

# USRA News



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University of Saskatchewan

MAY, 2006

## USRA EXECUTIVE 2005-2006

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Vice-President - Bob Wood  
Secretary - Yvonne Cuttle  
Treasurer - Ken Smith  
Past President - Pat Lawson

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IN ERROR (first things first)

Exec member, Doris Hasell, has one spelling as does artist, Marie Lannoo, but who's counting? Others!

Apology to Prime of Life winner, Richard C. Strayer whose career was in Engineering but was identified as having been in Agriculture.

## President's Report

On Friday, May 5, at the invitation of President MacKinnon, and in my position as President of the University of Saskatchewan Retirees Association, my wife and I attended the Banquet honouring this year's 79 retirees.

Despite a number of already retired people who say that there should be no mandatory retirement, I did not see any sad faces looking as though they supported that

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## BBQ June 5th at the Willows

How quickly passes the academic year, which the USRA largely follows. So, before the summer break, don't miss the end of the 2005-06 academic year BBQ windup at the Willows.

We hope that a more picturesque locale, with much free parking might be attractive to our members as summer approaches. Join us and make this a successful, enjoyable event.

Getting together with folk we have known for years is always an unforgettable evening. The BBQ should be excellent,



but the surprise might be entertainment from USRA members willing to share their talents. The question to be answered on June 5th is: Will some talented members entertain us?

Former USRA President, Joel Gajadharsingh asks, "Do you think that we are capable of entertaining ourselves? Perhaps, sharing a joke, singing a song, or playing a tune on a favourite musical instrument might just do the trick. Please feel free to participate in any or all of these activities on June fifth."

One thing certain is that parking will be available and free. Cocktail time will be between 4:30 and 5:45 when the salmon and chicken dinner begins. It includes salads, dessert, tea, coffee and juices. The price is \$20.00.

Join us with your spouse or partner and your voice, your harmonica, guitar, whatever - be an entertainer and see your picture in the next issue of the USRA News.

Make your reservation early. Willows requires us to tell them our number of expected guests. The social committee set May 31st as its deadline to report. Phone 966-6618 or 374-5786. Likely, Willows can feed some who forget to call, and choose to come at the last minute without a reservation.

## SEPTEMBER 11, 2006

**WHAT  
WHEN**

2006-07 AGM and Fall Banquet  
Monday - September 11, 2006  
AGM MEETING starts at 4:30 PM

**WHERE  
PARKING**

Faculty Club  
Seek and ye shall find

(More information in August)

**RESERVE EARLY FOR THE BBQ - PHONE: 966-6618 OR 374-5786****President's Report** continued from page one

view. Maybe those who did not wish to retire did not attend and those who did attend were all just resigned to their fate!

My wife and I spent a very enjoyable evening with a number of past associates, faculty and staff, whom we had not seen for several years. The food was excellent (there are some compensations to being President of the Association!), speeches, both scheduled and extemporaneous, were generally "upbeat" and humorous. I had no opportunity to "do a sales pitch" for membership in the USRA, although brochures were available for those who chose to take them, but we have their names and recruitment will follow in the near future.

We have been experiencing difficulties with newsletters' mailing and e-mail distribution, that appears to be associated with the recent USRA move to the Williams Building. We expect to solve the problem very soon. I am tempted to insert a note here saying that "if you do not receive this copy of the newsletter please email us to let us know," and so I did.

Expect a great time at the Willows BBQ on June 5. So, be there at 4:30 p.m. Call in early even before receiving e-mail reminders to tell us you will be attending the BBQ (966-6618 or 374-5786).

Of course, join us at our fall banquet and arrive early to attend the annual general meeting.

Elsewhere in the News and in a previous issue, we are urged to believe that we can entertain ourselves. Prove it at the BBQ with your favourite musical instrument, your voice, or by telling stories or jokes.

This is a challenge, and I will be there to listen attentively with great joy to all performances. I am a great audience as will be all retirees. Listen for my applause.

The executive committee has received concerns from a number of members about the pension fund. Unfortunately, there is little that the association can do except to pass on your letters or calls. Something is in the works and soon you will receive a Pension Plan Newsletter that may answer some of your questions and worries about the plan. Maybe the best thing members can do is to inundate us with mail. When an expected meeting is held, we can help the committee by passing on to them a sense of members' unhappiness with how the fund has been performing.

Want something useful and important to do?  
Join the USRA Executive.

LAUGHTER - *There's nothing worth the wear of winning but laughter and the love of friends . (Hilaire Belloc)*



How to tell if you are driving too fast.

A man and his wife were celebrating 50 years together. Their three kids, all very successful, agreed to a Sunday dinner in their honour.

"Happy Anniversary Mom and Dad," gushed son number one... "Sorry I'm running late... had an emergency. You know how it is; didn't have time to get you both a present."

"Not to worry," said the dad... "the important thing is that we're all here together today."

Son number two arrived and announced, "You and Mom still look great, Dad... just flew in from L.A. and didn't have time to get you a present...Sorry."

"It's nothing," said the father, "Glad you were able to be here."

Just then the daughter arrived, "Hello both of you, Happy Anniversary! I'm sorry, but my boss is sending me out of town and I was really busy packing; so I didn't have time to get you anything."

Again the father said, "I really don't care, at least the five of us are together today." After they had all finished dessert, the father put down his knife and fork, looked up and said, "Listen up, all three of you; there's something your mother and I have wanted to tell you for a long time. You see, we were very poor. Despite this, we were able to raise each of you and send you to college. All through the years your mother and I knew that we loved each other very much, but we just never found the time to get married."

The three kids gasped and said, "You mean we're bastards?" "Yep," said the dad, "and cheap ones too!"

George W. Bush's Revelations on May 8, 2006

When asked about his high point since becoming president January 2001, President Bush told German weekly, *Bild am Sonntag*, "I would say the best moment of all was when I caught a 7.5 pound perch in my lake." His worst moment was September 11 when hijacked planes attacked American targets. "I would say that this was the hardest moment, once I had the real picture before my eyes."

## Mail or e-mail your jokes

**Important Changes to Retirees' Duke E-Mail over Next 12 Months**

Information Technology Services (ITS) will be decommissioning six years old Skyway and Duke, first implemented over 15 years ago. The hardware is nearing its end of life and no longer will be manufactured after October 2007.

Other servers already offer better performance and higher capacity. Specifically, E-mail is provided on *mail.usask.ca* for all faculty, staff, and students. This service will include retirees.

In answer to a query from USRA News, Alfred Hovdestad, System Administrator wrote: "We are going to continue to offer retirees the privilege of e-mail, we are just moving them from *duke.usask.ca* to *mail.usask.ca*. We have a faster server and larger disk quotas on *mail.usask.ca*.

Retirees will be responsible for updating their desktop email client with the new settings (we will send a list of updates to all retirees and offer any assistance that we can)."

Once the migration of web pages is complete, ITS will focus on e-mail. Please contact: [alfred.hovdestad@usask.ca](mailto:alfred.hovdestad@usask.ca). if you would like to arrange an early migration of your e-mail.

A University of Saskatchewan account offers a huge message quota that is probably difficult to reach. As well, it very effectively protects users from viruses and spam. Sign up and enjoy.

**MEMBERS WILL BE HEARING FROM THE COMMITTEE FOR RETIREES PENSION PLAN**

Peter Lane wrote on May 7, 2006, "Perhaps there are members of the Association who are disappointed with the recent pension results. If so, it might be helpful if we could meet with the pension board to discuss things. After all, it is our money. Anyone interested?"

As if anticipating Peter's letter and others, at the most recent Executive meeting, Doug Knott reported that The Committee for Retirees' Pension Plan recently reviewed its 2005 actuarial report and will mail out a newsletter to the 297 members which will provide an analysis of the report.

Not too long after the distribution of the newsletter, the committee will invite pension members to a Saskatoon meeting to discuss the newsletter's information.

The *USRA News* will cover, as fully as possible, the meeting's discussion, reporting concerns, implications and future pension expectations. The USRA Executive was told that fund members will not receive a cost of living increase this year, nor might they expect one in the foreseeable future.

**RAMBLINGS**

Agriculture is a very worthwhile place to wander about whether by oneself, with friends and/or family or on a guided building tour.

Devote time to the first floor. Study the art floating above you, as well as the visible wall hangings on the surrounding open halls. Carry binoculars to bring objects closer from below and on the sixth floor to help your eyes see more in the campus and city panorama. Paintings line the sixth floor's well lighted halls, and picture taking is allowed. A flash seems unnecessary and may be harmful to pictures.

Don't miss the second floor Kenderdine Gallery. If Lannoo's exhibit is still installed when you arrive, let the *News* know what her exhibit, *See Nothing, See Everything*, tells you.

Do visit, the third floor, opposite the gallery, to study



her 1989 artistic recall of being a Catholic School boarder.

The local news about the U of S is intriguing. It seems to have garnered a hundred million dollars in donations this year while it pleads poverty and may well abandon many Huskie sports.

Concomitantly, it is increasing the size of its stadium while, according to experts and fans, its ice rink is an insult to its hockey program and other ice sports.

The Canadian Light Source (Synchrotron) hit the news media with the announcement of the first two published research articles emanating from the Synchrotron. Hasn't it been in operation for about two years? Now, using my home method of figuring my costs over use equation, if Canadians spent ten billion dollars for the Synchrotron, that means, to date, the cost of each article is five billion dollars. How many articles must be published to reach a research break even point, and in which century will that occur?

A letter was received complaining that the *USRA News* is not an appropriate publication for political partisanship. The writer rather likes George W. and felt the Connecticut road scene (April, 06) was hostile. So be it. If you agree, complain. I "vow" to find more. Write and, with your permission, I will publish your letters with the same restraints as guide the *Star-Phoenix*.

## MIGHT YOU COME TO AN INTEREST GROUP AS REGULARLY AS POSSIBLE?

Several issues ago, "Ramblings" explored the idea of starting special interest groups. We are returning to the theme and ask you to make suggestions for small groups that could meet regularly, in or outside of homes. The groups would differ from University Women by including men and women. As well, they might, as an added bonus, develop into cross-generational groups.

Which interest group ideas might grab you: film, book, photography, bridge, dance and art? Ponder how film, book, and art could involve informal meetings several times during the year. A film might be watched on a home screen or in a theatre. If the latter, the group would visit a home or a nearby restaurant to discuss the film.

Ideally, with dvd, parts of a film could instantly or later be played back to clarify points. Alternatively, time may be devoted to the many extras presented by a film's director and cast revealing technical and philosophical matters about a film.

In somewhat similar fashion, books or art can be the focus of other groups. Retired History Professor, Gary Hanson, has lead such book and film groups in his home and is interested in being involved.

Periodic gatherings of all interest groups could be fun as well as continuously challenging. At the June 5th BBQ and the September 11th Annual Banquet, the welcoming desk will have several interest groups sign-up sheets.

In the meantime, let us know what you think about joining a small group that functions regularly with its own membership and leadership (klein@duke.usask.ca). Tell us.

**If you missed the "AG" art tour, sorry! You missed a good one, but can't there always be another? Ask, and ye shall know!**

Many of the members failed to receive the April USRA News because of computer glitches a bemused President Cribb observes in his column. Reason enough to discover both the April and May issues in your envelope when it was opened. If everyone had received the April issue, would the number of Ag Building tour visitors have doubled?

The tour visited a relatively hidden campus treasure.

Have many faculty, past and present, known of the art collection on the sixth floor?



Begin a personal tour, on the main floor with a look-about-around and up and down to see things you will remember and, perhaps, choose to show off to your Saskatoon visitors.

## In Memory

S. Parvez Wakil, deceased April 24, 2006. Dr. Wakil retired in 2003 from the Department of Sociology. He was hired in 1964. His spouse, Farkhanda Akhtar, survives him.

Thanks to Doris Hasell and guide, Leah Taylor, about 20 of us had a superb morning walking Ag's labyrinthine halls, peeking into some open offices which had on their walls one or two examples of the extensive U of S collection, mainly produced by local or visiting artists, dating back to the 1870s, or earlier. Many of the current art objects on the sixth floor were given or loaned to the U of S by the Kloppenberg family.

A bit of lagniappe Doris arranged was to show us a panoramic views of the city and campus from the top of the Ag Building, where we did the moving. It is well worth a visit just to fill your digital camera with snaps and make them into works of art, or recognition games.

I returned to find teaching pictures, charts and posters created by Order of Canada local artist, Ernst Lindner. Dean Murray hired him to help him put food on the table, pay the rent and have the wherewithal to develop as the famed Canadian artist he eventually became.

Following the tour we gathered for lunch at Boffins, and remained, as it happened on a previous visit, for a few hours.

The tour and lunch are get-togethers worth repeating in the fall or, even winter. Then the Kenderdine Gallery will feature new displays.

Tell us how art might become a special interest group in Saskatoon and elsewhere.

