



QUARTER NOTES

CH.25 ARM Newsletter: Winter 2026

www.armch25osstf.com



President's Message

30 Years of ARM: Notes from Our Shared Journey

Dear Members,

This winter edition of *Quarter Notes* marks a significant milestone for Active Retired Members across the province—and here in Chapter 25—as ARM celebrates its **30th Anniversary (1996–2026)**. Since its founding in 1996, ARM has played a vital role in ensuring that retirement from education does not mean stepping away from connection, advocacy, or community. For three decades, ARM members have remained engaged with OSSTF/FEESO, supported colleagues still in the system, and brought their experience, insight, and collective voice to issues that matter—public education, retirees' well-being, and social justice.

Here in Chapter 25, that legacy is very much alive. Our members continue to come together through events, learning opportunities, and shared initiatives that reflect the spirit on which ARM was founded: staying connected, staying informed, and staying involved. As we celebrate this anniversary year, we do so not only by honouring the past, but by reaffirming the relevance of ARM today and into the future. On May 11, ARM members from across Ontario will come together for a province-wide celebration of our 30th Anniversary, with Chapter 25 proud to take part in this collective milestone.

Thank you for being part of ARM Chapter 25 and for helping to sustain the strength of this organization over the past 30 years. I look forward to connecting with many of you in the months ahead as we celebrate this milestone together.

Happy New Year!

Les Robinson (President, ARM Chapter 25)

Limestone, District 27

Partners in Mission Food

Bank (Kingston): \$5,000

Ottawa Region, District 25

Casselman Food Bank:

\$2,500

Ottawa Food Bank: \$5,000

Upper Canada, District 26

Agape Centre (Cornwall):

\$5,000

Smiths Falls Community

Food Bank: \$2,500

Lanark County Food Bank:

\$2,500

Renfrew, District 28

St. Joseph Community

Food Bank (Pembroke):

\$2,500

Renfrew District Food

Bank: \$2,500



Bruce Baker at the Kingston Food Bank donation



Les Robinson; Norma Sharkey; Lisa Duprau (Director of Agape-Cornwall) and Cathy Bailey

As we have all been hearing on the news, food insecurity, defined as "the lack of access to adequate food because of financial constraint", is at an all time high. It is acknowledged as a serious health problem in Canada, associated with poorer mental health, increased risk of infectious and noncommunicable diseases and injuries, poorer disease management, higher health care use and premature mortality" (Tarasuk V, McIntyre L.).

On CBC Radio's "The Current" (Friday, December 5, '25), Matt Galloway's segment on Food Banks explored the rapidly growing need across Canada and reinforced the importance of such qualities as being non-judgemental, having compassion, promoting dignity, showing kindness and exercising care for one another. To listen to this segment, at 47:00

min, please click here: [FOOD](#)

On behalf of the ARM/MRA Chapter 25 membership, your Executive has made donations to food banks in each of the 4 districts: Limestone, Ottawa-Carleton, Renfrew and Upper Canada.

ARM Chapter 25 President, Les Robinson, was interviewed on CTV's live holiday broadcast on Friday, December 12, underscoring ARM's role in the community.

In Ontario, last year alone, more than 1 million people needed a food bank, making a record breaking 8.7 million visits. According to Feed Ontario, 1 in 3 of these visitors were children under the age of 18; 1 in 3 were people with disabilities; 1 in 4 were employed but still could not earn enough; 3 in 5 were social assistance recipients; and 2x as

many visitors were seniors compared to just five years ago.

To read more, please click the following: feedontario.ca

In March 2025, food banks across the country recorded nearly 2.2 million visits –the highest number in history. Under "Top Insights", Food Banks Canada indicates that food bank visits in March of 2025 totalled 2,165,766- up 5.2 % from 2024, and have doubled in number since 2019. Housing and food costs are up more than 25% since 2021, while wages, especially among the low income workers, have failed to keep pace. Food bank usage amongst working individuals has reached its highest level ever. Employment is no longer a reliable buffer against poverty. The organization states that Canada is not facing a food bank problem. We are facing a food

Chapter 25 Fighting Food Insecurity Together

Members Giving Back to Our Communities

insecurity crisis. Food Banks Canada provides policy recommendations to begin to address this, stating that the "food bank system is no longer sustainable in the way it was meant to operate". To read more, please click the following: foodbankscanada.ca

While donating to Food Banks is an important way to provide support to our fellow citizens in need, political awareness and action are also critical. Members can contact their local MPP with a message that Ontario needs a strong poverty reduction plan. The Feed Ontario, 2025 Hunger Report contains a link to a petition for those who are interested.

Sources:
<https://doi.org/10.24095/hpcdp.45.9.04>
<https://feedontario.ca>
<https://foodbankscanada.ca>

ARM Chapter 25 Events 2025–2026

Stay Connected!

Our calendar of upcoming events continues to evolve as new dates are confirmed. Please check the [ARM Chapter 25 website](#) regularly for the latest updates, registration details, and additional opportunities to participate:

Upcoming Events:

 **January 22, 2026 – OTIP / RTIP Update Meeting – Enjoy a hot breakfast beginning at 9:00 a.m., with the presentation to follow at 10:00 a.m.**

Join OTIP representatives for our annual update on benefit changes, new options, and 2026 rate updates. The meeting will be available both in person and online via Zoom.

 **February 11, 2026 – East & West Breakfast Meetings (10:00 a.m.)**

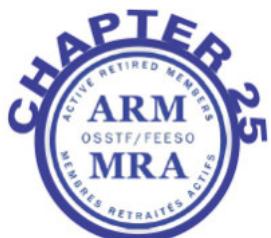
- **Chances R West – 1365 Woodroffe Ave, Nepean, ON K2G 1V7**
- **Chances R East – 540 Montréal Rd, Ottawa, ON K1K 4R4**

Join fellow members at one of our two February breakfast gatherings for conversation, connection, and a Valentine's Week celebration — with door prizes to enjoy.

 **April/May – Spring Breakfasts** – Join us for spring breakfast gatherings in **Brockville, Cornwall, Kingston, and Renfrew regions**. Stay tuned for dates, locations, and registration details.

 **May 11, 2026 – ARM Chapter 25 30th Anniversary Celebration**

A province-wide milestone event to celebrate **30 years of ARM**, with Chapter 25 proud to take part. Details and registration information will be announced in early 2026.



For the latest updates, visit:

[https://www.armch25osstf.com/upcoming-events](http://www.armch25osstf.com/upcoming-events)

Start the new year off right with ways to save on insurance



We all want to make our money go as far as possible, and even small savings can really add up over time! Insurance premiums can vary by hundreds of dollars, so how can you get the best bang for your buck? To start the new year off right, we've put together a list of 11 ways you may be eligible to save on your home and auto insurance. Let's help you hang on to more of your hard-earned money while ensuring you have the coverage you need.

Read more at [#OTIPUpdate](http://www.otip.com/article198)

You inspire us to serve you better, at work, on the road and at home.

You dedicate your life to helping others, and we dedicate ours to protecting you with complete insurance solutions built for the education community. [Get a quote](#) or call: **1-888-892-4935** and mention this offer **to receive a \$20 gift card!**

EDVANTAGE PERKS

Who doesn't like a deal? Save with EdvantagePerks!

Hello members,

Don't forget that as an **active member with OTIP/RTIP benefits**, you have access to the EdvantagePerks program (www.edvantage.ca) courtesy of Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan group of companies ("OGC").

- **EdvantagePerks** is a discount program that gives you access to discounted offers on products and services from many categories such as:
- **Travel:** vacations, hotel bookings, car rentals and more,
- **Entertainment:** attractions, and waterparks,
- **Shopping:** clothing, shoes, skincare and more,
- **Health & wellness:** gym memberships, and personal care products,
- **Insurance:** home and auto insurance,
- **Services:** moving, wills, financial and more,
- **Gadgets & Tech:** mobile phones and plans, appliances and more,
- **& more**

Every partner has their own Partner Page on the www.edvantage.ca site, where you can view all details of their offer and instructions on how to redeem them. Most offers are redeemable online, some in-stores, few by calling the partner and there are few destination-based offers.



EdvantagePerks Social Media:

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