

BRANCH REPORT

ON33 | Algonquin Valley Branch

President's message

Hello everyone! By the time you receive this report, spring will almost be here. I can hardly wait, because I'm still not a fan of winter. We've had a couple of in-person events since our Branch Annual Meeting (BAM) in April 2024. These included our annual picnic at Jubilee Lodge in August, where fun was had by all, and an informative Lunch and Learn with our Preferred Partners in October at the Petawawa Legion. We also had an information table at the Deep River Seniors Fair, also in October. Hope you took part in some of these! More in-person events are in the planning stages for 2025: including our BAM in April, our Branch Annual Picnic at the end of the August (Aug 24), as well as a special celebration to commemorate the 50th anniversary of our own Algonquin Valley Branch. These will all be announced in advance, so please stay tuned. And if you have any suggestions, please let one of our Executive members know, or drop us a line at avb.on33@gmail.com. We would really love to hear from you! Vickie Hulley


2024 National Annual Member's Meeting (AMM) Highlights

This year's Presidents' Forum focused on the Strategic Plan for 2024-2027. Of special note, was a 2023's proposal (2307QC57G03) which was sent back to the National Board, which had been referred to the Governance Committee. This proposal was a proposed amendment that would make both the National President and the Chief Executive Officer positions bilingual. As a result of further discussions, it was resolved that only the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) would need to be bilingual.

Some Excerpts from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Report: Effective January 2024, the Association membership surpassed the 170,000-member mark. A survey conducted by Abacus Data confirmed that our membership overwhelmingly feels that our Association is on the right path so far. The survey revealed that a significant majority of members feel that their membership has positively impacted them.

Many responded on how the resources, services, advocacy initiatives and engaging communications channels provided by the Association are essential and valuable parts of their membership. The Association is investing in new technologies to improve the website, improve the communication channels and offering more tailored resources and programs that meet the specific needs of the membership.

The CEO reported on the Associations progress in communications, marketing and recruitment and on enhancing




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the Associations visibility through sponsorships and participation in media interviews, op-eds and in meetings with government officials. The Association’s flagship *Sage* magazine, which began its 10th year of publication, generated \$285,000 in advertising revenue in 2023. In addition, the Government of Canada Periodical Fund grant of \$339,864 helped further offset production costs, enabling *Sage* to remain the centrepiece of our member information and engagement initiatives. *Sage60*, a digital e-magazine was developed through 2023 and introduced in 2024 as a 60th anniversary legacy project.

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Preferred Partners and Membership Recruitment Event

On October 29, 2024, Algonquin Valley Branch organized and hosted Preferred Partners: **Belair Direct / Johnson Medoc, Collette Travel, Hearing Life Canada, Relocation Services and Tradex** at the Petawawa Legion. The Preferred Partners gave presentations, some provided door prizes and all Partners offered up their promotional items. Needless to say, attendees (including prospective members) were very pleased with it all. Partners that were on site fielded specific questions from the members at each of their booths.

The Partners went above and beyond to support our local branch’s Lunch & Learn.

- Shawn McCord-Belair-Direct/Johnson/Medoc
- Danielle Martins – Collette Travel
- Daniella Beaudry – Hearing Life Canada
- Carl Nabien – Relocation Services
- Luc Bisallion and Conor Doyle - Tradex



The doors prize winners! Congratulations to:

- Judith Cloutier, who won Tradex's "Silver Dollar commemorative coin".
- Debbie Reynolds, who won Relocation Service's "\$50.00 LCBO gift card".
- Laura Obrutsky, who won Belair Direct/Johnson Medoc's "Backpack filled with Essentials."

Thank you to the participating Preferred Partners and the Attendees.

Remembrance Day

Once again, Algonquin Valley Branch supported Remembrance Day at Legions in our area, representing the National Association of Federal Retirees. We honour those who served our country in wartime and the many armed forces members who have died in the line of duty.

This is a time-honored tradition and those who were representing our branch in the laying of a wreath this year, said it was a privilege. To the individuals who volunteered to represent our branch in recognizing the importance of paying tribute to those who sacrificed for our freedoms, we would like to thank you.

Specifically:

- Jeannelle Romain, Cobden Legion
- Beverly Mau, Renfrew Legion
- Bob Richards, Pembroke Legion
- Jacques Caron, Petawawa Legion

2025 events — Save the dates!

The date and location have been set for next year's **Branch Annual Meeting (BAM)**, so please save the date. Date and time: Wednesday, April 9, 2025, 11:30 am to 3 p.m. Location: Deep River Legion

We are delighted to have a guest speaker from our Ontario District: Ted Young. Ted will be sharing his wealth of knowledge of the organization and the importance of Branches, etc. More details will follow in an eblast. If you wish to receive the email announcing the BAM, send us a short request to:

avb.on33@gmail.com. We hope to see you there.

If you'd like to help our seniors' community, please think about volunteering for a position on our local executive board. If you have any questions, please contact us at above e-mail.

2025 Petawawa Showcase

The Algonquin Valley Branch will again have a booth at the Petawawa Showcase. The dates are:

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| Friday, | April 25th, 2025, | noon to 8 pm |
| Saturday, | April 26th, 2025, | 10 am to 6 pm |
| Sunday, | April 27th, 2025, | 10 am to 2 pm |

Come out and see us. If you'd like to help with this event, please contact us at avb.on33@gmail.com.

Algonquin Valley Branch Annual Picnic Mark your calendars now for this year's annual branch picnic, which is planned for Sunday, Aug. 24th at the Jubilee Lodge and Marina in Petawawa. We hope to see many of you there!

Date: Sunday, Aug. 24, 2025, time noon

Location: Jubilee Lodge, Petawawa

More details will follow in an eblast in early August. If you wish to receive the email announcing the picnic details send us a short request to: avb.on33@gmail.com.

Lunch 'n Learn Seminars in 2025

Estate planning is the process of making arrangements for the distribution and management of assets after death or incapacitation. It involves creating legal documents, such as wills, trusts, and powers of attorney. We are going to help you understand this process over three concurrent monthly sessions starting in May 2025.

The first session will cover what documents you need to gather up to determine what your financial landscape looks like by understanding your assets and liabilities. Do you need to plan beyond the demise of the pensioner and if so, how? There are two key takeaways: one, consider updating the information package yearly to keep it current; and more importantly, two, if you go to all the work of figuring where you are fiscally, then you should tell someone where you have stored the information.

The second session will dive into documents crucial to estate planning, wills and powers of attorney for property and health care. The session will also cover living wills, end-of-life plans, designating beneficiaries and finding an estate trustee (executor). The duties of an estate trustee will be outlined: what liabilities they take on and how to find and engage one.

The third session will examine the third document used in estate planning: trusts, covering their purposes and establishing if they are good fit for you. The session will look at taxes and how they impact on estate planning and inheritances.

We will review probate looking at how one should approach or forget about this form of taxation. We will delve a little into insurance coverage reviewing different types and their need in estate planning. To wrap it up we will have a look at what sort of team of advisors you should consider, or can you manage estate planning as a do-it-yourself project?

The current plan is to hold these Lunch 'n Learn at the Petawawa Legion but more details will be forthcoming and be publicised by handouts at the Branch Annual Meeting in April 2025 and through e-blasts, an effective means the branch has to reach out to members.

Fear of Missing Out?

The Association and Algonquin Valley Branch executive committee do not have email addresses and/or telephone numbers for a substantial number of our members. Why is it important for us to have your email address? It is expensive if we don't the cost for advertising in the local newspapers is extremely expensive, and because of that, our events are no longer being advertised in all the local papers. The best way to be informed about all of our events (BAM, Lunch and Learns, our annual picnic, other special events, etc.) is through our e-blasts. As members, you don't want to miss out on our events, do you?

The national office does circulate occasional news updates, useful information and requests for feedback on issues by email.

If you haven't already provided your email address to the Association you can do so at the national website or email the Association's national office at service@federalretirees.ca to update this info. Please consider doing so. You can always opt out later if it does not work out. You can also contact Judith Cloutier at judith.cloutier2@sympatico.ca, or Vickie Hulley at vhulley@nrtco.net or use the branch email to get your email added (avb.on33@gmail.com).