

EXCERPTS FROM THE SUMMER 2016



LE MAGAZINE DE L'ASSOCIATION DES RETRAITÉES ET RETRAITÉS DE L'ÉDUCATION ET DES AUTRES SERVICES PUBLICS DU QUÉBEC

QUOI de *neuf*

DOSSIER

AMOUR, SEXUALITÉ ET CORPS CHIFFONNÉS

⊕ **CONSEIL NATIONAL**
Relève, retraite et
autres préoccupations

⊕ **RÉFLEXION**
Accueillir 40 000 réfugiés?

⊕ **ACTION SOCIOPOLITIQUE**
Pour une nouvelle approche
en agriculture

⊕ **ÉCHOS DE NOS RÉGIONS**
Deux femmes honorées
pour leur bénévolat

ÉTÉ 2016

AREQ
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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Pierre-Paul Côté

President

At AREQ, we respond : Present!

We are already at the end of the second year of the 2014-2017 triennial. Wow... Time flies!

In autumn 2015, the public square was dominated by the negotiations with civil servants. Many AREQ members supported their former colleagues' demands in various ways. Without abandoning its own priority files, AREQ was present at many of the negotiation rounds with the CSQ.

SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS

The 2015-2016 year was an opportunity to meet sectoral representatives of various AREQ committees. Representatives of the retirement, insurance, environment and sustainable development, political action, status of women, and status of men committees participated in a one-day meeting in Québec City.

More than 600 volunteers put in time and energy to serve their colleagues. These national get-togethers allow members to coordinate what is happening at the sectoral and regional levels. Moreover, they also strengthen the dynamic of the actions that can be taken in the members' respective milieu. The very positive rating these meetings earn is indicative of the participants' high level of satisfaction. This incites us to multiply our efforts in pursuit of our mandates.

For an organization such as ours, these exceptional moments would not be possible without the contribution of people generous of themselves. We take this opportunity to thank national committee members, regional and political representatives of the executive committee who, backed by AREQ resources, make these activities possible and interesting. The involvement of sectoral and regional presidents is to be highlighted in the success of this initiative and in its continuance.

ADEQUATE INFORMATION

We have to mention the constant improvement in the quality of the sectoral news bulletins and the orderly growth of our various websites. It is essential that a major organization like AREQ be in a position to supply adequate information in order to report on the actions taken at all levels. To perform this work and contribute to making AREQ dynamic, credible, and known, it is indispensable that it have volunteers in sufficient numbers.

THE VIRTUES OF VOLUNTEER WORK

The future of volunteerism is a subject of discussion in all community organizations and milieus. Despite recognizing the many benefits of volunteer work, many still hesitate to join. Amongst other benefits, we can see that volunteer work reduces isolation, allows seniors to develop networks, and reinforces their sense of belonging.

We all have unknown talents and strengths that ask only to be used in service to others. With our experience and know-how, "not being able to" is not an option. Just try it! You'll like it!

Have a beautiful, sunny, invigorating summer and come back in top shape for the third year of our triennial.

IN THE PUBLIC EYE

Dominic Provost
Communications Advisor

Your association takes action, speaks its mind and makes demands. Here is a summary of AREQ's main public initiatives since the last issue of *Quoi de neuf*.

APRIL 10, 2016

AREQ MARKS VOLUNTEERISM WEEK

Volunteerism Week, which ran from April 10 to 16, offered AREQ the opportunity to celebrate the contribution of thousands of members who do volunteer work throughout the province.

"Thousands of our members work, day after day, with organizations and for causes they hold dear. The benefits of their involvement are numerous and varied: associations like AREQ can achieve their mission, sick or people in need get help, and wonderful projects see the light of day. During this week, to all the people who so generously offer their help, we say bravo and thank you," declared AREQ president, Pierre-Paul Côté.

APRIL 5, 2016

FOR THE ABOLITION OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAGS

AREQ has officially adopted a position in favour of abolishing single-use plastic bags distributed by so many businesses in the province. The Association's board of directors adopted a resolution to that effect following a recommendation by the national committee on environment and sustainable development.

Keep in mind that Québec consumes over one billion single-use plastic bags yearly. And the accumulation of plastic matter in our ecosystem represents an increasingly urgent environmental and public health problem. We estimate that there are 150 million tons of plastic waste in our oceans and that, between now and 2050, there will be more plastic than fish in those same oceans.

"Single-use plastic bags are a veritable scourge: their useful life is only a few minutes, but their life in nature can attain 400 years. We must therefore take concrete action to ban them altogether. We made due without plastic bags for centuries, we should therefore be able to do so today," stated the AREQ president, Pierre-Paul Côté.

April 5, 2016

A CALL TO THE MAYORS OF QUÉBEC CITY AND LÉVIS

On the occasion of its national council held in the *Québec–Chaudière–Appalaches* region, AREQ took the opportunity to issue a challenge to the mayors of Québec City and Lévis. A few smaller municipalities have already banned the use of single-use plastic bags on their territories. Other cities, such as Montréal and Brossard, are considering doing the same in the coming months.

If the big cities ban plastic bags, big businesses will have no choice but to look for alternative solutions. Also, this initiative will incite hundreds of smaller municipalities, and even the government, to follow suit," declared the 2nd vice president and member responsible for the environment and sustainable development committee of AREQ, Ms. Claire Bélanger.

MARCH 22, 2016

AGAINST THE ABOLITION OF THE COMMISSIONNER OF HEALTH

AREQ has denounced the abolition of the office of the commissioner of health and wellness. This decision comes in the wake of the most recent budget.

It should be noted that the commissioner of health and wellness served as an independent source of information and solutions as regards the health network. Amongst other projects, the commissioner was looking at the quality of lodgings for the elderly and the method of paying doctors.

"The commissioner for health was doing fine work, evaluating the health system independently and at low cost. Abolishing the office makes no sense on either the administrative or the budgetary level. This latest again gives the impression that the government and, in particular, Minister Barette are totally allergic to criticism, the AREQ President stated."

MARCH 17, 2016

REACTION TO THE 2016-2017 PROVINCIAL BUDGET

AREQ had a mixed reaction to the 2016-2017 budget. The Association was pleased to see the progressive abolition of the health contribution. For a great many seniors, this abolition represents savings of some 50 \$ in both 2016 and 2017. However, they may not get to enjoy the money because they may have to pay new ancillary fees at their next visit to the medical clinic.

"That which the government gives us with the one hand by abolishing the health tax, it takes back with the other by legalizing ancillary fees, which are, sadly, increasingly frequent and numerous in our health network. It is a new demonstration of the user-payer principle. For seniors who fought to create a health system universal and free, it is a step back," declared Pierre-Paul Côté.

AREQ rather doubts that the announced investments in the health network, specifically for home care, will actually see the light of day. "The budget increases announced by the government are insufficient, and the savings to be realized within the framework of Minister Barette's reforms are at best hypothetical. Everything leads us to believe that the network will suffer further cuts, and citizens, including seniors, will have to pick up the tab," added the AREQ President.

NATIONAL COUNCIL

Jules Desfossés

National Committee of Quoi de Neuf Magazine and Communications

SUCCESSION PLANNING, RETIREMENT, AND OTHER PREOCCUPATIONS

It is under winter conditions that the National Council was held in Lévis from April 4 to 7, 2016. The documents remitted to participants testified to the remarkable work done in preparing the meeting: complete, pertinent, and of high quality.

OPENING MESSAGE AND CURRENT AFFAIRS

Mr. Pierre-Paul Côté thanked the volunteers who contribute to making AREQ dynamic, credible, and known in various milieus. He then mentioned the support many members gave civil servants during their contract negotiations in the fall of 2015. Moreover, he spoke of the crucial area “communications” occupy in an organization and the importance of ensuring its members are made aware of the organization’s realizations and share in its orientations. He further informed the assembly that preparations for the Congress are underway and that a CROP poll was conducted involving 1,000 members. He finally reminded those present of the teamwork and solidarity needed for the Association to get through important moments.

THE ABITIBI-TÉMISCAMINGUE REGION

President Aline Castonguay presented her region, the smallest in terms of members and the largest in terms of geographical area. First, she spoke of the region’s various geographical sectors, of the origin of place names, its particularities and tourist attractions. She explained that great distances had to be covered in order to visit retirees. Afterwards, each member of the Regional Council told participants about their sector. The photos shown could incite some to travel. A gift bag was presented to each of the other regions.

VACANCIES ON THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Mr. Pierre-Paul Côté mentioned that we would have to proceed to replace the 1st vice-president. The person presently occupying the post would have to stand for election. The simplified procedure has already been approved. The nomination forms had to be completed and remitted before 12:00 a.m. April 5, 2016.

TOUJOURS EN ACTION PROGRAM

Ms. Nicole Patry-Lisée informed the assembly that, out of the 163 projects presented, 128 were accepted. Ms. Doris Dumais went over the various steps of this program and gave more detail regarding the nomination forms.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Members reviewed the document *Présentation des états financiers – version simplifiée* (presentation of financial statements - simplified version). Ms. Dumais drew participants’ attention to the favourable opinion of the independent auditor who verified the Association’s financial statements and on an extract from the report regarding its statutes and objectives.

BUDGETARY REVIEW 2015-2016

The two individuals responsible presented the document. A proposal was later formulated and adopted on April 7, 2016.

AREQ AREAS OF REPRESENTATION

The president presented various elements, commented a few meetings held in the name of the Association, and mentioned the informational means used to promote the positions of AREQ. He closed with a reminder about the importance for AREQ of being present on the public stage.

WORD FROM THE GODMOTHER

Ms. Line Camerlain reviewed the agreement with the government. She deplored the government ideology of reducing its role and privatizing. She further deplored the fact that the maintenance of health services, which requires a 5% budgetary increase, will only receive a 2.4% increase. Ms. Camerlain also mentioned that, despite the fact the Liberal Party declared education a “national priority,” it either makes budget cuts or maintains the status quo. She closed, inciting participants to action and protest.

ATTAC-QUÉBEC CONFERENCE (Association québécoise pour la taxation des transactions financières et pour l'action citoyenne) (Québec association for the taxation of financial transactions and citizen action)

Ms. Dominique Bernier spoke about the four general principles of free trade agreements: secrecy, non-discrimination of businesses, protection of investments, and irreversibility. She elaborated on the many resulting impacts. She ended her presentation claiming the Trans-Pacific Partnership puts democracy at risk in many ways.

RETIREMENT

Ms. Côté detailed the various preparatory exchanges that preceded the meeting with the Treasury Board and Mr. Martin Coiteux. He expressed his great disappointment with the meeting. According to him, the multiplicity of participants, including management, and the divergent interests left no one a stranger to this feeling.

RETIREMENT OBSERVATORY (RO)

Ms. Johanne Freire presented a creation of the IRÉC, the Retirement Observatory (RO). She reminded participants of its mission, that is to say, to support and lead research and favour interventions that improve pension plans in Québec. She listed the partners, the meetings held since 2014, the activities, realizations, and projects.

Ms. Lise Lapointe mentioned that we are still waiting for the government's reaction to the submitted document regarding the Quebec Pension Plan. A meeting is to be held in late June to adopt an orientation and prepare a news conference to announce AREQ's willingness to participate in the public consultation.

Ms. Lise Lapointe was present to offer her comments about the document. She mentioned that this tentative agreement proposes two major changes: admissibility to a penalty-free pension (factor 90) and an actuarial penalty (increase in 2020).

VACANCIES ON THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (cont.)

Jacques Boucher, the electoral officer, informed the assembly that there was only one candidate, Ms. Lise Lapointe.

MS. LISE LAPOINTE ELECTED 1ST VICE-PRESIDENT

Members of the National Council moved to officially replace the 1st vice-president of AREQ. The vacancy on the Executive Council resulted from Mr. Michel A. Gagnon's resignation in November 2015. One single application for the post was received. It was that of Ms. Lise Lapointe who had occupied the position in an acting capacity these past few months. She was elected by acclamation. As with the other members of the Council, her mandate will end in June 2017.

Ms. Lapointe was a grade school teacher for 16 years, a member of the Board of directors of the teachers' union, the *Syndicat de l'enseignement du Saguenay (SES)*, an SES union consultant for 8 years, and a labour relations consultant with the *Syndicat des infirmières du nord-est québécois (SIISNEQ)*.

In retirement, she occupied the post of president of the *AREQ Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean* sector (2008 to 2014) and of 2nd vice-president of ASSUREQ. Since 2015, she sits as representative of retirees on the retirement committee of the RREGOP.

She is a person who is available and involved, with a skill for synthesis who expresses herself clearly. She is mindful of respecting values, especially justice and equality. Like other members of the AREQ Executive Council, she is adamant about defending the rights of seniors.

PRESS RELEASE

Ms. Claire Bélanger mentioned that there would be a press release announcing how AREQ is in favour of a ban on plastic shopping bags. The argument for this position can be found in the Association website.

QUÉBEC ENERGY POLICY

Mr. Tommy Bureau announced that the Québec energy policy would be revealed on April 7, 2016. He presented a document that gives an overview of the main issues. It contains the ideas and steps that led to this policy. In conclusion, he reminded participants that this policy was long-awaited, and hoped to find it ambitious and coherent in a perspective of sustainable development.

AREQ CONGRESS REFERENCE

Seeing as the Congress had not yet reached a decision on this matter (article 1.01 Name of Statutes and Rules), the Assembly broached the subject yet again. President Côté gave a brief history regarding the name of the Association and spoke of the proposition's evolution. He mentioned that the reference of the Congress is non-responsible. The two recommendations of the Board of Directors were presented and voted on.

A WORD FROM LISE LAPOINTE

The new 1st Vice-President was pleased with the unanimity of her election and mentioned the outlines of her career path and the characteristics that define her. She then expressed her desire to defend the rights of seniors, the very reason for having thrown her hat in the ring.

COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Claire Bélanger presented the notes prepared by Ms. Nicole Gagnon (absent). Mr. Dominic Provost made clearer the communications by presenting five elements. He provided information and his comments regarding each element and offered his collaboration, specifically with drafting local and regional communiqués.

SOCIO-POLITICAL

First, Ms. Ginette Plamondon analysed the provincial government's mid-term performance. The idea that budget cuts have no impact on the general population, especially on seniors and women, is unrealistic she believes. Shortcomings, problems, and various observations of undesirable situations were identified regarding housing, municipal taxes, social services, ancillary fees, and patient quotas. She closed by analyzing certain elements of the federal budget that especially affect seniors.

RIVERSIDE MARCH

Over 50 people showed up at the *Parcours des Anses*. The frozen and bumpy condition of many segments of the trail had walkers taking parallel, safer paths. The beautiful, cocooning late afternoon light raised participants' spirits, and the riverside panorama of Quebec City enchanted them.

SUCCESSION PLANNING OF VOLUNTEERS

"Boomers and volunteerism" was the title of the lecture by Thierry Durand and Fimba Tankoano. It was greatly appreciated. The latter described the new generation of boomers volunteering context, the values and attitude that determine their choices, and the benefits they seek. For his part, Thierry Durand, using a "meeting" metaphor, developed the idea that success comes through sound management of volunteers and direct contact. Three key words: reception, integration and retention of new volunteers. In closing, he spoke of the obstacles and the need to develop a "toolbox". The morning went on with workshops. Special feature: the regions were represented in each workshop.

PRESENTATION OF THE MONTÉRÉGIE REGION

Ms. Christiane Potvin-Lapointe presented her region, the Montérégie. It is by way of a choir that the regional council, the sectors, their activities, and the region's tourist attractions were described to participants. The music had a distinctive homegrown feel to it: the theme music of *Les joyeux troubadours* radio show, Gilles Vigneault, and *Mes Aïeux*. The joy at this performance could be seen in the faces of those present and in their enthusiastic reception. To remember these moments, colourful gift bags were remitted to the regions and souvenirs given to each delegate.

“SCOL'ERE” GRANT

The *Forêt d'Arden* and the Scol'ERE carbon grant presented by Ms. Geneviève Delisle-Thibeault was well received. Two elements of the program were presented: je m'engage et je compense (I commit and I off-set). With the first, 12 challenges require participants adopt small, daily changes to reduce greenhouse gasses (GHG). The second element requires the purchase of educational carbon credits (ECC). AREQ thus paid the travel expenses of the delegates present. A short awareness-awakening video was presented.

WORKSHOP REPORTS

Each workshop president took the microphone to summarize the exchanges of their respective workshops. Ms. Lise Legault will synthesize and list the problems encountered and the solutions suggested. A document will subsequently be sent to the regions.

CLOSING SPEECH

In his closing speech, the president, Mr. Pierre-Paul Côté, expressed his great satisfaction with delegates' interests, openness, and punctuality. He then thanked those who contributed in making this meeting successful. He closed saying there is no place for criticism when the assigned mandates are successfully completed.

ASSUREQ GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2016

THE ASSUREQ BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS PLEASED TO INVITE YOU TO ITS ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Monday October 24, 2016 Registration: 12:30 p.m. General Assembly opening: 13:30 Hotel Rimouski et Centre de congrès 225, boul. René-Lepage Est Rimouski QC G5L 1P2	Among the subjects to be discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- ASSUREQ group insurance plan - Conditions of renewal January 1, 2017- Adoption of ASSUREQ rules- Nomination of members to the Finance Committee- Elections to the Board of directors
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ADOPTION OF ASSUREQ RULES

The summer 2016 issue of *Quoi de neuf* magazine contains the document Propositions de modifications aux règlements d'ASSUREQ (proposals to modify ASSUREQ rules). A copy of this document is also available online at the AREQ website at areq.lacsq.org. These proposals come from the Board of Directors whose work in progress on updates was presented to you at the General Assembly of 2015.

Pursuant to article 9.01, "the rules of the Corporation can only be adopted, modified, or repealed by the General Assembly," and that "any proposal to that end must be submitted to the Corporation's secretariat at least sixty (60) clear days before the General Assembly is held. Therefore, we ask that any proposal be sent to us before the 12th of August, 2016, at the following address:

320, rue Saint-Joseph Est, bureau 100 Québec (Québec) G1K 9E7
or by email to: archambault.lucie@areq.lacsq.org.

As of August 26, 2016, the proposals to modify will be published on the AREQ extranet website with a view to the adoption of the rules at the General Assembly.

NOMINATION OF MEMBERS TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Pursuant to ARTICLE 3.02 of the rules, members of the ASSUREQ Finance Committee are nominated by the General Assembly upon the recommendations of the Board of Directors. Members who want to submit their candidacy for a post on the Committee must do so before August 12, 2016, to the ASSUREQ secretariat by email to archambault.lucie@areq.lacsq.org or to the above-mentioned address.

ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The following positions are vacant:

- President
- 2nd Vice-President

Nomination forms will be available on site.

RETIREMENT

Johanne Freire
Social Security Advisor

LET'S TALK RETIREMENT

For some time now, the media has been filled with events, news items, and the adoption of laws regarding retirement in Quebec. In the following text, we deliver to you in bulk information on various aspects of retirement.

In its 2016 budget, the federal government brought back to 65 the age of eligibility for old age security (OAS) and increased the guaranteed income supplement amount (GIS).

As of July 2016, persons of 65 or more who live alone could receive up to \$947 per month in GIS.

Persons receiving an RREGOP pension are represented on the Québec RREGOP Retirement Committee by the 1st vice-president of AREQ, Ms. Lise Lapointe, who has sat on the Committee since 2015.

The Retirement Committee is constituted in accordance to the *Loi sur le RREGOP*. It performs its duties relative to the RREGOP, RRE, RRF and RRCE. Specifically, the Committee has the mandate to work with the *Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec* (CDPQ) to define the investment policy as regards the funds contributed by members.

The RREGOP pension fund achieved a 9% rate of return in 2015.

The CDPQ is responsible for managing the RREGOP pension funds. The funds are invested in various categories of assets such as stocks and bonds, but also in infrastructures and real estate. The RREGOP fund represents some 25% of CDPQ assets.

A public consultation on the Québec Pension Plan (QPP) to be conducted every six years will be held by the end of 2016.

This consultation allows citizens speak out about any planned modifications to the QPP. In all likelihood, the question of improving the plan will be dealt with in the consultation document *Retraite Québec* will submit.

The next actuarial evaluation of the RREGOP is scheduled for the fall of 2016.

Every three years, the RREGOP Retirement Committee asked *Retirement Québec* to perform an actuarial audit of the plan. The report contains information on the plan's constitution, clients, and the value of participants' assets. The next audit will be based on the financial data from December 31, 2014.

As of January 1, 2016, the CRRA and the QPP merged into a single organization called *Retraite Québec*.

The 17-member Board of Directors is not always complete. Currently, there are two vacancies on the Board: a post representing recipients of a *Retraite Québec*-administered pension and the one representing retirees. AREQ is keeping an eye on things!

Si non réclamé, retourner à :



AREQ
320, rue Saint-Joseph Est, bureau 100
Québec (Québec) G1K 9E7

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