

BRANCH REPORT

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CONTACT US

OTTAWA BRANCH
National Association of
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MEMBERSHIP

OTTAWA BRANCH has over 35,000 members living in the City of Ottawa. Our main mission is to advocate for the protection of our members' pensions and retirement benefits.

We are soliciting nominations for the Board of Directors. Submit nominations by surface mail or email (see addresses above) before 5:00 p.m. EST **April 22, 2020**. See: <https://nafrottawa.com/board-of-directors> or call the Branch for application form.

Learn more about Ottawa Branch activities at our **2020 AGM on May 7** at the Ottawa Conference and Event Centre. Visit our website or call 613-737-2199 for information on how to register.

President's message

As Ottawa Branch President, I am very proud of the work our Advocacy Team has done to make Ottawa area candidates in the 2019 federal election aware of our Association's four priorities for seniors. Our goal is to see public policies and systems adapted to the needs and concerns of our members and all Canadian seniors and their families.

This initiative was led by Leslie Lawry, Vice-President of the Ottawa Branch Board of Directors and Chair of the Advocacy Committee. Leslie and her team planned, organised and delivered three town hall meetings (Meet 'n' Greets) with representatives from the Liberal, Conservative, New Democrat, Green, People's and Communist parties. The team also set up and attended one-on-one meetings with 5 of these candidates. The Meet 'n' Greets brought together 400 members and 30 candidates.

Ottawa Branch proudly collaborated on the Meet 'n' Greets with the National Office of the Association, Ottawa Chapter #26 of the Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP) and the Council on Aging of Ottawa. We are very grateful to Chartwell Retirement Residences who graciously sponsored all the Meet 'n' Greets.

Since the election, Ottawa Branch has written to the eight successful candidates to congratulate them and to remind them of our four priorities for seniors: retirement income security; National Seniors' Strategy; support for veterans and their families, and pharmacare. We will continue to advocate on your behalf to advance these important issues.



Sincerely,

Robert Giroux
Branch President

PARTNER BANNER



Ottawa Branch's Advocacy Initiative

Advocacy is not just a word. It is an opportunity for us to express our views and concerns about our rights and needs.

Seniors represent the fastest growing demographic in the country. As an advocate for seniors, the National Association of Federal Retirees recognized the 2019 Federal Election as a prime opportunity to highlight the needs of today's growing seniors' population and to ensure these issues are front and centre on the political agenda.

Working with eight other seniors' organizations, our Association identified four key priorities for seniors and then launched a national campaign to bring these four issues to candidates' attention: retirement income security, a National Seniors Strategy, support for veterans and their families, and pharmacare.

In June 2019, Leslie Lawry, Vice-President of the Ottawa Board of Directors and Chair of our Advocacy Committee stepped up to the plate and built a team of volunteers to advocate on behalf of our members and Ottawa's seniors. Working closely in concert with the National Office and in line with the four national priorities, the Ottawa Branch team conducted an environmental scan and identified goals and activities for the Branch to carry out from September to October 11, when advance polling was projected to begin.

Based on the distribution of Ottawa Branch's members (approx. 35,000) in Ottawa's eight ridings, the main advocacy activities took the form of Meet 'n' Greet meetings with candidates from the Liberal, Conservative, New Democrat, Green, People's and Communist parties:

- Meet 'n' Greet for Ottawa Centre, Ottawa South, Ottawa-Vanier
 - 14 candidates and 100 seniors attended
- Meet 'n' Greet for Orléans
 - 3 candidates and 190 seniors attended
- Meet 'n' Greet for Carleton, Kanata-Carleton, Nepean and Ottawa West-Nepean
 - 13 candidates and 110 seniors attended

As a non-partisan association, we provided the candidates with information on the four key priorities for seniors in advance. We stated our goal to make sure these issues were recognized and addressed by candidates at the meeting to help our members make informed decisions at the ballot box. At each 90-minute Meet 'n' Greet, all candidates present were introduced and a representative from each party was given a brief opportunity to speak about how their party intended to address the four priorities. After the party representatives concluded their presentations, all attendees were invited to mingle with candidates one-on-one and ask them questions directly.

**Election 2019
Priorities**

National Association of Federal Retirees / Association nationale des retraités fédéraux

Candidate Meet & Greets

Open to all Ottawa-area voters, these events are opportunities to meet the candidates, hear about their platforms and to ask questions in a safe, non-partisan space.
Light refreshments will be available.

Thursday September 26 - 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
RA Centre, Courtside A/B (2451 Riverside Drive)
Featuring candidates from Ottawa Centre, Ottawa South and Ottawa-Vanier

Tuesday October 1 - 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Shenkman Arts Centre, Lower Lobby (245 Centrum Blvd)
Featuring candidates from Orléans

Tuesday October 8 - 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Ben Franklin Place, Council Chambers (101 Centrepointe Dr)
Featuring candidates from Carleton, Nepean, Ottawa West-Nepean and Kanata-Carleton

Ottawa Branch is working in collaboration with the Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP). Ottawa Branch extends sincere thanks to Chartwell Retirement Residences – our generous sponsor for these three meet & greet sessions.

CARP CHARTWELL retirement residences

For more information and to register, visit www.federalretirees.ca/electionscorner

Our Meet 'n' Greet poster, which was distributed across Ottawa during the run-up to the 2019 Federal Election.



OTTAWA



Ottawa Branch Advocacy - Opportunities and Challenges



From left to right: Leslie Lawry, Chair Advocacy, Hélène Buteau Co-Chair Advocacy, Darlene Boileau, Co-Chair Advocacy, and Hélène Nadeau, Ottawa and Nunavut District Director.



Leslie Lawry and Terry Sing, Ottawa Branch volunteers met with Catherine McKenna, Liberal incumbent candidate for Ottawa Centre on August 28 who was re-elected on October 19.

Putting on branch advocacy activities comes with some opportunities and challenges....

Opportunities

1. Collaboration with strong seniors' organizations - Ottawa Branch had the opportunity to work closely with Ottawa Chapter #26 of the Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP) and the Council on Aging of Ottawa (COA).

2. Sponsorship of event – Chartwell Retirement Residences graciously sponsored all three Meet 'n' Greet events.

3. Strength of teamwork – As Advocacy Chair, Leslie and her two co-chairs, Darlene Boileau and Hélène Buteau, built and maintained a strong team of volunteers who took on different responsibilities and dove into the various activities with zeal. All were ably supported by Ottawa Branch Manager, Linda Barber.

4. Working with National Office – Throughout this initiative, Ottawa Branch benefitted from the advice, support and encouragement of members of the National Office Advocacy Team. In particular, Candace Jazvac was an invaluable de facto member of the Branch Advocacy Team and she also made magic happen through the electronic Eventbrite registration system.

5. Development of planning materials – Leslie consulted with Dyane Dufresne, past Ottawa Branch Advocacy Chair, to harvest lessons learned. However, the Branch did not have any recent history with Meet 'n' Greets, so we

definitely broke new ground. Leslie and her team are now documenting the experience to be sure we have the materials on hand for the future that will serve as an operations guide and supporting documents.

Challenges

- 1. Initial contacts with candidates and their office personnel** – In some cases, parties took some time to identify candidates in all ridings or their staff changed, and contact had to be restarted. In other cases, the contact information was incorrect or unavailable. *Volunteer persistence paid off, eventually.*
- 2. Registration** – Participants were great at registering through Eventbrite for the three Meet 'n' Greet events. However, if they were unable to attend, they did not always advise us. It was disappointing to

see lower numbers of attendees than expected and we could not invite others who may have been on wait lists. *Please remember to let your branch know in advance if you cannot attend an event.*

- 3. Fire alarm** – What can we say - things happen! Unfortunately, at one of our Meet ‘n’ Greets, someone doing electrical work tripped the fire alarm inadvertently. Our Meet ‘n’ Greet looked like it might become a Stop ‘n’ Go. But it all turned out well in the end. *We thank everyone for their understanding.*

VOLUNTEERS – THE KEY TO OUR SUCCESS

Organizing activities such as the Meet ‘n’ Greets with 2019 candidates would simply not be possible without the dedicated Ottawa Branch volunteers who contributed their time and energy to making things happen! While this activity is over, Ottawa Branch is involved in many other activities, including our Financial Literacy Program for members, where we could benefit from your help. These include:

- Research and writing, especially grant application writing;
- Interacting with members through social media – Ottawa Branch plans to be on Facebook in 2020 and is looking for volunteers to help us keep our page up to date;
- Managing projects;
- Being Association ambassadors to help recruit new members;
- Translation and translation verification;
- Taking minutes at board and committee meetings; and,
- Joining the committees below and/or our board of directors.

OTTAWA BRANCH COMMITTEES & GROUPS

Membership and Services Committee (M&S) - This Committee seeks and implements ways to enhance the value of your membership. It develops and oversees a range of member services and discounts.

Recruitment and Retention Committee (R&R) - This Committee is developing a strategic approach to member recruitment and retention.

Policy and Governance Committee (P&G) - This Committee examines policy issues identified by its members, or referred to it by the Board, or other Branch committees. It develops required policies for Board approval. The P&G Committee also recommends updates and changes to Branch by-laws.

Branch Community Liaison Committee (BCLC) - This Committee engages with local senior-oriented organizations, which advocate to advance health, pensions and well-being issues that are congruent with the Association’s objectives.

Office Volunteers: (OV) - These volunteers provide reception services, answer members’ telephone enquiries and direct them to the proper support group. They assist in data entry, tabulate and analyse survey results and follow-up with members on their interest in continuing their membership.

Please email info@nafrottawa.com or call 613-737-2199 to let us let us know what kind of volunteering interests you.



Shelagh Tuddenham, Volunteer Team Leader of the Neighbours Helping Neighbours initiative, at our 2019 AGM.

If you have a new email address, please advise us. We want to be sure you receive our monthly e-newsletter. Past newsletters are available on our website at: <https://nafrottawa.com/newsletters>.

