

# BRANCH REPORT

ON43 | Ottawa

## CONTACT US

OTTAWA BRANCH  
National Association of  
Federal Retirees  
Unit B-2, 2285 St Laurent Blvd.  
Ottawa ON, K1G 4Z5  
Phone: 613-737-2199  
Email: [info@nafrottawa.com](mailto:info@nafrottawa.com)  
Website: [nafrottawa.com](http://nafrottawa.com)  
Facebook:  
[facebook.com/nafrottawa](https://facebook.com/nafrottawa)

## MEMBERSHIP

OTTAWA BRANCH has over 33,000 members in the City of Ottawa. Our main mission is to advocate for the protection of our members' pensions and retirement benefits.

Learn more about Ottawa Branch activities at our virtual **AGM on May 4, 2022, at 10:00 a.m.** You can visit our website or call 613-737-2199 to register and take part.

We are asking for nominations for the Board of Directors. Submit nominations by surface mail or email (see addresses above) before **5:00 p.m. EST April 19, 2022**. See: <https://nafrottawa.com/board-of-directors/> or call the Branch for the application form.

## President's message

We hope you are keeping safe and taking advantage of the booster vaccination shots available from Ottawa Public Health.

While the pandemic kept the Ottawa Branch office physically shut in 2021, I am proud to report that we still had an excellent year providing value to our members virtually. I want to thank our Board of Directors, our volunteers, and our office team, Linda Barber, Erin Higgins and summer student Antoine Baillargeon, for their commitment to excellence.

In 2021 (my fifth year as your President), we offered our members 55 free webinars on financial literacy and healthy aging. These webinars were offered over Zoom and attended by over 3,500 members and their guests. That is almost twice as many attendees as we had at in-person workshops in our best year, 2019. We also held our first virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM), and this went very smoothly. You can access videos/presentations from these webinars and the AGM [on our website](#).

We also worked closely with the Council on Aging of Ottawa and the Ottawa Chapter of the Canadian Association of Retired Persons, to be sure all our members had the opportunity to hear local candidates address key seniors' issues before the fall election. Together we hosted eight virtual information sessions, one in each Ottawa riding, with 27 candidates and over 300 seniors in attendance. It has been a busy year!



Sincerely,

**Robert Giroux**  
*Branch President*



**Save 25%**  
on your annual membership dues by switching to the DDS payment option!

For a limited time only, we are offering a one-time 25 per cent discount on annual membership dues for every member who switches to the Dues Deduction at Source (DDS) payment option.

Make the switch to DDS today! Call 1-855-304-4700 or visit [federalretirees.ca/DDS](http://federalretirees.ca/DDS) for more information.



National Association  
of Federal Retirees  
Association nationale  
des retraités fédéraux



## Ottawa Branch Annual Report - 2021

### Member Services

With help and guidance from our lead volunteers on financial literacy (**Alain Corriveau**) and healthy aging (**Darlene Boileau** and **Patricia Walsh**), we offered 55 free webinars in 2021 on a wide range of topics, including for example, a webinar on climate-friendly investing offered through [Climate Legacy](#) and the [Group of 78](#).

We are proudly working with uOttawa research teams and, as a result, our members were offered webinars on dealing with heat stress and self-designed exercise (thanks to **Dr. Glen Kenny**) and memory loss (thanks to **Dr. Sarah Fraser**). The research teams also invited our members to participate in research studies and Dr. Kenny reports that 175 members volunteered to participate the last time we asked!

Given the pandemic restrictions, we decided to offer monthly online fitness classes with **Meg Stickl**, owner of AIM Fitness. Over 600 members participated in Meg's classes and tried her exercises to build strength, improve mobility, and maintain good mental health and a healthy lifestyle. Good news – we will offer 12 more virtual classes with Meg, once a month in 2022!



Perennial favourite, **Michael Fine** offered nine investing webinars ranging from how to invest in real estate without fixing toilets to inspiring your grandchildren to become investors. Speakers from **RBC Dominion Securities** offered 16 financial literacy webinars to over 1,000 members and their guests.

Our own team of volunteers converted the **Neighbours Helping Neighbours** program from the Victorian Order of Nurses into Zoom webinars to help people learn basic skills and knowledge to support caregivers in our community. This was a major undertaking in English and French and kudos go to: **Darlene Charman, Lucie Delorme, Gaétan Lortie, Mary March, Patricia Marsden-Dole, Virendra Sahni, Terry Sing, Shelagh Tuddenham** and **Hélène Valin**, and **Erin Higgins** for great support and technical advice.

### Advocacy

When the snap election was called this summer, our volunteers snapped into action and re-established the great partnership we shared with the Council on Aging (COA) of Ottawa and the Ottawa Chapter of the Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP) during the last election campaign.

Together we hosted virtual information sessions with candidates in all eight Ottawa ridings. We advised the candidates to address key seniors' issues related to: a National Seniors' Strategy; enforced principles and standards for long-term care; and adequate funding for home care.

Twenty-seven candidates and over 300 seniors participated. Recordings can be viewed by visiting [our website](#). Huge thanks go to our Branch Advocacy Task Force: **Robert Giroux, Leslie Lawry, Jean-Claude Bouchard, Hélène Buteau, Dianne Canary**, and new volunteer, **Moninna Running**; and **Erin Higgins** and **Linda Barber** from our staff team for their terrific support!

## Recruitment and Retention

**Chris Ford, Myriam Boudreault** and **Linda Barber** spoke about life after retirement at ten pre-retirement planning courses hosted by the Association. Two of the virtual courses were given through Zoom to Canadian High Commission staff in **Australia!** Participants were offered a one-year free membership. You do not have to be retired to join the Association.

**Wayne MacWhirter** and **Georges Nadon** did an excellent job explaining the benefits of membership at four Second Career Assistance Network (SCAN) virtual workshops for Canadian Armed Forces members and their families.

We thank the MCs at our 55 webinars (**Darlene Boileau, Myriam Boudreault, Alain Corriveau, Dyane Dufresne, Patricia Walsh**, again ably supported by **Erin Higgins**), who always made sure to encourage attendees to invite guests and refer new members. We invite all our members to encourage federal retirees to join the Association. You can give [the gift of membership](#) too!

We also reached out by phone to former members whose renewal dates had passed, and we called current members to remind them about their upcoming renewal dates. As a result, many members returned or renewed with time to spare. We thank our callers for their dedication: **Heather Bell, Andrée LaRose**, and **Karen Kirby** (who are members themselves), and **Antoine Baillargeon** (our former summer student).

You never have to worry about your membership lapsing if you pay by pension deduction. Call 1-855-304-4700 to switch to pension deductions or to check your renewal date if you pay by credit card or cheque.

## Finances

Treasurer **Harry Ruthnum** and **Linda Barber** are predicting a small year-end surplus (pending final results of the 2021 audit). They managed our money wisely, but it is challenging to deliver our ambitious program with such a small budget. In 2021, branches received only \$9.24 from each single membership (\$51.36) and only \$13.20 from each double membership (\$66.60). The bulk of the fees goes to the National Office.

**Robert Giroux, Dave Bennett, Harry Ruthnum** and **Linda Barber** formed a task force to tackle our urgent need for more funding. The Ottawa Branch Board approved two proposals from the task force to go to the national Special Members' Meeting (SMM) that was held virtually last fall. The National Board supported the proposals and the members approved them at the SMM.

As a result of this work, starting in 2022, all branches will receive an increase in their share of membership fees to bring them closer to the share they received in 2016. Back then, Branches agreed to take a reduced share to help the National Office, but the need for that help has long been satisfied.

Also starting in 2022, a Special Committee will review the financial needs of branches and recommend actions to ensure adequate funding for the future. **Robert Giroux**, Ottawa Branch President, is following this project closely and will serve on the Committee that will comprise one Branch President per district, plus one of chairs of the Presidents' Forum, and three National Board Directors.



## Other 2021 achievements

**Chris Ford, Darlene Boileau and Jean-Claude Bouchard** formed a planning team to work with a governance consultant and help the Board review its formal committee structure. The consultant guided the Board through focused discussions to confirm our 2022 priorities (in line with the National Strategic Plan) and propose guiding principles and a streamlined structure for engagement.

Ottawa Branch will continue the two new discount offers we introduced in 2021. Branch members receive an exclusive **33% discount** on membership in the AIM Fitness online group fitness program for seniors. Visit our website [nafrottawa.com](http://nafrottawa.com) for full details or contact **Meg Stickl** at [Meg@ActivitiesInMotion.ca](mailto:Meg@ActivitiesInMotion.ca). Be sure to mention you are an Ottawa Branch member.

Ottawa Branch members also receive a **15% discount** on annual membership with **Ingenium** that enables you to enjoy all the exhibitions and activities at the [Canada Agriculture and Food Museum](#), the [Canada Aviation and Space Museum](#), and the [Canada Science and Technology Museum](#). To purchase a membership, go to the [Ingenium website](#) and use the code: **2223NAFR**. Visit our website to learn about all our member discounts.



## In memoriam in Sage Magazine

If you would like to honour a past branch member by having her or his name included in the Ottawa Branch in memoriam section, please email volunteer **Diane Law** at [inmemoriamOttawaON43@gmail.com](mailto:inmemoriamOttawaON43@gmail.com).

## Looking for new Board Directors

If you are interested in our work, consider joining our Board of Directors. The Ottawa Branch is committed to building a culturally diverse board and strongly encourages applications from women, former civil servants from all staffing levels, visible minorities, Aboriginal Peoples and individuals with disabilities. Spousal members are also welcome to apply.

Send an email to [info@nafrottawa.com](mailto:info@nafrottawa.com) or call 613-737-2199 if you would like to discuss this opportunity further. The deadline for nominations is **5:00 p.m. EST April 19, 2022**.

Election of Directors will take place at our virtual **Annual General Meeting on May 4, 2022**.

***Ottawa Branch Disclaimer:** Ottawa Branch provides information on issues, products, and services of general interest to our membership. It does not endorse a particular position or a product or service, as being suitable for individual members, but brings them to the members' attention so that they can make up their own minds.*



**Linda Barber**  
Ottawa Branch  
Manager



**Erin Higgins**  
Program  
Coordinator,  
Member  
Communications &  
Engagement



**Antoine Baillargeon**  
Summer Student

*Thanks to funding  
received from the  
Government of Canada*