

USRA EXECUTIVE 2005-2006

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President's Report

Just when we were hoping that spring might be on the way and winter "skipped" for this year, the thermometer has chosen to take what promises to be a nasty dip. Let's hope that it is short.

The Christmas Reception at the President's Residence was a very enjoyable event as usual. The President is a gracious and friendly host who makes everyone "feel at home" from the moment of arrival. It is also a great opportunity for one to see many people whose paths have not been crossed for a long time. The cheerful "chatter" and friendly laughter make the reception an elevating event.

To make room for recent Toxicology researcher appointees, the USRA has been moved to the R.J.D. Williams Building (formerly, the School for the Deaf). We have been allocated a single room only, losing the

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POINT OF VIEW

Mandatory Retirement John Owen and Sergey Fedoroff

The matter of mandatory retirement was first raised by retirees Keith Johnstone and John Owen in the February 2004 issue of USRA News. At that time, they urged the USRA to initiate discussions with interested parties to bring the University of Saskatchewan's retirement policy in line with those of other Canadian universities. Their published recommendation received only lukewarm reception in the News, and no USRA action was implemented.

It is now timely to raise the matter again and ask the USRA to reconsider its stance. The trend across Canada is for universities to adopt policies which would allow retention of experienced faculty beyond normal retiring age (65 at most universities). Last year's policy decision by the University of Toronto was noteworthy. The U of T faculty now have four retirement options - early retirement, phased-in retirement, regular retirement at age 65 and late retirement. These provisions have been well documented by Professor John

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COMING UP - Something New and Other Things Different

After a long hiatus following the Annual September Banquet, the USRA Education-Social Committee announces four events beginning on March 23rd and ending with the annual BBQ on June 5th. They chose new venues with extensive free parking for two events and, as well, a luncheon at Boffins on campus.

On March 23 (Thursday - 1130), "Travel Time" will take place at Mano's Restaurant, 1820 8th Street East, which has a senior lunch menu. Help us to know who is coming by phoning or by e-mailing. (Ph. 966-6618) The program begins with a surprise guest who will talk and show slides about someplace (you won't know where or who, unless you come). We anticipate the presentation will be followed by slide talks from others in the audience who have stories to tell and photos to pass around

At some time during the luncheon there will be a debate - resolved that: "Cruising is the best possible holiday". Let us hear your best and worst cruise stories to fuel the debate. If you have never been on a cruise, decide if you really want to try one after the debate. For table talk, bring and share both photographs and stories from world travels or the cottage. Everyone can submit stories and photos to the USRA News for members near and far to enjoy.

It is not exactly the best hidden campus secret, but there is always an interesting collection of art on display across the U of S campus. On April 24th, from 1030 to noon, join a tour guide leading a visit of the Kenderdine Gallery on the second floor of the Agriculture Building. The Kenderdine

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Mail or e-mail some of your travel photos.

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"lounge" area in the old quarters which has had very little use during recent years.

The office will be open as required for various



USRA matters. The telephone number remains the same: 306-966-6618.

The answering machine will be checked several times weekly. You can e-mail members of the executive

- their e-mail addresses can be found on our website (see above).

Our new mailing address is: Room 424, R.J.D. Williams Building, University of Saskatchewan 221 Cumberland Avenue North, Saskatoon SK S7N 1M3

Nominations are now being sought for this year's "Prime of Life" Awards. Please mail or e-mail any recommendations to me at one of the above addresses. If you are not sure whether or not your nominee has been selected in the past, we can check for you.

We are hoping that sometime in the not too distant future we will be able to display the names of past and future recipients on the walls of the new Retirees Lounge in the College Building. That room is little used at present. For security reasons, it is kept locked. To spend time in it, or just see it, you can obtain the key from the President's Office, located on the second floor.

LAUGHTER - Seek long laughs. They are jog-ike exercises.

Father Murphy walks into a pub in Donegal, and says to the first man he meets, "Do you want to go to heaven?"

The man said, "I do Father."

The priest said, "Then stand over there against the wall." Then the priest asked the second man, "Do you want to go to heaven?"

"Certainly, Father," was the man's reply.

"Then stand over there against the wall," said the priest. Then Father Murphy walked up to O'Toole and said, "Do you want to go to heaven?"

O'Toole said, "No, I don't Father."

The priest said, "I don't believe this. You mean to tell me that when you die you don't want to go to heaven?"

O'Toole said, "Oh, when I die, yes. I thought you were getting a group together to go right now."

Two submitted jokes

A man checked into a hotel. There was a computer in his room, and he wrote and sent an e-mail to his wife. He, however, typed the wrong e-mail address. Without realizing his error, he sent the e-mail.

Meanwhile, somewhere in Houston, a widow had just returned home from her husband's funeral. The widow decided to check her e-mail, expecting messages from relatives and friends. After reading the first message, she fainted. The widow's son rushed into the room, found his mother on the floor, and saw the computer screen which read:

To: My Loving Wife
Subject: I've Reached
Date: 9 June 2004

I know you're surprised to hear from me. They have computers here now, and you are allowed to send e-mails to your loved ones. I've just reached and have been checked in. I see that everything has been prepared for your arrival tomorrow. Looking forward to seeing you then! Hope your journey is as uneventful as mine was.

Regards,
Your Loving Husband

A man was flying from Seattle to San Francisco. Unexpectedly, the plane stopped in Sacramento along the way. The flight attendant explained that there would be a delay, and if the passengers wanted to get off the aircraft, the plane would re-board in 50 minutes.

Everybody got off the plane except one gentleman who was blind. The man had noticed him as he walked by and could tell the gentleman was blind because his Seeing Eye dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of him throughout the entire flight. He could also tell he had flown this very flight before because the pilot approached him, and calling him by name, said, "Keith, we're in Sacramento for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?"

The blind man replied, "No thanks, but maybe my dog would like to stretch his legs."

Picture this: All the people in the gate area came to a complete standstill when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with a Seeing Eye dog! The pilot was even wearing sunglasses. People scattered. They not only tried to change planes, but they were trying to change airlines!

Send one of your jokes to -klein@duke.usask.ca



OF COURSE ,I
WOORRRY IF YOU
FORGET TO PAY YOUR
DUES. DO YOU WANT
YOUR USRA
TREASURER TO ALSO
WORRY?

Mail or e-mail your jokes

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Courtney in *On Campus News* (April 25, 2005). They could serve as a model for the University of Saskatchewan.

Since the removal of financial incentives, the number of U of S faculty choosing early retirement has dropped. Even so, in 2005, half of retiring faculty elected to take early retirement. Indeed, early retirement appears to be the trend in the Canadian workforce. According to Statistics Canada, only six percent of Canadians work beyond the age of 65, and the average age of retirement is 62. Our University should not be fearful about ageing professors clinging to their jobs!

We believe that the USRA can no longer show disinterest in what is increasingly perceived as a factor in sustaining the Province's economy. Demographic trends portend a diminishing work force and provide a challenge to its universities to show leadership by abolishing mandatory retirement.

As a first step, could not the USRA accept the challenge and support a proposal to establish a joint faculty and administration committee to discuss the matter? Such a committee was recently formed at the University of Regina. The "North" should not lag behind the "South"!

You and your former department

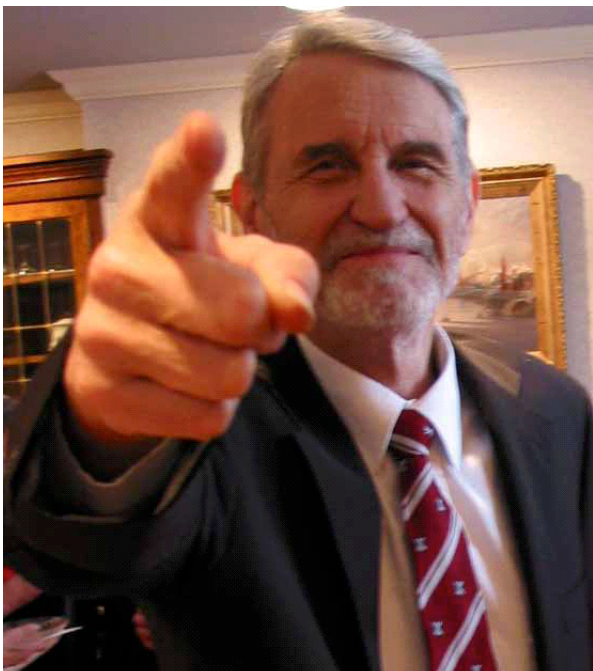
CURAC is investigating the continued relationships of retirees to their former departments. We seek your input to assist the association. We created a two page survey. In essence, this is what we would like to know, so e-mail or post answers as soon as possible - klein@duke.usask.ca.

Is your former department regularly in contact with you? If so, what do you hear about: its socials, seminars, retirement banquets, etc? Do you attend any or all of these functions?

How do you learn about them? If you have little or no communication with the department, except for that which you might initiate, what should be done by its head?

Rebates

Do you have good or bad stories to relate? Are you a rebate shopper? If so, do you follow instructions exactly and make copies of everything that you send? Have you had a problem that numerous phone calls failed to resolve, and gave up? Try a registered letter to the company's CEO with copies to the media and your favourite MP. ©



I WANT YOU ON THE EXECUTIVE.

VOLUNTEER NOW TO HELP MAKE THINGS HAPPEN

Current 2006 Scheduled Events

MARCH 23 THURSDAY 11:30 LUNCH	TRAVEL TIME MANO'S 8TH ST. EAST (SENIOR MENU)
APRIL 24 MONDAY 10:00-12:00 LUNCH	CAMPUS ART TOUR PRESENTATION KENDERDINE GALLERY
JUNE 5 MONDAY 5:00 PM	SPRING BBQ WILLOWS
SEPT 11 MONDAY 4:30/5:00 PM	AGM /DINNER U OF S FACULTY CLUB

USRA'S PHOTO ALBUM (VOLUME I) IS MISSING AND NEEDS TO COME HOME. DROP IT OFF AT RJD WILLIAMS BUILDING'S MAIN OFFICE TO RESTORE OUR HISTORY. CONTACT USRA BY PHONE (306-966-6618) OR E-MAIL (ss_usra@duke.usask.ca)

Retirees' Pension Plan

Doug Knott

A number of pensioners have asked why the Pension Plan has been unable to provide a cost-of-living increase for several years. The simple answer is that the actuary must certify that the Plan has a sufficient surplus to pay such an increase. For several years the actuarial analysis of the Plan has not permitted him to do so.

This, of course, raises the question of why the Plan has not had sufficient earnings in recent years to cover a cost-of-living increase. The Retirees' Plan is unusual in that it is a closed plan with a declining membership and will eventually terminate. No new members or new money are coming in. For this reason the Plan has to be very conservative in its investments.

At the inception of the Plan, its investment advisor, J. P. Marshall, presented a number of scenarios on various asset mixes and their earnings and volatility over the previous thirty years. The committee selected an asset mix that had a reasonable level of earnings and good stability. In retrospect, who would have predicted the scenario that has unfolded with, for example, Canadian equity markets much stronger than U. S. markets, particularly in Canadian dollar terms.

Unfortunately, at a time when pay outs from the Plan were large, financial markets throughout the world went through a substantial recession. As a result, more than expected of the Plan's capital had to be used to pay pensions. Even in the stronger markets of the last three years, it has been difficult to rebuild the Plan's principal. The Plan's investment managers are relatively conservative and did well during the recession. For example, the following are their results for Canadian equities:

	Annual Returns in %			
	2001	2002	2003	2004
S&P TSX Index	-10.4	-12.4	26.4	14.5
Jarislowsky Fraser	5.2	-2.9	23.8	21.6
	Annual Returns in %			
	2001	2002	2003	2004
Benchmark	-2.7	-3.8	10.5	8.2
Total fund	-0.6	-2.0	8.4	7.8

Over the four years, the fund has outperformed its benchmark slightly - not a bad performance.

In Memory

Donald R. Grant died on February 1, 2006. Dr. Grant retired as a professor in the Department of Chemistry in June of 1993. His spouse, Melba, survives him.

Patrick Thomas Mackenzie died on January 23, 2006. He was a professor of philosophy for 38 years. His wife, Eileen, survives him.

Christopher Bigland died December 16, 2005. He was hired in July of 1964 and retired as Director of VIDO, Western College of Veterinary Medicine, in June of 1984. His spouse, Eva, predeceased him in 2001.

Peter Walmsley died November 22, 2005. He retired from the Industrial Relations and Organizational Behavior, Department of the College of Commerce in June 1990. His wife, Doreen, survives him.

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changes its display seven times during the year. During our Gallery visit, the work of Saskatoon artist, Marie Lannoo, will be on view. Also, you will be taken to the sixth floor representative permanent collection of campus holdings. The Art Curator, or an associate, will discuss the collections with brief histories of the two galleries. After the tour, those who wish can lunch at Boffins. The last time USRA members gathered there, it was a rousing success that went on and on and on.

The Annual Spring BBQ takes place on June 5, 2006. For a change of scenery and easy parking, the committee chose the Willows to hold the event. Read future *News* issues for updates.

Finally, the September AGM/Banquet is scheduled for Monday the eleventh at the Faculty Club. This is a wonderful after summer get-together filled with good fellowship and surprises.

Become active in the USRA by making program suggestions to the Education-Social Committee. What kinds of meetings, seminars, outdoor activities, trips etc would be an *I don't want to-miss* event for you to attend? Your ideas might bring many of us out, so write or phone your ideas to the Executive, no matter what they are and leave them to us to schedule and bring to fruition.

FIND OUT WHAT IS GOING ON AT THE U OF S 18 TIMES DURING THE YEAR.

www.usask.ca/communications/ocn/

Read the 2006 Green & White

www.usask.ca/greenandwhite

In this issue:

- Skating Through History: A Look Back at Huskie Hockey
- Computing On the Shoulders of Giants
- The Sisters of Mercy
- The Unlikely Story of Garry and Bev's Fruit Patch
- Adventures of a Country Vet

2005 issue