

# NAFR Alberta – Edmonton Branch (AB17)

## 2015 Annual General Membership Meetings (GMMs)

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# 2015-05-06 Annual General Meeting Report

Our 2015 Annual General Meeting was held May 6th, 2015 at the Royal Canadian Legion, Kingsway Branch, 14339 – 50<sup>th</sup> Street, Edmonton, AB.

**Social Hour:** We opened at 4:00 PM to allow members to have some extra time to socialize with their friends and colleagues ahead of the dinner and meeting. Arriving early was, of course, optional.

**CART Service:** Communications Access Realtime Translation (CART) was again available for deaf and hard of hearing members.

***Communications Access Realtime Translation (CART)** With CART, everything that is said is “captioned” live for deaf and hard of hearing individuals. The CART captions are displayed via a projector on a large screen. The CART provider quickly types into a stenotype machine using machine shorthand, and the computer software translates that shorthand into real time captions, matching the shorthand against what is in a specialized shorthand dictionary stored in the computer. The process is so fast that there is hardly any lag time between what is said and what the deaf or hard of hearing person is able to read.*

**Attendance & Guests:** There were 117 **members present** including Board Members. Special Guests included Doreen Morton (life member) and Larry Sakaluk (AB/NWT Regional Services Officer) and his wife, Carol.

**Welcome:** President Brian Emdin welcomed everyone and asked for a Moment of Silence to honour deceased members. He then thanked all the volunteers who serve our members. Following Grace the meal was served.

**Presentation:** During coffee/dessert, Shannon Patershuk and Terina-Lyn Brown of Johnson Insurance gave a presentation on MEDOC Travel Insurance and answered questions from the audience.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by President Brian Emdin.

**Approval of Agenda & Previous Minutes & Treasurer Report:** Following Approval of the Agenda and of the Minutes of our previous General Membership Meeting, Treasurer Clay Kolstad presented the Audited Financial Statements and his Treasurer’s Report, which were approved.

**Motions on Not-For-Profit Act:** Clay then led a discussion on requirements under the new Not-For-Profit Act which make it prudent for us to establish a formal “Defense of Benefits Fund”. Two motions were approved:

1. That Edmonton Branch, AB17, establish a Defense of Benefits Fund of \$40,000.00, and that, when there have been expenditures from it, replenishment of this fund be made at a

rate of not less than \$4,000.00 per year, provided that there are funds available to support this rate. This rate may be adjusted by a motion of the Board of Directors following an examination of branch books. Such an adjustment will be reported to the members at the Branch Annual General Meeting.

2. That Edmonton Branch AB17 Board of Directors is authorized to make expenditures from the Defense of Benefits Fund when necessary up to the amount of \$10,000 each fiscal year. Expenditures over this amount require member approval at a Branch General, Special, or Annual Meeting.

**Motions on Cost of Meals:** Clay led a further discussion on the rising cost of meals compared to the cost charged to members, which led to two further motions being approved:

1. The cost per meal to be paid by members attending meetings be \$25.
2. The branch holds 3 membership meetings a year, two evening meetings (May and Sep) and one afternoon meeting (Dec). [The only change is the September meeting moves from the afternoon to the evening.]

**HBO Report:** The Health Benefits report reminded members:

- That for members who participate in the Public Service Health Care Plan (PSHCP)
  - there is no more annual deductible on claims, and
  - that each unnecessary claim or phone call to Sun Life is costed against the PSHCP and ultimately reflected in our premiums.
- The Supplementary Death Benefit must be applied for as it isn't automatically given upon death.
- Alberta Private/Semi-private hospital room rates increased over the past 2 years above Level 1 coverage, so members will have to decide if they want to pay higher premiums for more room coverage from Levels 2 and 3. Even with higher coverage, members are not guaranteed to get private/semi-private rooms if none available. A brief report was provided on the new national website address [[www.federalretirees.ca](http://www.federalretirees.ca)] and our updated branch website.

**PAO Report:** Provincial Advocacy Officer, Dave Riffel highlighted the previous day's Alberta election results where the NDP won a majority. He, with National Office, is organizing Town Hall meeting in September prior to the federal election expected in October.

**Next Meeting:** The next General membership meeting will be a supper meeting held on September 2, 2015.

**Meeting Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

## 2015-09-02 General Membership Meeting Report

Edmonton Branch held a supper and general members meeting at the Royal Canadian Legion Kingsway Branch on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015. The focus of this meeting was to meet and listen to our very special guest speaker Maria Fitzpatrick. Maria is one of our association members. On May 5th, 2015 she was elected as the NDP MLA for Lethbridge East. To avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest, she resigned from the Board of Directors of the Southern Alberta (Lethbridge) Branch. Maria gave an informative description of the campaign process and the emotional experience of assembling in the legislature for the first time.

Branch Past President and Provincial Advocacy Officer, Dave Riffel provided an update on his plans for Edmonton Branch to host All Candidates Town Hall meeting for the Federal Riding of Edmonton Centre. The event was held at the Polish Hall on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September. Our District Director, Roy Goodall was moderator for the event. It was recorded by Shaw TV and was broadcast at 10:00 AM September 24<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 PM September 25<sup>th</sup> and 8:00 PM September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015. By early October it was available on Shaw's You Tube channel. It was organized with support from our National Office staff. Dave did a tremendous amount of work and is to be congratulated on an outstanding effort.

**Communication:** Your 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Ross Gillespie, provided an in-depth report regarding our electronic communications and our web site.

**New Board Volunteers:** Two new board volunteers were introduced – Heather-Anne Elliot-Martin (Membership Chair) and Rick Brick (Acting Secretary and Health Benefits Officer). It was pointed out that these two new volunteers are filling critical positions which require considerable effort.

**President Report:** President Brian Emdin provided an update regarding the significant changes at the national level with the coincident resignations of our CEO, National President, and National Vice President. The inaugural message to all Branch Presidents from Konrad von Finkenstein, the acting Chairman of the National Board (with the powers of the National President) was read to the assembly. This message articulated his vision (and that of the majority of the National Board of Directors including your Alberta Director, Roy Goodall) for our association. This message was very well received and introduced a new and positive direction for our association. Branches and volunteers will finally be listened to and treated as important partners in our association. Our advocacy and our association with partners will be transparently non-partisan. Future advocacy will be restricted to issues impacting upon our members and not "all Canadians". Your Branch Directors felt very strongly about association members' funds paying for advocacy such as CPP Expansion on behalf of "all Canadians". This type of advocacy could adversely impact superannuates and future superannuates. The future of your association is looking significantly brighter.

**Door Prizes & Adjournment:** The meeting closed with the awarding of door prizes and, as always, both halves of the 50-50 draw.

# 2015-12-02 General Membership and Volunteer Appreciation Meeting Report

A general membership meeting was held December 2, 2015 at the Royal Canadian Legion, Kingsway Branch. The doors opened early to allow members time to socialize. When signing in at the door all volunteers were provided with a rose and pin in recognition of their service. 131 members attended including Board Members.

**Our guests were:** Nicole Goehring – MLA for Edmonton-Castle Downs, John Cabral – Assistant Deputy Minister for the Seniors Services Division, Bonnie from Saint Elizabeth Home Health Care Services, and Jennifer Duvold who provided CART services for our deaf/hard of hearing members.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 11:58 am by **President Brian Emdin**.

**Welcome from the President:** President Brian Emdin welcomed everyone and asked for a moment of silence to honour deceased members. Brian spoke to the new provincial and federal governments which hopefully will make our advocacy more productive. It seems that in some cases, the governments are planning things that were beyond our expectations in advocacy. Our role may be enhanced in that we provide value to the trusted information and advice sought on what the seniors need or want.

Brian then asked Ross Gillespie to speak on the importance of volunteers to our association. Ross thanked all the volunteers who serve our members. He stressed the critical nature of those individuals and encouraged all members to consider volunteering.

Brian then noted that the reports and announcements were provided in written format for this meeting to provide more time for the speakers and the meal.

**The agenda and the minutes of the previous meeting** were approved as presented.

**Series of Briefings:** One of our members, Gerry Shaw, advised of a series of briefings he will be delivering on the issue of climate change, energy issues, radon gas, etc. at the Strathcona senior's centre.

**President's Report:** Brian spoke to the Strategic Planning Committee that had been formed nationally to look at the direction and objectives of our association. Brian expressed his pleasure at the willingness of the current National Board of Directors to seek input from a wide variety of sources including members and branches. This change in philosophy and approach bodes very well for our association as we move into the future.

Brian asked for grace to be given following which the meal was served.

**Guest Speaker:** During coffee/dessert, the following presentations were provided.

Bonnie spoke to the role and importance of organizations such as St. Elizabeth in providing home health care services for seniors and others in our communities. She outlined the types of services they can provide and their ability to bill directly to Veterans' Affairs. She concluded her presentation by stressing the importance of foot care with older individuals especially those with diabetes.

Nicole Goehring – MLA for Edmonton-Castle Downs spoke to her experiences as a newly elected member of the Legislative Assembly and her tasking as the Government Liaison with the Military. She outlined the current government's commitment to ensuring retirees are treated fairly. MLA Goehring also recounted her many opportunities to work with serving and retired military members.

She then opened the floor to questions and was joined by John Cabral. There were a number of questions regarding the priorities of the recently elected provincial government and their need to work closely with the even more recently elected federal government. Some questions were asked about specific government polices such as the Alberta Property Tax Deferral Program for Seniors. Finally, there were a number of concerns expressed in regard to dental services and the need for government to help ensure these essential services are provided in a cost-effective and cost-consistent manner.

President Brian Emdin thanked all three of the speakers on behalf of the Association Branch members for their remarks and willingness to respond to questions.

**Door Prize & Adjournment:** Following the presentations to the Door Prize and 50/50 draw winners, the meeting was adjourned at 1:56 p.m.

**The next meeting:** It will be the Annual General Meeting and is scheduled for May 4, 2016. Supper will be at 6:00 pm and the meeting start at 7:00 pm.