



Association nationale des retraités fédéraux National Association of Federal Retirees

OUTAOUAIS

**30TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS
APRIL 20, 2022**



**Branch Annual Report
2022**

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1. Message from the President

Dear Members:

On behalf of the National Association of Federal Retirees, Outaouais Branch Board of Directors, I am proud to present our 2021-22 Annual Report. This report presents the financial statements and the main activities that your Board of Directors, its volunteers, and its employees have carried out since April 2021.

Like society in general, the pandemic has imposed major changes on us in the way we operate. Our Branch is being reorganized, and your Board of Directors and its volunteers are resolutely committed to meeting these new challenges, as you will see in the following pages.

Our 2021-2024 Strategic Plan, developed last summer, has guided all of our work. It allowed the members of the Board of Directors to follow a plan with the common goal of advocating for your interests, increasing the recruitment and retention of members, and finally increasing our regional visibility. I am very proud and impressed by the contribution of our team of volunteers to the achievement of our mission. I congratulate all of them!

Would you like to be part of our team? Do you have time and energy to devote to our Association? If so, I invite you to contact us, and we would be pleased to discuss volunteer opportunities within our Association and our Branch.

Cordially,
Donald Déry, President
National Association of Federal Retirees, Outaouais Branch

2. Board Of Directors and Branch Volunteers and Staff

2.1 Officers and Executive Committee

President	Donald Dery
1 st Vice-president	Andrée-Lise Provost
2 nd Vice-president	(Vacant)
Secretary	Jacques Lecompte
Treasurer	René Caron

2.2 Directors

Director	Michelle Page
Director	Michael MacNeil

2.3 Branch Staff

Director	André Thivierge
Member Services Assistant	Liane Dussault

Left in December 2021	
Manager of Programs and services	Guylaine Ross

2.4 Volunteers

Web page — Outaouais Branch	Michelle Page
Facebook Page	Michelle Page
Photography	Francine Frappier
	Robert Dubois
Member Outreach	Hélène Brosseau
	Christiane Babin
Web Hosting	Guy Gaumont

2.5 Advocacy on Behalf of Members

Mme Andrée Lise Provost joined the Branch in April 2021 as vice-president. She was also the new Provincial Advocacy Officer (PAO).

The Outaouais Branch was also pleased to engage Mr. Michael MacNeil as Director and Advocacy Officer in April 2021.

As part of her duties as PAO and Vice-president, Mme Provost presented an overview of the Outreach 338 Program at the Quebec District meeting in October 2021

The Outreach 338 Program, intending to reach all 338 MPs in the federal Parliament, focusses on four priorities:

- Retirement income security;
- A national seniors strategy;
- Support for veterans and their families, and;
- Pharmacare.

These four priorities, advocated by the NAFR, are of such scope and cover such a range of issues that it is difficult for volunteer Association officers proposing to meet their elected representatives to advocate for them in depth, and to explain their importance for members of the Association.

To provide more focus, discussions are underway with the Association National Office to allow Branches to choose which of the four priorities that they could advocate more effectively. It was also suggested that Quebec branches could combine forces to meet the Quebec caucus leaders of the various political parties, thus increasing their influence.

Otherwise, the Outaouais Branch continues to advocate for its members' interests through other means. One of our strategies is to form coalitions and develop partnerships with other regional associations that share with our Association the work of advocating for retirees in the Outaouais. In this context, leading up to the 2021 federal election we collaborated with *l'Association québécoise de défense des droits des personnes retraitées et préretraitées de l'Outaouais* (AQDR Outaouais) and *la Table de concertation des aînés et retraités de l'Outaouais* (TCARO) to organize a candidates' debate. The debate, which lasted two hours, was held at the Cabane en bois rond in Gatineau. Email invitations were sent to all our members as well as to the members of the five other branches in Quebec. Just over 100 people registered for the videoconference and 25 representatives of various seniors' associations attended the debate in person.

Candidates representing the five main political parties in the Outaouais region addressed issues concerning health, retirement income security, housing, and home support programs. Each candidate was given the opportunity to answer each of the questions on behalf of their party. The candidates present were:

- M. Yves Destroimaisons, Bloc Québécois, candidate in Argenteuil-La Petite-Nation;
- M. Samuel Gendron, New Democratic Party, candidate in Hull-Aylmer;
- M. Steven MacKinnon, Liberal Party of Canada, candidate in Gatineau;
- M. Shaughn McArthur, Green Party of Canada, candidate in Pontiac;
- Mrs. Sandrine Perion, Conservative Party of Canada, candidate in Hull-Aylmer.

In January 2022, still as part of the Outreach 338 program, the Branch sent a letter of congratulations for their re-election or election, as was the case, to the six (6) candidates elected in the Outaouais region. Those are:

- The Honorable Steven MacKinnon, MP for Gatineau and Chief Government Whip;
- The Honorable Greg Fergus, MP for Hull-Aylmer and Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and Minister of the Treasury Board;
- Ms. Sophie Chatel, MNA for Pontiac and member of the Standing Committee on Finance;
- Ms. Sylvie Bérubé, MNA for Abitibi – Baie-James – Nunavik – Eeyou;
- M. Sébastien Lemire, MP for Abitibi – Témiscamingue; and,
- M. Stéphane Lauzon, MNA for Argenteuil – La Petite-Nation, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Rural Economic Development and member of the Standing Committee on Science and Research.

In preparation for future meetings with these MPs, Messrs. Déry and MacNeil, and Mme Provost will establish which aspects of the Outreach 338 program will be prioritized for discussion during these meetings.

We have initiated an interactive process of exchanges with our members in the form of surveys published in our newsletters. These surveys have enabled us to identify information/training needs via our videoconferences, and to identify the issues that concern our members so that we can present them to MPs during our meetings with them.

Our last survey, launched in February 2022, aimed to better identify the number of our members who were employed before 2011 and who experienced late payments of their severance pay. The results of this survey will be shared with the National Office in order to consider possible national and local measures of intervention.

2.6 Financial Management 2021

Having a year-round treasurer allowed us to stabilize the financial management of the Branch and to make improvements to our financial operations.

During 2021, electronic payment to suppliers was implemented and thus reduced travel of volunteers needed to authorize and to sign cheques. The number of cheques issued has also been greatly reduced. However, Interac payments will not be implemented, as this method does not permit signature by two Branch officers, which is in contravention to our regulations.

As well and due to the pandemic, funded activities planned for 2021 did not take place. Consequently, the Branch generated a financial surplus of \$14,701. The surplus generated over

the past two years has enabled us to employ a director to manage the day-to-day affairs of the Branch and thus assume certain tasks formerly performed by volunteer administrators.

The overall financial situation of the Branch will be presented during the reading of financial statements prepared by the Branch's accounting firm, and the Branch Treasurer will present the budget for the year 2022 and the budget forecast for 2023. Funds held in the reserve have been revised in order to allocate monies to activities that the Branch plans to hold over the next few years.

2.7 Recruitment and Retention of Members and Volunteers

2.7.1 Recruitment and Retention of Members

Recruitment activities related to National Public Service Week did not take place due to the pandemic. However, we hope to participate in 2022. This event allows us to meet future federal retirees and to discuss and promote to them the benefits of joining our association.

For a second consecutive year, confinements and the closure of public places eliminated any possibility for the Branch to hold these group activities in person.

In terms of recruiting new members, the year 2021 has proven to be a year of great change among our members, as many of them decided, for various reasons, to give up their memberships. At the end of 2021, the Branch had only 9,939 active members. However, new, or renewed memberships in the first months of 2022 made it possible to reverse a major part of that decline. As of early February 2022, our Branch had some 10,003 active members.

During the same period, some 45 members in good standing were unfortunately deceased. We offer our sincere condolences to their partners and/or families. The complete list of our missing members can be found in Appendix 1 of this document.

2.7.2 Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers

Given the same situation that prevailed in 2021, it was once again impossible for us to bring our volunteers together in December to thank them for their continued support. We have high hopes that distancing measures will be lifted in a few months, which will allow us to organize a face-to-face meeting of our volunteers.

2.8 Health Liaison Officer

The role of Health Liaison is still vacant on the Board of Directors. In the meantime, the Branch has continued to support members to the best of its ability by following up with Sunlife Insurance Company as needed. To our knowledge, members are always pleased to receive this kind of support.

2.9 Member Discount Program

At the end of 2021, the Board undertook to revalidate our agreements with regional partners. Many of them have decided to terminate their agreement with our Branch, due to reductions in their business revenues because of the pandemic. Only 9 of our 20 agreements have been renewed.

At the end of 2021, the Board began a research program aimed at identifying future partnerships and securing new agreements for the Member Discount Program. We invite you to read the new list of regional partners located on our website.

2.10 Communication with members

We communicate with our members via SAGE Magazine, into which we add an insert specific to our Branch and which is mailed to all our Branch members. We send monthly newsletters by email whenever possible, which are also published on our regularly updated website: [Outaouais | Federal retirees \(federalretirees.ca\)](https://www.federalretirees.ca)

Note that from now on, our newsletters are sent in the language chosen by our members when they register. We published 9 newsletters in 2021-22.

We organize videoconferences of interest to our members of all ages, including future retirees from the Federal Public Service. Philanthropy, hearing, wills, estate planning, memory and aging, as well as Alzheimer's disease are some of the topics that were addressed by speakers who are experts in their field. We work with the other Quebec branches and with the Ottawa Branch to provide you with a range of interesting topics.

In 2021, we organized 9 videoconferences in French and 7 in English which reached nearly 400 French-speaking members and 200 English-speaking members, not to mention the members who were able to participate in the videoconferences of the other Quebec branches and the Ottawa Branch. Your suggestions for topics and speakers are welcome.

We invite you to subscribe to our Facebook page ([ANRF Outaouais](https://www.facebook.com/ANRF-Outaouais)) to be informed of the latest news. Our Facebook page now has over 687 followers, an increase of 15% (compared to 2020). Subscribers to the page regularly receive invitations to our activities, videoconferences, photos, as well as the regular news from the Branch. If you are not already a subscriber, you can do so at no charge on our Facebook page "Federal Retirees Branch Outaouais" by clicking "like". In this way, you will be assured of being kept continually up to date with our publications. Please feel free to share our publications to maximize our profile on social media and thus reach as many seniors and federal retirees as possible.

This second pandemic year forced us to be imaginative in celebrating Christmas together without a mask while respecting social distancing, which gave life to our first Visioparty! 68 members attended and had a chance to win a good bottle of wine chosen by our Singing Sommelier. As soon as health measures permit, we will again plan face-to-face activities,

particularly the 2022 Christmas party, which will also be the celebration of our thirty years since our foundation.

3. OVERVIEW 2022-2023

This section presents an overview of the projects and activities undertaken during the first quarter of 2022. Some priorities have also been identified by outgoing Directors, as a guide for the next Board of Directors.

3.1 Member services

in August 2021, the Board of Directors engaged a second office employee, Mme Liane Dussault, who was assigned tasks aimed at improving our services to members. Her engagement allowed us to initiate our “Welcome Message to New Members” as well as to strengthen our “Calls to Members Without Email Addresses” programs. The departure of our Office Assistant, Mme Guylaine Ross, at the end of the year led us to consolidate tasks formerly performed by her to Mme Dussault. The engagement of Mr. André Thivierge as Director in mid-January 2022 has also strengthened the performance of the administrative office.



3.2 Retention

In 2021, a growing number of members have subscribed to our videoconferences. Consequently, we have set up a quarterly calendar on our website, identifying topics and viewing dates for our next videoconferences. A recent survey of our members has identified new topics of interest for which we hope to hold future videoconferences.

Another development of interest was the establishment of an agreement with the other branches of Quebec as well as that of Ottawa, so that our members can have access to the videoconferences which are organized by these branches.

Health restrictions affecting the holding of group activities are in the process of being lifted. We therefore hope to be able, by the fall of 2022, to plan a group meeting at the end of the year to celebrate together the 30th anniversary of our Branch.

3.3 Communications

Thanks to the ZOOM platform, we have kept in contact with our members, and will continue to take public health directives into account when organizing social activities. We will continue to translate documents into English as much as possible. Given the success of our videoconferences, we will continue to suggest topics of interest and share them with the other branches in Quebec and the Ottawa Branch.

3.4 Discount program for our members

Despite the negative effects of the pandemic on the local economy, our Branch has succeeded in formalizing new partnership agreements, the most important of which was with the Katasa group, which manages the residences for retirees "Le District d'Aylmer". We invite you to consult our list of member discounts on our website to learn about the various discounts offered to you by our regional partners.

3.5 Priorities of Focus for 2022-2023

3.5.1 Advocacy

In anticipation of the Quebec provincial election to be held on October 3, 2022, the Outaouais Branch, in collaboration with the other Quebec branches and the National Office, will assign the necessary resources to support the Association's strategic advocacy priorities.

3.5.2 Membership Recruitment and Retention

The use of videoconferencing as one of our social activities has proven to be a great success. We plan to continue to improve the variety of speakers as well as increase our access to conferences organized by other Quebec branches, and the Ottawa Branch.

3.5.3 Financial management

Until the end of 2021, accounting statements were maintained by our accounting firm. From 2022, books will be maintained by the Branch. However, preparation of annual financial statements will still be produced by our accountants.

Employee payroll will continue to be managed by a company specializing in the field. We currently use Nethris

We will continue to try to simplify our financial practices while adhering to National Office guidelines.

3.5.4 Governance

The Outaouais Branch must comply with the Rules and Practice Guides issued by the Association. In this context, the Branch will have to undertake a review of the Administrative Regulations of the Branch to ensure conformity between the Association and the Branch.

To ensure that the knowledge of all Directors on the new Board of Directors is up to date, formal training sessions for staff, directors and volunteers are planned for the start of their mandate.

The Strategic Plan developed by the Branch in 2021 will be updated during a planning day to be held in late spring 2022.