

The Annual General Assembly of the Association canadienne des enseignantes et enseignants retraités – Canadian Association of Retired Teachers (ACER-CART) was held June 3-5, 2010 in Ottawa. Founded in 1991 at a meeting at the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) office in Ottawa, ACER-CART represents 14 retired teacher associations with a total membership of 167 000 in every province and Yukon. The three smallest member associations are YRTA (Yukon) with 103 members, QART, with 351, and PEIRTA (PEI) with 892, while the three largest are BCRTA (BC) with 14 106, AREQ (QC) with 53 101, and RTO (ON) with 57 471.

To carry out its lobbying responsibilities, ACER-CART develops policy and position papers on relevant topics, communicates these to the federal government, and solicits the support of other seniors groups and retired teacher associations. Since the CTF offices were not available this year, representatives from 13 of the 14 member organizations in Canada gathered at the Ottawa Marriott. Ed Zegray was the QART delegate to this meeting.

This year the format included a pre-AGM optional session on Lobbying that was presented by John Staple from the CTF. John gave an overview of the Lobbying Act, strategies to be used in lobbying efforts, and pointers on things to do and/or avoid. The actual meeting began with the usual committee and delegate reports, business arising from last year's minutes, new motions presented for consideration, and so on. Considerable time was devoted to discussing events and issues of the member associations. During the meeting Ed Zegray was re-elected to a second term on the Executive Committee of ACER-CART as Quebec Regional Representative.

Motions were passed at the 2010 AGM directing the Executive Committee to:

1. Urge the federal government to change tax legislation in such a way that charitable donations be accorded the same tax credit as those of political contributions.
2. Lobby the federal government to increase Canada/Quebec Pension Plan (CPP/QPP), Old Age Security (OAS), and Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) benefits.
3. Support the proposed Federal Bill C-516 intended to increase the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) paid to eligible pensioners, to improve survivor benefits when a spouse/partner deceases, to remove the obligation to make an application for a supplement, and to allow retroactive payment of supplements.
4. Pursue with other senior groups the goal of lobbying the federal government on the issue of investment fraud against seniors.

The AGM adjourned at 14:50 on Saturday, June 5 while the Executive continued with the post-AGM planning meeting until 16:45.