

**General Meeting Minutes  
Hessenland Inn at Zurich, ON  
October 17, 2018**

Branch Web site <http://www.federalretirees.ca/en/Branches/Ontario/Bluewater>

**Present -**

President - Gloria Cayea  
Treasurer - Diane Kerr  
Program Coordinator - Mary Ann Burgess  
Vice President - Earnie MacDougall  
IT and Web Site Coordinator - Doug Kerr  
Secretary - Bob Jackson  
Member at Large - Murray Lester

**Absent -**

Director of Membership - Bill Mason  
Outreach Coordinator - Pat Mason  
Member at Large - Diana Wright  
Member at Large - Georgina MacIssac

**President Gloria Cayea** opened the meeting at 12:03.

**Mary Ann Burgess** led a moment of silence followed by grace. Members then enjoyed lunch provided by Hessenland Inn.

Following lunch the meeting resumed with the introduction of the guest speaker, Mr **Ted Young**, NAFR Director, District of Ontario.

Ted began by noting that NAFR's heart is its Branches and their membership. While in the past National Office may have been a bit standoffish and self-involved, Ted reported National's priorities have changed to prioritize responsiveness to Branches' needs. Their new approach is "When a Branch calls National, answer."

A big issue for the National Board of Directors is the fragility of Branches and the replacement of Branch officers. In Ontario Oshawa Branch has closed and both Windsor and North Bay were in difficulty. In the case of North Bay, the President of the Board of Directors (Jean-Guy Soulière) and Ted went to a meeting of the members to help the Branch get the volunteers it needed to form an Executive. Ted's main point was to keep him informed if a Branch is having issues finding volunteers to serve on its executive. Both he and the President of National would like to 'be there' for any Branch having difficulty in finding volunteers, and want to meet with local members before giving up hope on a Branch.

Ted gave several updates with a national overview. NAFR's membership has plateaued and more recruitment effort is required. Bill 27, an Act to amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act, is still on Parliament's Order Table. Although it appears not to be a priority for the Government, NAFR continues to monitor its status. The court hearing for the Public Service Healthcare legal action was held in September. Things seemed to go well, however it may be several months before a decision is delivered.

Ted noted nationally NAFR's finances are 'solid' although Canada Revenue may make an issue of the roughly \$1.3M surplus funds that Branches currently hold. This matter is easily addressed, however it does mean that some Branches may lose their surplus funds.

Ted reported the dental insurance rates will soon be under review.

Following a short Q&A session, Ted turned the floor back to Gloria.

**Gloria Cayea** reminded members of their responsibility to vote in the upcoming municipal elections.

Gloria noted in recognition of the 100'th anniversary of the World War One Armistice, Bluewater Branch will be laying a wreath at this year's Remembrance Day ceremony. Members are encouraged to attend the event which will be held at the Sarnia Arena on Brock street.

***Mary Ann will look into the possibility of having a wreath laid at the Goderich ceremony.***

**Diane Kerr**, Treasurer, advised the membership we have about \$6k in the Branch's bank account and to date we are doing well and are within budget. No problems are anticipated.

Following the door prize draws, **Mary Ann Burgess** advised the Christmas meeting will be held at the Sarnia Legion on November 21. Entertainment will be provided by the local group, The Casuals. As in the past, members are asked to bring a food bank contribution.

**Mary Ann and Gloria** asked the membership for their ideas concerning the type of speaker/information they would like to have at our general meetings, and for ideas on entertainment, venues, and/or day trips members would enjoy attending as a group.

**Doug Kerr**, IT and Web Site Coordinator, reminded members of the web site and invited everyone to make use of it.

**Earnie MacDougall**, in his capacity as a member of the Volunteer Recognition Committee, invited members to nominate fellow members for recognition of their volunteerism. Members can contact Earnie directly using his personal e-mail "enmacdougall at hurontel dot on dot ca" Leave no spaces in the actual address, and type "@" and "." rather than 'at' and 'dot'.

**Gloria Cayea** adjourned the meeting at 1400 hours.