

National Association of Federal Retirees

October Newsletter 2024



Mid-Island & Pacific Rim Branch fedretirees-nanaimo.ca
PO Box 485, Lantzville, BC V0R 2H0

Telephone: (250) 248-7171



September General Meeting 2024, Lantzville Legion

Next Meeting - General Meeting.

Date/Time: Thursday, November 28, 2024.

Doors open 10:00 AM, Meeting starts 11:00 AM.

Coffee available at 10:00 AM

Location: Tigh-Na-Mara: 1155 Resort Dr, Parksville

Directions: Resort Drive is 1.5 km West on W. Island Highway from Exit 46 on Inland Highway 19. Turn right onto Resort Drive. Tigh-Na-Mara Resort is 170 meters off the Highway.

Business Meeting: 11:00-12:00

Presentation: 12:00 - 12:30 -
TBA

Lunch: Buns, Salads, Roast Turkey Breast, Stuffing, Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables, Sweet Offerings, Coffee, Tea. Cost is \$35

In-House Draw - Tickets \$2 or 3 for \$5. All proceeds to charity.

We are also collecting non-perishable food or cash for the local food banks.

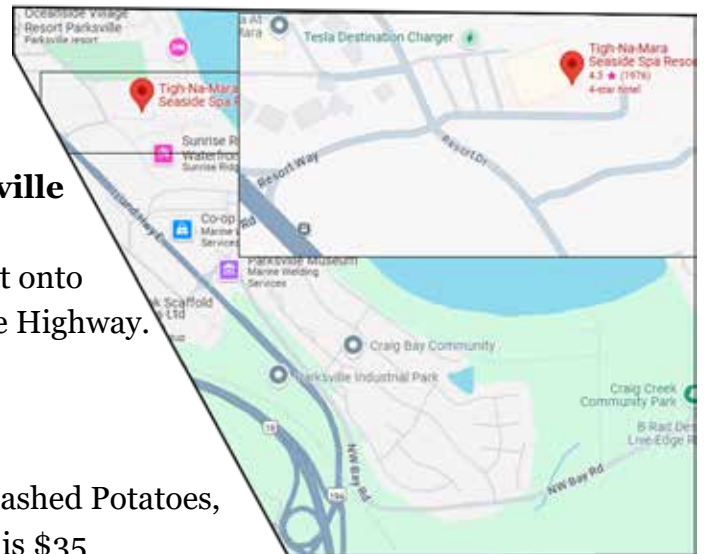
Reservations: Reservation procedure now includes the option to pay for meal on-line.

We will be canvassing members by email regarding their attendance at the November 28 GM. If you plan to attend you will be asked to fill out a short (3 min) survey indicating if you want to have a meal or not. Submitting this form indicates you will attend. Your local Federal Retirees volunteer will still phone those who prefer contact by phone to ask whether you plan to attend the lunch.

NOTE – If you receive the email but are reluctant to click on the registration link then please phone Rick Roberts, 250 248 7171 if you plan to attend with or without the meal.

Name Tags will be available at the door for all members attending the November GM and luncheon. Remember to leave them at the door when you leave after the meeting luncheon. If your name tag from the last meeting had spelling errors, please contact Charles @ 758-2240 or scrivenercharles59@gmail.com.

Cancellations: To cancel, please call Jim Gahr, 250 760-2894. The last date for cancellation to avoid billing is **Saturday, November 23, 2024**. If you said “no” or “maybe” and then decide to attend on the day of the meeting, you are welcome to come and register at the door.



President's Report - Fall Newsletter 2024



Rick Roberts

Hope everyone is having a good Fall....had to scrape the ice off of my car this morning so the cooler weather is definitely here. The following are a few of things keeping your Branch busy:

Advocacy: the Advocacy Committee has done yeoman's work leading up to the Provincial election...introduced the Association to each candidate by letter including an offer to meet, researched questions based on our priorities to be asked during the interviews, and sat down and conversed with three candidates. A tremendous amount of dedicated time...my thanks to Marg, Larry, Christine and Charles. You can read more about this initiative in the Advocacy report below.

National on line survey: the results of the survey for our Branch were a little disappointing. 232 members responded (out of our total membership of 1700), 1 person said they didn't realize there was a local Branch and 1 said they were dissatisfied with the Branch (my guess would be that would be the same person), 84% were not familiar with the Branch contact information, 16% said they were not aware of Branch meetings, 32% were not familiar with Branch services, 27% did not think the Branch was important, and 76% have not attended any Branch functions. Member Services are a priority for our Branch, we endeavor to keep in contact through welcoming letters, newsletters three times a year, President's letters a couple of times a year and General Meeting another 3 times a year. If you think we are missing something. Please let us know.

Eventbrite: Due to a shortage of volunteer phoners and the difficulty in contacting folks by phone these days (fear of scams etc), we have decided to pilot Eventbrite registration for our General Meetings though we will continue to phone those without email. This process has some advantages including ability to pay upfront if you wish with a credit card and the reduction in the number of no shows at our luncheons. So please watch your emails to register for our November meeting and if you can think of anyway to improve this new system and process, please let us know.

November 28th General Meeting: to be held at the beautiful Tigh Na Mara resort in Parksville including a Christmas buffet. Speaker to be confirmed and all of this for a subsidized cost of \$35...please plan to attend. Should be fun.

Plea for volunteers: no writings from me would be complete without a request to consider a volunteer role for our Association no matter how small. We presently have 2 vacancies one for a Secretary and someone to work on communications. No position is overly onerous and it is a good way to support your fellow retirees.

And finally, don't forget the Mega Recruitment Drive...a way to increase our Membership and make you eligible for some wonderful prizes.

See you in November!

Minutes of September 26, 2024 General Meeting.

The General Meeting (GM) of the Mid-Island and Pacific Rim Branch (BC05) took place at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 257, Lantzville, B.C., on Thursday, September 26, 2024.

BC05 Branch President Rick Roberts called the meeting to order at 11:00 am.

Marg Smith acted as secretary.

Rick asked the new members present to stand and introduce themselves.

The November 2023 General Meeting minutes were displayed on the overhead screen for review and approval. The President called for a motion to approve the Minutes.

Maureen Shakespeare moved that the November 2023 General Meeting Minutes be approved, seconded by Fran Graham. Motion carried.

REPORTS from September GM President

Rick thanked the Advocacy Committee for its work in relation to the 2024 B.C. Provincial Election. He also thanked the executive members who helped with the GM and filled in for those absent.

Rick noted that the number of attendees at the GM was smaller than usual. This may be due to the new Eventbrite registration system the Branch is trialling and the number of people who are away.

Marion Pickton asked whether the branch could phone members uncomfortable with registering through the on-line system. Rick noted that the Branch will examine what changes can be made to improve attendance before the November GM.

The Secretary and Communications positions on the Branch Executive are currently vacant. Rick asked that anyone interested in these positions and other volunteer opportunities with the Branch sign the volunteer sheet at each table.

The neighbouring branch in the North Island—the North Island-John Finn Branch—is struggling to find volunteers and has asked for our help with advocacy.

Rick discussed the results of the NAFR 2023 national survey. Two hundred thirty-two (232) Branch members responded to the study. Rick was concerned about the number of people who had never heard of the Branch. He asked attendees to think about other ways the Branch can communicate with members.

Treasurer

Penny Kanigan, Branch Treasurer, is in the hospital. Rick wished her a speedy recovery.

The Treasurer's Report was displayed on an overhead screen. The Branch currently has \$27,906.53 in assets comprised of cash in a chequing account (\$14,609.27) and two GICs (#1: \$7,609.27 and #2: \$5,687.99).

The Draft Budget for 2024 was shown.

Membership

Pat Benton, Membership Director, was away. The Membership Report was displayed on an overhead screen. The Branch has a total of 1698 members. A list of transfers in and out and membership cancellations were shown,

The names of members who had passed away since the last general meeting were read, and a minute of silence was observed.

Health and Benefits – Andy Gilman



Andy reminded members that copies of the You and Your Survivors Workbook are available for those who wish to have one.

He noted that on November 1, 2024, the administration of the Pensioners' Dental Plan will be transferred to Canada Life, which is completing positive enrollment for members.

Andy recommended that members review the booklet accompanying their credit cards to understand the coverage and exclusions for travel insurance coverage, vehicle rentals and other card benefits.

Advocacy - Marg Smith

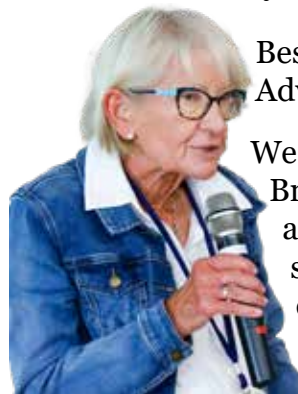
Marg reviewed the new voting processes and technology Elections BC will employ in the 2024 election.

Members were reminded to use the templates for letters to candidates and letters to the editor on the Federal Retirees website.

Members were invited to visit the Branch table at the Nanaimo Seniors Health and Wellness Fair on October 24, 2024.

OCTOBER REPORTS

Branch Advocacy – Marg Smith



Best wishes from your Branch Advocacy Committee.

We are pleased to report on our Branch's advocacy activities and other developments on issues relevant to our advocacy efforts.

Advocacy Action

2024 B.C. Provincial Election

The Advocacy Committee met three times over the summer to plan and prepare for the election.

The points below summarize the Committee's work, including

- researching issues and developing questions to ask candidates about health care and housing, two issues of importance to our members and B.C. seniors,
- drafting a letter to candidates to introduce our association and branch and request a meeting,

- monitoring each party's website to check for nominations and platforms,
- emailing letters to each nominated candidate in the four electoral districts within our branch boundaries,
- creating a roster of Advocacy Committee members to meet with candidates,
- monitoring and, where possible, attending candidates' forums in the electoral districts,
- communicating with candidates' campaign staff to make meeting arrangements,
- meeting with three candidates: Adam Walker (Independent candidate, Ladysmith-Oceanside), Gwen O'Mahony (BC Conservative candidate, Nanaimo-Lantzville), and George Anderson (NDP candidate, Nanaimo-Lantzville); none of the candidates in the Mid Island-Pacific Rim electoral district responded to our meeting requests,
- sending thank-you letters to each candidate after meetings,
- reporting on each candidate meeting and submitting the reports to the provincial Advocacy Program Officer and National Office,
- furthering our advocacy outreach by co-hosting a table with the Duncan and District Branch at the NDDLCL Labour Day Picnic on September 2, 2024,



L-R: Bob Benton, Christine Walker, Rick Devlieger (Duncan Branch President), and Pat Benton with her dog Finnegen

and

- preparing an e-blast for branch members about our election advocacy action.

NDP candidates won all four electoral districts within our branch boundaries. Your MLAs are:

- Sheila Malcolmson – Nanaimo-Gabriola Island
- George Anderson – Nanaimo-Lantzville
- Stephanie Higginson – Ladysmith-Oceanside
- Josie Osborne – Mid Island-Pacific Rim

Sheila Malcolmson and Josie Osborne have held Cabinet posts in the past. Stephanie Higginson and George Anderson are rookie MLAs.

Our branch advocacy initiatives were featured in an Advocacy Spotlight communication from National Office.

While it is easy to encapsulate the Advocacy Committee's work in bullet form, the summary merely scratches the surface of the work done and the time spent researching issues, drafting questions and letters, communicating and meeting with candidates, attending candidate forums, preparing reports, and coordinating and communicating our action.

Thank you to all Advocacy Committee members for a job well done, particularly to Larry Biccum for leading that effort. And thank you to the branch Executive Committee for supporting our work.

Seniors Health & Wellness Fair

On October 24, 2024, the Branch participated as an exhibitor in the Nanaimo Seniors Health & Wellness Fair at the Beban Park Social Centre in Nanaimo. Exhibitors from government, not-for-profit organizations, and the private sector were present. Entrance to the event was free.

Over 500 attendees visited the fair, where we



L-R: Fran Graham and Christine Walker. Carol Gregson, and Marg Smith also handled the Branch table and talked with attendees.

distributed information about Federal Retirees and promotional items. The event offered an opportunity to recruit new members, raise our profile among seniors in the area, and increase awareness about our advocacy priorities and their positive impact on Canadian seniors.

Thank you to our volunteers; they all did a great job.

Health and Benefits - Andy Gilman

Travel Insurance: be aware!

When you are traveling out of Province (domestically or internationally) and you have a medical emergency, there are things you must do to enable the PSHCP (managed by MSH) and Johnson (if you have opted into their travel insurance) to efficiently handle your claim. The most important item is that you must get permission as soon as possible for the appropriate medical assistance. If you cannot contact the medical insurer yourself, then a family member or travel partner can do this. Travel insurance companies have medical staff on call who will assess treatment plans and work with health care providers to determine the what, where and when of your treatment. The second most important item is making sure that you get a comprehensive, legible invoice for services rendered by the health care provider. Recently, some members have experienced delays or been denied claims because the invoices they received were not adequately detailed or the amounts owed for treatment were poorly prepared.

If you are renting a car anywhere, be sure you know if you are covered for accident insurance. A comprehensive damage waiver sold by major rental companies in North America usually means you pay no damages even if the vehicle is a write-off; liability is usually not covered.. In Europe, damage waivers can be quite different and you may still have a hefty deductible to pay. Most premium credit cards (not Costco Mastercard) have car accident insurance policies; however they only cover vehicles with a retail cost up to \$65,000 before tax and not trucks and vans. Are there age limits on who can rent and drive a car? In Ireland, you may not be able to rent a car if you are over 75 years of age. Home auto insurance can cover accident vehicle damage and liability; however, you need to check that this is included in your policy. Rentals

of a third party vehicle, such as from TURO, are not covered by most home policies.

Read your rights and responsibilities as the traveller and have those emergency numbers provided by the insurer at hand before you travel. Trying to figure it all out when an emergency occurs is so much more difficult, very stressful and expensive.

Guest Speaker

Bonnie Stableford from the **Oceanside**

Hospice Society spoke about the Society's programs and services, including medical equipment loans, individual and family grief counseling, volunteer visiting, Reiki and healing touch, palliative vigils, grief support groups, a lending library, and grief packages.



The Society operates with a small part-time staff and many volunteers. Its services are free in the Oceanside communities of Parksville, Qualicum Beach, Nanoose, Deep Bay, Bowser, Qualicum Bay, Errington, Coombs, Hilliers, and Whiskey Creek. Its palliative care bed unit (Oceanside Hospice) is at Trillium Lodge in Parksville, and Hospice House, the Society's administrative and meeting building, is in Qualicum Beach.

The Society welcomes volunteers. Training is provided.

Ms. Stableford took questions from the floor. Rick thanked Ms. Stableford for her remarks.

After a short break Lunch was served.





Left to right: Marg Smith, Andy Gilman, Christine Walker, Larry Biccum, Jim Gahr, Carol Gregson, Bob Benton, Pat Benton, Rick Roberts, Charles Scrivener, Penny Kanigan, Ian Williams, Fran Graham

Financial Report August 23 2024 - Penny Kanigan

Working Balance	\$17,302.05
GIC investments #1	\$7,205.10
GIC investments #2	\$5,687.99
Total	\$30,195.14

Tomato Garden

An old Italian man lived alone in New Jersey. He wanted to plant his annual tomato garden; but it was very difficult work as the ground was hard. His only son, Vincent, who used to help him, was in prison. The old man wrote a letter to his son and described his predicament:

Dear Vincent,

I am feeling pretty sad, because it looks like I won't be able to plant my tomato garden this year. I'm just getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. I know if you were here my troubles would be over. I know you would be happy to dig the plot for me, like in the old days. Love, Papa

A few days later he received this letter from his son:

Dear Pop, Don't dig up that garden. That's where the bodies are buried. Love, Vinnie

At 6 am the next morning, FBI agents and local police arrived and dug up the entire area without finding any bodies. They apologized to the old man and left. That same day the old man received another letter from his son. Dear Pop, Go ahead and plant the tomatoes now. That's the best you could do under the circumstances. Love, Vinnie



We collect donations (food or money) for the local Food Banks at each meeting. There will be a Collection Box at the Registration Desk to receive your gifts.

LOOKING GOOD

My face in the mirror isn't wrinkled or drawn.
 My house isn't dirty. The cobwebs are gone.
 My garden looks lovely and so does my lawn.
 I think I might never put my glasses back on.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT October 28 2024 - Pat Benton

Member Number Count

As of October 28, 2024, the Mid-Island and Pacific Rim Branch has 1696 members

NEW MEMBERS (6)

Sean Anderson & Sasha O'Regan

Nona Brack, Nanaimo

Kim Reach, Parksville

Darryl and Michelle Stark, Parksville

TRANSFERRED IN (2)

Nicholas & Amiee Rowe

TRANSFERRED OUT (1)

Petra Herrmann, Nanaimo

In Memorium (5)

**Robert J. Budd, Parksville,
Survived by Aileen**

Robert E. Hollies, Parksville

Borge Larson, Nanaimo

John Mathers, Parksville

Donald w. Pridham, Nanaimo

Veterans' Week

Every year, Nov. 5 to 11 is Veterans' Week, an opportunity for Canadians to honour the extraordinary efforts and sacrifices of our veterans and those who continue to serve. Remembrance Day, Nov. 11, marks the final day of Veterans' Week and recalls the end of hostilities during the First World War on that date in 1918. At the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, Canadians gather wherever they are and observe a moment of silence to remember those who have fallen in the line of duty and to recognize their service to our country.



Health and Benefits -

Copies of "You and Your Survivor" are available. It is also posted on our website <https://fedretirees-nanaimo.ca/seniors-information>. Penny will arrange for a seminar about Advanced Care Planning. About 20 members indicated they would like to attend.

"My Voice" – A provincial Advance Care planning guide regarding health care at end of life. Copies are available. These publications are available on our website <https://fedretirees-nanaimo.ca/seniors-information>.



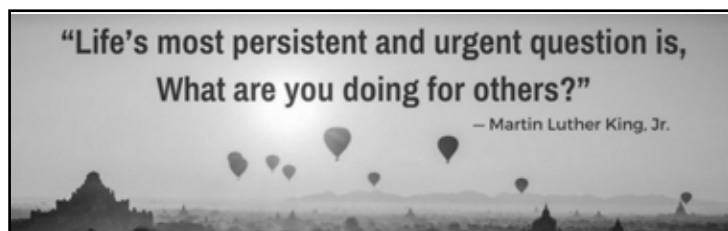
I am not interested in the past. I am interested in the future, for that is where I expect to spend the rest of my life.

Charles F. Kettering (1876-1958)

Please make sure your information is updated on the National website, if you have problems, Pat Benton can help.

**National Association of Federal Retirees
Mid-Island and Pacific Rim Branch Executive, Directors & Volunteers 2024**

Class	Position	Name	Phone	Email
Executive			Most 250	
Exe	President	Rick Roberts	248-7171	rick.roberts@shaw.ca
Exe	Vice - President	Christine Walker	754-4031	walkershomeemail@gmail.com
Exe	Secretary	Vacant		
Exe	Treasurer	Penny Kanigan	760-0929	pennykanigan@shaw.ca
Exe	Past President			
Directors				
Director	Membership / Database	Pat Benton	780-242-9220	bentonpb1@gmail.com
Director	Health & Benefits	Andy Gilman	248-8595	andygilman48@gmail.com
Director	Advocacy	Marg Smith	586-8690	mrgtsmth80@gmail.com
Director	Newsletter Editor / Web	Ian Williams	758-0954	ianv.will@gmail.com
Director	Awards/Historian	Charles Scrivener	758-2240	scrivenercharles59@gmail.com
Director	Registration	Jim Gahr	760-2894	heidleberghound@shaw.ca
Director	Program / Speakers	Fran Graham	585-8227	fran41@telus.net
Director	Telephone	Vacant		
Director	At- Large	Larry Biccum	752-3485	lbiccum@hotmail.com
Director	At- Large	Bob Benton	780-242-9220	bentonpb1@gmail.com
Director	At- Large	Carol Gregson	228-3510	cmgregsonbc@gmail.com
Coordinators				
Cards	Nanaimo	Sheila Wilson	591-2446	mesheshe@shaw.ca
Cards	Parksville/Qualicum			
Cards	Port Alberni	Marian Pickton	723-1136	pfmcj@shaw.ca
Nominations	Committee Chair			
Phone Captain	Nanaimo	Fran Graham	585-8227	frances41@shaw.ca
Phone Captain	Nanaimo	Maureen Shakespeare	758-2833	lmshakes@shaw.ca
Phone Captain	Parksville/Qualicum	Judy Southern	752-5586	njsouthern@shaw.ca
Phone Captain	Port Alberni	Wendy Stander	778- 421-4244	wendy.tony@shaw.ca



Volunteering is at the very core of being human. No one has made it through life without someone else’s help.
Heather French Henry