



USRA EXECUTIVE 2004-2005

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Pat's Place

We have had lots of variety in our 2005 summer weather, including some old fashioned storms. Unlike last year, we have had enough warm weather to grow a garden, but no "Saskatoons" unfortunately.

This will be my last letter. Peter Cribb will be taking over as president after our annual meeting. I have enjoyed my term and I wish Peter all the best.

Speaking of the annual meeting. I look forward to greeting a large crowd on September 12th at the Faculty Club. The AGM meeting will be downstairs at 5:00 followed by cocktails in the dining room beginning about 5:45 with dinner at 6:30. We urge you to let us know, as soon as possible, your intention to attend the annual banquet. On page three, is information about nearby locations and cost of campus parking during the school year.

You will also find a list of faculty who have retired in the last year. The USRA extends

Pat's Place: continued on page two.

AN AGM (5:00 PM) VERY WORTH ATTENDING ON SEPTEMBER 12, FOLLOWED BY A SUPER BANQUET (6:30 PM) at the Faculty Club

Mark your calendars now for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and banquet on September 12th. As soon as possible, make your reservations:

E-MAIL: ss_usra@duke.usask.ca
PHONE MESSAGE: 306-966-6618
POSTED LETTER: USRA, Toxicology Research Centre, 44
Campus Drive, Saskatoon, SK S7N 5B3

The 2005 AGM conclave (5:00 PM) should be one of the more pertinently exciting meetings in recent years when members learn about health care insurance plans that are being announced to the USRA. Probably there is a relationship between the arrival now of this crucial information and the erosion, if not irrevocable dismantling of Canada's universal health plan by various vested interests groups.

The twenty-five dollar salmon and chicken dinner (6:30 PM - cocktails 5:45) should be a campus treat with a special surprise guest in attendance. Do come, and bring others. (For parking information, see page three.)

CAUT health benefits plan, "FollowMe" to be available to CURAC member organizations

Doug Creelman, Peter Russell and Howard Fink

CURAC has recently distributed to all member organizations, such as the USRA, an information kit concerning the recently announced new health plan CAUT (Canadian Association of University Teachers) has negotiated with Manulife.

This plan is called *FollowMe*. It was designed for persons at institutions that terminate health benefits for some or all of their employees at the time of retirement. It will be available to faculty and staff at the time of retirement, as well as to faculty and staff who are already retired. What makes *FollowMe* particularly attractive is that it is being offered to those members who are already retired, and who may not have had coverage for some time – without a medical examination, during a 60 day application window this fall. While *FollowMe* is a CAUT plan, not a CURAC/ARUCC plan, CURAC/ARUCC encouraged CAUT to develop such a plan for university and college retirees, including staff retirees.

Members of CURAC/ARUCC's Health Benefits Committee have examined the details of *FollowMe*, and have concluded (and the CURAC Board agrees) that in terms of coverage and premium costs it compares well with other plans on the market – and indeed it seems superior for our needs when one notes that it is available without a medical examination, and without age-limitation, and available (during a 60-day window) even for those retirees currently uninsured.

For persons already retired and without any health-insurance coverage that window will be open from October 1st to November 30th, 2005. For persons who are retiring, the 60-day window begins at the time they retire and leave any group plan they may have had as employees. For persons who took early

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its very warm wishes for a happy retirement. Most retirees, when asked about the life in retirement, would agree with the response "what's not to like?"

I hope the new retirees enjoy the one year complimentary membership in the USRA and at the time of renewal would consider taking out yearly or life-time membership. You will receive four to six newsletters in 2005-06 that will keep you abreast of get-togethers, special events and other matters, letting you know what we are about and, hopefully, the news will encourage you to join us and become active in the organization. We always seek the participation of younger members. Check us out by attending the annual meeting and banquet on September 12th.

We would like to know new retirees' e-mail addresses and whether they would like to receive newsletters via e-mail or Canada Post. Likewise, older members should update this information for the association. Please contact the office by leaving a phone message or send an e-mail (See box above). Thanks.

Information about improved health benefits came from CURAC (our national organization) and other groups (See pages one and three). Duff Spafford, member of the executive, will continually update CURAC information, as it becomes available.

In addition, the U of S non-academic retirees association recently offered its members a plan through Mercer and that company's local contact will make a presentation to the USRA. Lastly, several USRA members received an e-mail from RMS Retirement Management Services urging them to investigate the RMS dental plan. Our pension and benefits committee, under chair Doug Knott, will study the proposals and report back to the membership.

Once again, I thank you for the privilege of serving as your president. See you at the banquet - **Pat**

**WANTED FOR USRA NEWS
WRITTEN AND ARTISTIC
CONTRIBUTIONS FROM USRA
MEMBERS**

LAUGHTER - *The young man who has not wept is a savage, and the old man who will not laugh is a fool. George Santayana*

"Do you believe in life after death?" the boss asked one of his employees.

"Yes, Sir," the employee replied.

"Well, then, that makes everything just fine," the boss went on. "After you left early yesterday to go to your grandmother's funeral, she stopped in to see you."

A travel agent got a call from a woman who asked, "Is it possible to see England from Canada?"

The agent replied, "No."

"But they look so close on the map."

The young couple invited their elderly pastor for Sunday dinner. While they were in the kitchen preparing the meal, the minister asked their son what they were having.

"Goat," the little boy replied.

"Goat?" replied the startled man of the cloth. "Are you sure about that?"

"Yep," said the youngster. "I heard Dad say to Mom, 'Today is just as good as any to have the old goat for dinner.'"

Recently while going through an airport during one of his many trips, President Bush encountered a man with long hair, wearing a white robe and sandals, holding a staff.

President Bush went up to the man and said, "Aren't you Moses?" The man never answered but just kept staring straight ahead. Again the president said, "Moses!" in a loud voice. The man just kept staring ahead, never answering the president.

Bush pulled a Secret Service agent aside and pointing to the robed man asked him, "Doesn't that man look like Moses to you?"

The Secret Service agent agreed.

"Well," said the president, "every time I say his name, he just keeps staring straight ahead and refuses to speak. Watch!"

Again the president yelled, "Moses!" and again the man stared ahead and didn't answer.

The Secret Service agent went up to the man in the white robe and whispered, "You look just like Moses. Are you Moses?"

The man leaned over and whispered back, "Yes, I am Moses. However, the last time I talked to a bush I spent 40 years wandering in the desert and ended up leading my people to the only spot in the entire Middle East where there is no oil."

ALWAYS CHECK... If you have a life membership, stop reading. When a date, other than the current one (i.e., 2005 or 2006), appears beside your name, it indicates that your membership is not paid up. In that case, we urge you to renew your membership or to consider one for life. Life overcomes forgetfulness and keeps you informed of USRA news and upcoming events you would not want to miss.

Annual Membership dues are \$15; think One-Time Lifetime.	
Age on July 1 (less than) 60	\$180 for life
60 to 64	\$160
65 to 69	\$140
70 to 74	\$110
75 to 79	\$ 80
80+	\$ 50

Planning to buy a digital camera? Check out - [www. dpreview.com.](http://www.dpreview.com); it has over 427 million visits.

CAUT: continued from page one

retirement but remained under a university or college health plan until the date of normal retirement, the 60-day window begins when they leave the institutional group plan. w

Those retirees who wish to switch to FollowMe from another individual plan can do so during the Oct 1-Nov 30 window. In these cases of changing plans, Manulife says that the FollowMe coverage could begin as soon as coverage under the member's previous plan ends – which we strongly advise. Note that FollowMe insurance cannot be combined with coverage under an existing plan; it is not a second-payer plan.

Despite verbal assurances, concern was expressed at the CURAC/ARUCC Annual General Meeting last May that retired staff might not be eligible. CAUT have assured us that they are changing the definition of retired associate membership in their by-laws to include all “retired staff from universities and colleges”, and that in the interim before that change is made CAUT will accept applications from all members of CURAC/ARUCC - affiliated associations."

Basic information about the FollowMe plan is available online from the CAUT website here. More detail is provided in a printed Manulife booklet available in English or French. The booklet includes an application form and a schedule of rates. (The latter vary by province.) Copies of the booklet and answers to questions about eligibility and coverage may be obtained from Matt Power of Lee-Power Associates, 616 Cooper St., Ottawa, ON K1R 5J2, telephone 1-613 236-9007, fax 1-613 236-0329, email <matt@lee-power.ca>. Information about the plan may also be obtained directly from the Manulife customer service number 1-877-268-3763.

Applicants must also be signed up as associate members of CAUT. Information and an application form may be found on the CAUT website (here in Adobe PDF format). Note that although the fee quoted is \$30, CAUT has agreed that the fee for members of CURAC/ARUCC-affiliated associations who wish to join FollowMe in this inaugural period (including the 60-day window from October 1st to November 30th) will be only \$25.

List of USRA Nominees for 2005-06

- President ... Peter Cribb
- Vice- President...Bob Woods
- Secretary...Yvonne Cuttle
- Treasurer...Ken Smith
- Past President...Pat Lawson

Chair Persons for Committees

- Office Services... Les Coleman & Harbans Dhingra
- Membership....Les Coleman & Harbans Dhingra
- Newsletter...Howard Klein
- Education ...Norah Carey
- Social/Recreation...Joel Gajadharsingh
- Prime of life Achievement Awards... Peter Cribb
- Pictorial History... Faye Kernan
- Pension/Benefits...Doug Knott

Barry Brown's Digital Seminar, A Feast for the Ears and Eyes

Over 100 people attended the power-point digital camera seminar conducted by Barry Brown in May (a future USRA News issue will carry a full account.)

Barry demonstrated on the screen and with blow ups around the classroom, pictures he had taken, many of which were, side by side, copies modified with software.

He contends that today's digital cameras have countless advantages over film, even for the professional. Barry admitted he now uses only digital cameras. Two reasons are that one can take hundreds of pictures, one after the other, and view each instantly. As well, it can be a brief mini digicam. However, when deciding to buy a digital camera, one must investigate significant differences between digital and film photography; then assess how worthwhile it would be to spend several hundred dollars to replace a dependable film camera. The key questions to answer are how would I use such a camera better and how much can I spend to get what I want?

Barry gave an overview of how quickly digital photography has changed, explaining that his first limited 1.2 megapixels digital cost well over \$1000. In contrast, many 2005 brand name four and five megapixels digitals now cost less than \$400 and have much more versatility. Today, a 6.1 SLR (single lens reflex) megapixels camera sells for less money than he paid, and offers many significant improvements, one of which is that it accepts already owned lenses. Such an SLR digital, when Barry bought his first one, might have cost at least \$10000.

Internet digital reviewers (two are identified atop pages 3 and 4) provide much information for buyers to make sound choices, but ignore, at your peril, purchasers' feedback when checking out the camera you have settled on.

PARKING OPTIONS

Unless, there is a breakthrough, campus parking for the annual meeting/dinner and other USRA campus events will require feeding at least a toonie to the meter or a human.



All campus meters operate until 10:00 PM, however a reduced fee is in effect after 6:00 PM. The Stadium Parkade is \$0.50 every half hour until 6:00 PM. After 6:00 PM. the evening fee is \$2:00.

The current R lot, in front of the Kinesiology Building, is to be divided into a metered zone and a faculty-staff lot by September first. The Faculty-Staff lot will be gated with a set evening \$2:00 fee available after 5:00 PM. Any parking changes will be passed on to you at the AGM and dinner registrations.

Planning to buy a digital camera? Check out - www.steves.digicams.com; it has over 443 million visits.

U of S Retirees 2005 (augmented)

Gillies, Jon Ag & Bioresource Engineering 30-06-04
 Slights, William English 30-06-04
 Wanner, Floyd Facilities Management 30-06-04
 Harvey, Eileen B. President's Office 31-07-04
 Elmgren, Lyle College of Agriculture 30-09-04
 Fortosky, Danielle Media and Technology 31-12-04
 McClements, James Kinesiology 31-12-04
 Reekie, Frederick Ed Psychology and Special Education 31-12-04
 Morley, Wayne A Ag & Bioresource Engineering 31-05-05
 Bishop, William D Economics 30-06-05
 Bond, David Languages & Linguistics 30-06-05
 Cochrane, Donald B Educational Foundations 30-06-05
 Denham, W. Paul English 30-06-05
 Dooley, Peter Economics 30-06-05
 Dosman, James Centre for Agricultural Medicine 30-06-05
 Dowling, John Media & Technology 30-06-05
 Gummadi, Venkata Chemistry 30-06-05
 Hamilton, W. Paul C Art & Art History 30-06-05
 Harding, Anthony J English 30-06-05
 Harvey, Bryan L Vice-President (Research) 30-06-05
 Hay, David Sociology 30-06-05
 Hosain, Mahbub-U Civil & Geological Engineering 30-06-05
 Hughes, Geoffrey R Plant Sciences 30-06-05
 Laing, Gail P Nursing 30-06-05
 Leung, Man-Kam History 30-06-05
 Meyer, Victor Electrical Engineering 30-06-05
 Miket, Milivoj Math & Statistics 30-06-05
 Montbriand, Muriel J Nursing 30-06-05
 Pomedli, Michael St. Thomas More College 30-06-05
 Popkin, David Obstetrics, Gynecology & Reproductive Sciences 30-06-05
 Robinson, Samuel Curriculum Studies 30-06-05
 Roebuck, Terrance Systems & Database Services 30-06-05
 Salt, David P Main Library-Cataloguing 30-06-05
 Scott, Peter A Main Library-ITS 30-06-05
 Sokalski, Alexander A Languages & Linguistics 30-06-05
 Stauffer, Melvyn Geological Sciences 30-06-05
 Stearn, Hugh Support & Development 30-06-05
 Tan, Leonard Community Health & Epidemiology 30-06-05
 Thompson, John R St. Thomas More College 30-06-05
 Tynan, James J Dentistry 30-06-05
 Wagner, Susan Nursing 30-06-05
 Wetzel, Eva Industrial Relations & Organizational Behavior 30-06-05
 Mead, Lorna Applied Microbiology and Food Sciences 31-08-05
 Forster, M. Jane Vice-President (Finance & Resources) 15-08-05
 Richardson, Arleen Anatomy & Cell Biology 31-08-05

In Memory

Guenter Blankenagel died July 18, 2005. He retired in June of 1985 from Applied Microbiology and Food Sciences. He is survived by his spouse, Elfie.

VANCOUVER CURAC CONFERENCE A BUSY SUCCESS

By DOUG SPAFFORD

Doug Spafford agreed to represent the USRA at the CURAC conference in Vancouver during May. This is a brief report to the membership. You can find out much more on the internet by typing in CURAC.

Delegates to the annual conference of CURAC (College and University Retiree Associations of Canada), held in Vancouver May 11-13, worked through a list of agenda items which included campus retirement centres, health benefits, and the role of universities in extending the professional lives of their retirees.

CURAC is a federation of college and university retiree associations across Canada. It is a young organization which relies on volunteer services and the energy of executive members who believe CURAC can be useful to local associations. At the time of the conference 30 local associations were members.

A prominent theme at the conference was "retiree engagement," as it was called—the maintenance of retiree involvement in the work and life of the university. There seemed to be agreement that universities were encouraging such involvement in various ways. Some are now providing retirement centres which give retirees a home base on campus and from which programs (social, educational, and so on) aimed at retirees can be administered. The University of Toronto has recently agreed to institute retirement centres at each of its campuses.

The benefits provided by universities to their retirees vary a great deal across the country. Some universities continue employee medical and dental programs into retirement; others terminate them. The CURAC conference passed a "best practices" resolution whose purpose is to encourage universities providing little or no health coverage to do more in this respect for their retirees.

CURAC has been on the lookout for an attractive package of health benefits which could be purchased by university retirees whose benefits were stopped at retirement, and attention was drawn at the conference to a benefit package about to be offered by CAUT. The CAUT offering, details of which were made public subsequently, has been endorsed by the medical benefits committee of CURAC. Readers of this newsletter will hear more about this (See page one and then visit the internet).