



**UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
RETIREES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER**

**211 TRC Building, 44 Campus Drive
Saskatoon, Sask. S7N 5B3
Tel. (306) 966 6618**



No. 43, June, 2001

Editor- Iain MacLean

President's Message

Doris Hasell

HELLO AGAIN. Your USRA executive has been extremely active since our last Newsletter.

The Alzheimer Symposium was a successful educational program. Thank you to our educational committee chaired by Peter Lane and to the co-sponsor: Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan.

We responded to a request that was prompted by a one-day conference of the Canadian Association of Emeriti and Retired Academics (CAERA) held as part of Congress 2000 at the University of Alberta. We shared information about our association and made two suggestions: that the membership of a national association also include retiring academics who are not emeriti, retiring professional librarians, senior administration, and spouses (which is what our membership is comprised of); and that there be a representative from each of the associations like ours to CAERA to create an active network.

With the help of Mohindar Sachdev, we are creating a "web site" for the USRA. This should greatly enhance all our communications.

As its President, I represented the USRA at the University's Annual Retirement Banquet, held on May 4, 2001.

Your Pension and Benefits Committee chaired by Doug Knott is working on the possibility of there being available medical and dental coverage options to members.

81 persons enjoyed our annual barbeque held on June 4, 2001, at the Faculty Club. We appreciated having the University President Peter MacKinnon presenting an update on current university matters.

On June 15, your Executive met with the President MacKinnon for an informal exchange of ideas as to ways the USRA and its members could assist with university needs and vice versa. Many ideas were brought forth from both sides.

We appreciate the office assistance given to the USRA by Norah Carey, Les Coleman, Ray Boyle, Bob Woods, Faye Kernan, Pat Lawson, Bob Sanche, Bill DeCoursey, Paul Greenough and Norma Fulton. These volunteers have made it possible for the office to be open for an hour or two each day. Please note the office will be closed for the summer, until about August 20.

Thank you Iain MacLean for being editor of our Newsletter, and to all those who contribute updates and articles.

Doug Schmeiser has been working on updating our Constitution in readiness for our next AGM which, with our fall banquet, will be held Monday, September 10, 2001. **Have a good summer. We look forward to seeing each of you at the AGM and fall banquet.**

Editor's Message

On Friday, June 15, the USRA Executive met with University President MacKinnon to discuss how the relationship between retirees and our university could become more mutually beneficial. Suggestions for how retirees could more actively assist in University initiatives included the possibility of involvement in high school visitations and retention counselling. President MacKinnon welcomed these suggestions. He reported that the University is currently preparing a comprehensive enrolment plan and it was agreed that once the plan is in draft form it be distributed to all retirees for comment. There was general agreement that meetings between the USRA and the President are worthwhile and should be continued on a regular basis.

Elsewhere in this issue, you will see that the USRA will be establishing a web-site and suggestions for items that should be included on the site are welcome and should be sent to Les Coleman.

Did you know that "seniors - 65+" receive a reduced rate on subscriptions to the Saskatoon Star Phoenix?

USRA member may also be interested in information provided by the Saskatoon Council on Aging (#301 506 25th Street E.; phone: 652-2255; web-site: www3.sk.sympatico.ca/scaging)

Worldwide Web and Email

The USRA office is now connected to the internet with Email capability. Our Email address is "ss_usra@duke.usask.ca". All of this was made possible by a grant from President Peter MacKinnon for which we are extremely grateful.

We are in the process of producing a "web page" and it should be finished soon. When it is, it will contain a variety of information about the USRA, including upcoming social and educational activities. We also intend to have attached to the web-page a list of our members as well as others who have retired from the University who are eligible for membership. We plan to include Email addresses for those who have them (unless asked not to do so). Because of that, if you have an Email address and have not previously heard from us by Email, please let us know what it is since we can then provide former colleagues an easy means of contacting you.

In Memoriam

Emil Karl Sauer, Engineering
John Wendell MacLeod

May 4, 2001
June 10, 2001

Pension and Benefits

The Retirees Pension Plan Committee recently received the actuarial report for the Plan as of December 31, 2000. The report showed an actuarial surplus of approximately \$20 million dollars. Close to \$10 million of this will be set aside as a contingency reserve to ensure that the Plan is able to meet its future pension liabilities. Although the Plan continued to perform well until the end of April, 2001, it did not do so well in May and its assets declined by about \$5 million including the pension payments. The Committee is beginning to consider possible Plan improvements but with the current economic situation it will have to be very cautious. The Committee will be sending out a newsletter to all beneficiaries of the Plan in the next few weeks.

The Retirees Association's Pension and Benefits Committee is looking into the possibility of a group medical and dental plan for retirees living in Saskatchewan. Unfortunately, we understand that the insurer will not cover retirees living outside of Saskatchewan. As a first step, a questionnaire was sent to all retirees living in Saskatchewan. So far we have had an over 50% response, 150 out of 275. Over 80% of the respondents have some coverage, medical or dental or both, mostly with Blue Cross. All but four are interested in a group plan, assuming, of course, that there is some advantage in coverage or cost. Our next step will be to meet with a representative of Blue Cross to discuss the possibilities. The major problem will be that if no medical is required Blue Cross will require a high participation rate. Otherwise they will conclude that only our members who are in poor health want to join while those who are healthy do not. We recently learned that the Faculty Association has just concluded an agreement with Blue Cross to provide coverage to new retirees without a medical. If we had known this earlier, we might have been able to piggyback on their agreement

D.R. Knott

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the USRA will be held at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, September 10, 2001 at the Faculty Club.



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Notice

**Annual General Meeting and Dinner
Monday, September 10, 2001**

The Faculty Club
University of Saskatchewan

Annual General Meeting - 4:30-5:30 p.m.
Cocktails – 5:30 p.m. Dinner 6:00 p.m.

\$20.00 per person

We must know the number attending (for dinner arrangements) so **please telephone 966-6618** and leave a message with your name and the number that will be coming to the dinner before 4:00 p.m. on September 6, 2001.

PARKING – Those attending the Annual General Meeting and Dinner may park in any available parking spot in “R” Lot after 4:00 p.m. Alternatively, park in any available metered parking spot (no money required) close to the Faculty Club or Administration Building. If you are issued a ticket, pass it on to any member of the Executive. Remember you must not park in fire lanes, loading zones or disabled parking areas.

Please bring the enclosed copy of the proposed constitution amendments to the AGM.

2001-2002 USRA Nominations

The Nominating Committee, chaired by Past-President Les Coleman, intends to present to the Annual Meeting the following names in nomination for the Association’s Executive officers:

President	Iain MacLean
Treasurer	Bob Woods
Past-President	Doris Hasell
Fringe Benefits Chairman	Doug Knott
Members-at-Large	Yvonne Cuttle
	Joel Gajadharsingh
	Peter Lane
	Pat Lawson
	Bob Sanche
	Doug Schmeiser
	Gary Wacker

The USRA constitution and by-laws permit the nomination of additional persons provided that such nominations are signed by three members of the Association and are submitted to the Association Office fifteen days prior to the Annual Meeting.

Note – The annual dues for membership in the USRA are now \$15. They are for our fiscal year starting July 1 and ending June 30. The number beside your name on the mailing label indicates the year in which payment for your membership expires.