

Update – April 2026

Spring is coming in – a little slowly. York Branch is preparing for its Annual General Meeting on April 28. All members and prospective members are invited. This will be an activity report and an update on what Federal Retirees is up to. After the update, reports, and routine elections/acclamations, there will be a presentation from CRA in keeping with taxation season, followed by some refreshments. Amica Aurora Promenade is offering desserts!

We will recall some serving Board members who were lost in 2025. Tom Nichols, Ed Millar and Keith Chang gave some of their time to the Association, while contributing to society on other issues and in other clubs, as have so many of us. The only previous serving board member to die was Dexter Butt, a founding member of York Branch, another active volunteer. Retirees may no longer be wage-earners, but we are a critical part of our social fabric.



Keith Chang



Ed Millar



Tom Nichols

The 2026 Branch AGM will be a hybrid one: attendance will be possible by videoconference as last year. We have been working on mechanics of such meetings for several years, and we hope operations are improving. Tom Nichols was the leader in this objective, and now Frank Froude has taken over. This effort is important because York Region is large – travel and traffic is an issue – and our members are less mobile than they were. We also hope to bring in new members: another WFA wave is underway. Friends who are prospective members are welcome

NAFR is going through some turmoil and potential restructuring in face of a number of challenges. The biggest challenge is the shortage of volunteers for club boards and other NAFR positions, to support the involvement of members in the Association, in defending our benefits and in advocating for retiree issues. Every now and again another branch folds. There are reports that people are less disposed to become involved in traditional clubs and activities. In NAFR, a member votes through the local branch, so loss of the local branch is a problem. In a recent Association videoconference townhall, open to all members, the National Board Chair presented a plan to eliminate branches as part of the Association government. This proposal will be reviewed at the Branch AGM.

In the big picture there are ever more challenges. Trade disruptions threaten Canada's economy. Our governments will look for more money. Retirees will have to pay like all taxpayers, but we'll need to watch for the inevitable attacks on our benefits. Our pensions are funded from invested savings, but there will be pressure to put the money to government priorities rather than in sound investments. Our former employer is willing to pocket any alleged fund surpluses, but making up shortfalls, even legally required, may not be so simple. Who said that retirement meant pure relaxation?