, was given a Pandemic-friendly parade where many people drove pass wishing him **HAPPY BIRTHDAY** for his 100th birthday.

Mr. Stocky Edwards is a decorated Second World War fighter pilot ace, has been decorated by the French government, an Order Of Canada recipient, Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame inductee and named one of the 100 most influential Canadians in aviation.

Congratulations for your celebrations and hopefully we can all celebrate next year with you.

We are proud to have you as a member of our National Association of Federal Retirees, *North Island John Finn Branch*.

Speaking of Retirement.....

Pour yourself a drink and sit back and read this!

Why I like Retirement!

Q. *When is retiree's bedtime?*

A. *Two hours after falling asleep on the couch*

Q. *What's the biggest gripe of retirees?*

A. *There is not enough time to get everything done.*

Q. *Among Retirees, what is considered formal attire?*

A. *Tied shoes*

Q. *Why are retirees so slow to clean out the basement, attic or garage?*

A. *They know that as soon as they do, one of their adult kids will want to store stuff there.*

Q. *What's the biggest advantage of going back to school as a retiree?*

A. *If you cut class, no one calls your parents.*

Q. *What do retirees call a long lunch?*

A. *Normal*

Q. *What is the common term for someone who enjoys work and refuses to retire?*

A. *NUTS*

Q. *What is the best way to describe retirement?*

A. *The never-ending Coffee Break!*

Q. *What do you do all week?*

A. *Monday through Friday, NOTHING, Saturday and Sunday, I rest*

September General Meeting

Below are the instructions for joining the meeting:

Next General Meeting: Wednesday, September 15th, 2021 at 1:00 pm via Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting: North Island Branch is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: North Island Branch General Meeting

Time: Sep 15, 2021 01:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://fedretirees-retraitesfed.zoom.us/j/9401614850?pwd=cURHQXJmVFJPa1ZNUmRhcC9OT0V4dz09>

Meeting ID: 940 161 4850

Passcode: 5JVp89

One Tap Mobile:

+16475580588,,9401614850#,,,,*084174# Canada

+17789072071,,9401614850#,,,,*084174# Canada

Dial by your location

+1 647 558 0588 Canada

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

+1 204 272 7920 Canada

+1 438 809 7799 Canada

+1 587 328 1099 Canada

+1 647 374 4685 Canada

855 703 8985 Canada Toll-free

Meeting ID: 940 161 4850

Passcode: 084174

Find your local number: <https://fedretirees-retraitesfed.zoom.us/u/kd6kBoCMTC>

*If you haven't used Zoom before, it is primarily a video application for use on computers, tablets and smart phones. Meeting audio access is as possible by telephone so that's what the phone number are all about. If you don't have Zoom installed on your device, go to: **<https://zoom.us/download>***

Here is hoping we see you on September 15th, 2021. It is not as good as a luncheon meeting, but it is an opportunity to touch base and is the best we can do under the present conditions.

Bill Turnbull, Communications

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

It is very hard to believe 3/4 of 2021 is nearly over. Christmas is just 100+ days away. Covid-19 has been the centre of focus thru-out 2020 and 2021. Sad to say the Medical Professionals are saying we are in the fourth wave. People are being encouraged, everyday, to get vaccinated. Island Health and the North Island Region were doing very well, yet as I write this our numbers are 27 - hopefully soon we will lower our numbers to zero. Slowly we were getting back to normal, but the big question is what is normal? It seems we get one step ahead only to move two steps back.

I truly hope, that moving forward, everyone gets back to normal in their lives.

To quote BC's Medical Officer of Health, Doctor Bonnie Henry -
"BE KIND, BE CALM, BE SAFE"

Cherie E Kelley, CD, Editor

E&OE

Nine Important Facts

- Number 9 - Death is the number 1 killer in the world.
- Number 8 - Life is sexually transmitted.
- Number 7 - Good health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.
- Number 6 - Men have two emotions: hungry and horny, and they can't tell them apart. If you see a gleam in his eyes, make him a sandwich.
- Number 5 - Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach a person to use the Internet and they won't bother you for weeks, months, maybe years.
- Number 4 - Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in the hospital, dying of nothing.
- Number 3 - All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.
- Number 2 - In the 60's, people took acid to make the world weird. Now the world is weird, and people take Prozac to make it normal.
- Number 1 - Life is like a jar of jalapeno peppers. What you do today might burn your ass tomorrow.

...and as someone recently said:

- Don't worry about old age; it doesn't last that long.

FUN CORNER.

Are you Smarter than a 5th Grader
(Questions taken from benson puzzle & activity book)

1. Which of the following is measured in units known as newtons?

A. Force B. Mass C. Heat

2. How many faces are on a cube?

3. Pollen is part of a plant's reproductive system. TRUE OR FALSE

4. What American inventor patented phonograph in the 1870s?

5. The Rhine River is located one what continent?



WELCOME BACK TO THE WORLD

2022/2023: EARLYBIRD RIVER OR OCEAN CRUISE SAVINGS; NEW ITINERARIES!

OR:

2024: JANUARY GRAND OCEAN CRUISE OF A LIFETIME: 120 Days, 50 Tours; 23 Countries!

**JOIN US for a Grand Voyage of Discovery as you Cruise from L/A to England's Majestic Capital.*

**Explore picturesque isles of French Polynesia, cross the South Pacific to New Zealand & Australia, & Immerse Yourself in Asia's cultural treasures.*

Sail the Arabian Sea & behold ancient antiquities.

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"We Look After the Details so YOU Can Enjoy Your Journey of a Lifetime!"



ANSWERS TO FUN CORNER

1. *Force*
2. *Six (6)*
3. *True*
4. *Thomas*
5. *Europe*

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Mario and Dianne Levesque
- Kevin and Alexandra Gibbard
- Don Chamberlain and Ester Guimond
- Kelly Christensen and Edward Konrath
- Betty Graham
- Colleen Halbbrook
- Marian Moraes
- Shaun Morgan
- Tanya Foran
- Edward and Dawn Giles
- David and Mildred Johnson
- Pauline Wu

MEMBERSHIP UP-DATE

Do we have the correct information on you as a member? It is important to us and to you that our records are up to date. If the label on this newsletter has your initials instead of your given name, we may not have all the information we need to ensure that you get all the updates from your branch or National Office. Please fill in the following and send it to us (address on Page 1).

Surname Given Names:.....

Mailing Address:

City/town Postal Code Phone

E-mail address:.....

Pension is from: CF PS RCMP Other I receive a survivor's benefit Yes.....No

It is important to let the branch know of any changes in the above information

John McCrae

1872–1918



Born in Guelph, Ontario, Canadian poet, soldier, and physician John McCrae earned his undergraduate and medical degrees at the University of Toronto, where he received the Gold Medal. As a physician, he worked at Toronto General Hospital, Johns Hopkins Hospital, McGill University, the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Infectious Diseases, Montreal General Hospital, and the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal. He served in the Boer War in South Africa as an artillery subaltern in the Canadian Contingent from 1899 to 1900, was promoted to the rank of major in 1904, and reenlisted in the First Canadian Contingent soon after the start of World War I. McCrae became a member of the Royal College of Surgeons and was the first Canadian to be appointed consulting surgeon to the British Army.

McCrae's well-known poem "In Flanders Fields" memorializes the April 1915 battle in Belgium's Ypres salient. For 17 days, McCrae tended those injured in the battle. The poem, written after the death of a close friend, was first published in Punch magazine and led to the adoption of the poppy as the Flower of Remembrance for the British and Commonwealth war dead. McCrae wrote several medical textbooks during his life, and his poetry was posthumously gathered into the collection *In Flanders Fields and Other Poems* (1919).

In 1915, McCrae was transferred to Boulogne No.3 General Hospital to oversee medicine. He worked there until his pneumonia-related death on January 28, 1918, at the age of 45. McCrae was buried with full military honours in Wimereux Cemetery near Boulogne, France. His family home in Guelph is preserved as a museum, and the main street in Wimereux is now named Rue McCrae.

In Flanders Fields

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place, and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To take you from failing hands we throw
The torch, be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

Major John McCrae

Canadian doctor and WWI artillery commander

Lest We Forget

