

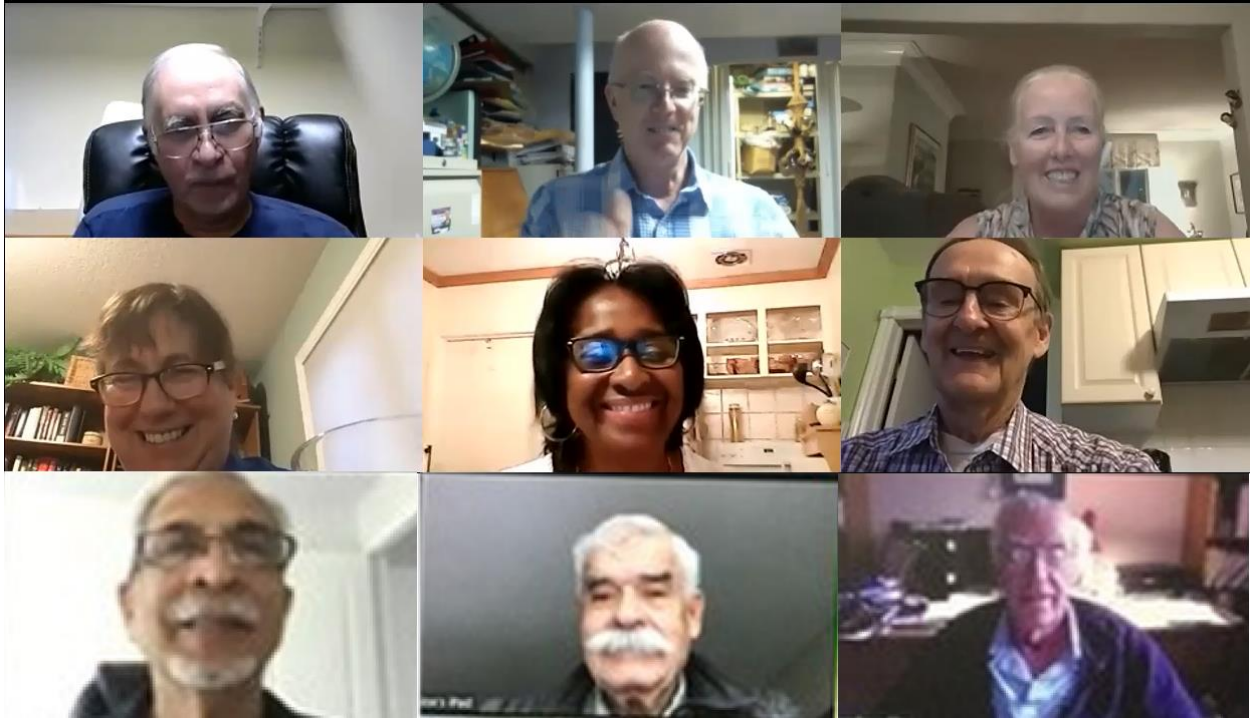
It has been an eventful summer and early fall. One non-event was the hoped-for and dreamed-of end of the pandemic. All our meetings are still virtual. Our usual venues – community facilities – were still closed as of September, so that our traditional Fall Meeting of Members (FMM) in October had to be a virtual meeting as well.

There have been four NAFR meetings of members (national meetings) – in part because of limiting each of these virtual meetings to half a day, so the business was split over four sessions. The last two dealt with proposals (resolutions), plus election preparation, since they took place before Trudeau go-for-majority try. There is continuing concern about money. NAFR is in good financial shape overall – money has been saved by more online meetings. Some branches (mostly small ones) don't have enough funding, some branches are hoarding reserves, members can't have more than a free coffee and donut per year because of tax rules – and a special committee will be struck to look at the funding issue. The meeting voted to return the branch share of dues to the historical 20% (small increase to branches). Personally, I think that the bigger problems are the difficulty in finding new volunteers and the tighter central control of how branches spend money.

We had an excellent speaker at our FMM – Christina Bizanz. We had asked her to speak due to her position as Chief Executive Officer of CHATS (Community & Home Assistance to Seniors), but her Bio showed a enormous range of activities, ranging from many health-related committees and tables to her position as Councillor for the Town of Newmarket, a job which brings even more responsibilities and commitments. In her presentation, she stressed the strong preference of seniors to live in their (our) own homes, and the work CHATS is doing to help make this possible. CHATS (<https://chats.on.ca>) works in York Region and South Simcoe. By permission, a copy of her presentation materials have been uploaded to this our Branch website.

The federal election is over, for now at least. All the major parties have paid some attention to most NAFR issues, but realistically not a lot of attention. The elections had at least one sad result. Deb Schulte was an excellent Minister for Seniors and actually spoke at the NAFR (virtual) Annual Meeting in the spring. She was defeated, so there will have to be a new Minister.

6-Nov-2021



Board members Frank Froude, Fred Conway, Linda Laffree (top); Marie MacPhee, Sharon Paris and Ed Millar (middle); Vasdev Sawhney, Joe Vettese, Ken Ackles (bottom). Missing from picture: Tom Nichols, Sharon Carson.