

# USRA Newsletter

March 2019

No. 106



## In This Issue



From Our President .....	2
Do You Know Anyone Who Deserves an Honorary Degree? .....	4
CURAC Benefits .....	4
New Retirees Describe Their University Careers .....	4
Update from the Education, Social and Recreation Committee .....	8
Coming Up .....	8
Updates on Recent Activities .....	9
CURAC Conference 2019 .....	14
Academics Without Borders .....	14
Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Enhancements (2019) ...	14
Call for Nominations for USRA Awards .....	15
Members No Longer with US .....	15
Renewing Your USRA membership .....	16

## From Our President



### President's Message – A Disruptor

The dictionary defines “disruptor” in the business sense as a major change that creates new markets at the expense of established ones. Examples include the telephone supplanting the telegraph, the Ford Model T replacing the horse and buggy (and in some cases public transportation), television and the internet reducing newspaper sales. Can we find examples of disruptive changes in biology?

Netflix offers an excellent documentary called “The Evolution of Us” (<https://www.netflix.com/ca/title/81023671>). Six to seven million years ago, our primate ancestors split into two groups: the apes and “hominins” (a fancy name for humans). Despite this long separation we still share 97% of our genes with the apes. Now the descendants of these early forebears number in the hundreds of thousands of apes and over seven billion humans. Further, humans populate all the major continents (including Antarctica) while apes are confined to central Africa

(gorillas, chimpanzees and bonobos) and Southeast Asia (orangutans). Obviously, the human line is more successful in the evolutionary sense. What was the disruptive change?



It wasn't bigger brains or opposable thumbs but rather the *Gluteus maximus* muscle! Colloquially referred to as the “buttocks”, the *Gluteus maximus* is a

postural muscle preventing us from falling forward while standing or walking. Our buttocks are much larger than those of apes. Apes can stand or walk upright for only a few seconds, while we can stand, walk or run for hours(1). Being upright helps us locate prey and avoid predators. Another disruptive innovation was the development of sweat glands. Humans are not particularly fast runners in the animal world. What we can do is run after animals for several hours, particularly if we run in relays. When animals, including us, run for prolonged periods they produce heat. If they can't dissipate that heat, body temperature increases leading to cellular breakdown and death. Most animals lose heat via panting and their respiratory system. Sweating is a much more efficient way of cooling, enabling humans to thrive in the hot, humid African savannah. Apes remained in the cooler forested areas.

Is there a downside to these changes? Did the apes get nothing in return for smaller buttocks and lack of sweat glands? Herman

Pontzer published an interesting paper in *Scientific American* entitled “The Exercise Paradox”(2). He reviewed his findings of exercise calorie expenditure in apes and humans. Apes exercise far less than humans, yet have lower body fat, virtually no diabetes, no atherosclerosis (“hardening of the arteries”) and their blood pressure does not rise with age. Moreover, they eat about the same number of calories per day as humans. Pontzer’s theory is that apes spend their food intake calories in ways other than exercise. The digestive system of apes is designed for large amounts of low-calorie foods (fruits and starchy tubers). Their small intestine is much larger than ours; and expends energy digesting and absorbing food. So the upside for apes is that they can be couch potatoes but not suffer the consequences.

Humans who are physically inactive are much more likely to die of cardiovascular disease caused by high blood pressure, diabetes and atherosclerosis(3).

Conventional wisdom is that lack of exercise means that extra energy is stored in fat. This leads to insulin resistance and eventually diabetes. Pontzer’s group has published an alternative explanation. With a novel technique, using doubly labelled water to measure CO<sub>2</sub> production, they found that energy expenditure per day was virtually identical in moderately and extremely active people (4). Indeed completely inactive folks expended only about 200 calories less per day than the others. Pontzer speculates that inactive people expend energy supporting low grade inflammation and hormone production (including insulin). Inflammation is defined as the reaction of tissues to injury; burns, freezing, infection all cause the cardinal signs: heat, swelling, pain, redness and loss

of function. Anyone who has had a sunburn or arthritis will recognize these. We have learned that inflammation can also affect arteries and organs. It is often quantified by measuring a blood constituent called c-reactive protein(cRP). Elevated cRP concentration in blood is predictive of heart attacks and stroke (5). To summarize, humans must exercise to prevent cardiovascular disease. A corollary is that exercise alone will not reduce body weight much; we need to reduce calorie intake as well.

There is another practical use of the “buttocks” theory. It provides a useful answer to the difficult question: “Does this dress (or these pants) make my derrière look big?” We can now say: “No darling, you look really evolutionarily advantaged”.

Have a safe and healthy year and keep moving.

#### Further reading

- (1) Finestone EM, Brown MH, Ross SR, Pontzer H. Great ape walking kinematics: Implications for hominoid evolution. *Am J Phys Anthropol* 2018; 166(1):43-55.
- (2) Pontzer H. The Exercise Paradox. *Sci Am* 2017; 316(2):26-31.
- (3) Brawner CA, Al-Mallah MH, Ehrman JK, Qureshi WT, Blaha MJ, Keteyian SJ. Change in Maximal Exercise Capacity Is Associated With Survival in Men and Women. *Mayo Clin Proc* 2017; 92(3):383-390.
- (4) Pontzer H. Constrained Total Energy Expenditure and the Evolutionary Biology of Energy Balance. *Exerc Sport Sci Rev* 2015; 43(3):110-116.

- (5) Kaptoge S, Di AE, Pennells L, Wood AM, White IR, Gao P et al. C-reactive protein, fibrinogen, and cardiovascular disease prediction. *N Engl J Med* 2012; 367(14):1310-1320.

Thomas W. Wilson

## Do You Know Anyone Who Deserves an Honorary Degree?

The Honorary Degrees Committee is always looking for candidates who may be deserving of an honorary degree from the University. If you know of anyone you feel is deserving, please forward their name to us so that we may investigate and possibly recommend them to the University.

## CURAC Benefits

Amongst the benefits of CURAC membership are the opportunities to access information of relevance to university retirees and to provide input to a variety of position papers and lobbying efforts to governments. See the CURAC website for details of recent papers such as *Opioids – Are Seniors at Risk?*

Also available are access to several organizations through affiliation agreements. These include travel opportunities, Collette and Trip Merchant; home and auto insurance, Economical Insurance; pet insurance, Economical Pet Insurance; travel and trip cancellation insurance, MEDOC; extended health benefit insurance, RTO. We are also in negotiations to finalize an agreement with Hearing Life Canada. In all of these members receive favorable rates and CURAC and USRA receive payments for services accessed. Be sure to mention your affiliation with CURAC and USRA when you utilize these services;

not all of their staff are fully conversant with all of their agreements.

## New Retirees Describe Their University Careers

By Judith Rice Henderson

Since July 2017, the USRA has welcomed, among other new members, more than 40 “new retirees.” They have worked in a rich variety of the careers covered by our recently revised definition of USRA membership eligibility: employees 55 years or older who have retired from, or worked at least six years for, the University or its federated and affiliated colleges and research institutes. In September 2017, USRA expanded from an “academic” retirees association for faculty, senior administrators, and contract researchers in order to welcome the membership of the former University of Saskatchewan Non-Academic Retirees Association (USNARA). As well as USFA and ASPA retirees, former CUPE 1975 employees are now participating in USRA, and sessional lecturers and others who have been on contract employment without a University pension plan are also encouraged to join as Ordinary (voting) Members. Their partners are invited to be Associate (non-voting) Members of USRA.

To represent some of the range of career experience of our enlarged membership, four 2018 retirees from the Department of Physics and Engineering Physics and their wives agreed to be interviewed for the USRA Newsletter.

As retired U of S Technicians, Blair and Debbie Chomyshen are both Ordinary Members of USRA. Blair, a Saskatoon native, worked as an Instrument Maker in the Physics machine shop (1989-2018) and was also involved in CUPE 1975 leadership

for 4-5 years. Blair took an 8-month course in machining at Kelsey (now a campus of Saskatchewan Polytechnic) and then learned for his first 3 years from Harry Meredith in the Physics shop. Blair enjoyed the creativity, variety, and collaboration of his job. He and two other machinists would design, draw, and produce whatever was needed, working with such materials as aluminum, steel, sheet metal, plastic, and wood. They often divided the tasks for a project according to their expertise with equipment, materials, or techniques such as types of welding. Increasingly the shop has been using 3-D computer imaging for designs. The technicians also train apprentices and sometimes have temporary employees from other campus facilities, for instance when the synchrotron is closed. Blair has quickly moved on to each new project, but he recalls some, such as a part made years ago for a piece of space shuttle equipment and, more recently, work on refurbishing a telescope donated to the rooftop Physics observatory. On February 4, The StarPhoenix published a front-page story about medical research on cystic fibrosis through examining genetically modified pigs with the University's synchrotron light beam. Blair helped make a Plexiglas part to hold the pig in the beam. He is working at home as he pleases on woodworking and renovations

Blair's wife Debbie, a bilingual native of Montreal, was a Health Sciences Librarian Assistant working in Interlibrary Loan. She met Blair when she and his sister were both in the library technician program at Kelsey in 1982-83. Debbie noted how much her job with the University Library had changed with digital technology from what it was 27-28 years ago: typing cards for the backs of books and guessing at signatures to see

who had checked them out. With the Internet her work became more challenging because, although patrons could get the readily available materials themselves, the Internet and databases led to requests for some very obscure ones. She claims that the learning curve was much steeper for her generation than "for kids today." She once told management, "You're never going to see the change that we had." She had to make her own manual for the new system introduced for Interlibrary Loan, but she got satisfaction from finding the materials needed and takes pride in having "never cancelled an order." Her attitude was, "If it kills me, I'm going to find this." Debbie misses that challenge and her co-workers but is looking forward to some travel now.

Stanley (Stan) Shadick (BSc Hons Saskatchewan, MSc Western Ontario) worked 39.9 years as Departmental Assistant, Instructor, and Sessional Lecturer in Physics. He was also a Lab Demonstrator in Engineering Physics. His sessional teaching eventually became part of his ASPA job. Stan taught and sometimes redesigned 100 – 300 level Physics classes, including 1st-year Astronomy and a 2<sup>nd</sup>-year "hands-on class" in the use of Physics' rooftop observatory. He was in charge of programming for the Department's three observatories. The venerable stone Campus Observatory is used now for 100-level labs and group tours, and open Saturday nights to the public. The Sleaford Observatory was developed on a vacant school site between Colonsay and Highway 5 east of Saskatoon. Its telescopes are no longer used for undergraduate teaching but are jointly operated with the Saskatoon chapter of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. The newest observatory, on the roof of the Physics building, has seven

telescopes and an eighth under reconstruction. It is the 24-inch telescope, donated by the estate of an amateur astronomer who made it. For 17 years Stan published annually *Skywatchers: A Sky Guide Calendar* with a star map and for each night something to look at. He also wrote a *Starwatcher's Companion* for school children. In retirement he remains involved in a long-term research project with students looking for moons around "exoplanets" (planets that circle others). They might be a clue to extraterrestrial life. See

<https://news.usask.ca/articles/research/2016/shadicks-research-is-out-of-this-world.php>

Stan's wife Jan, MSc, retired in 2017 from the Saskatoon Health Region but now works as a Registered Marriage and Family Therapist for Gryba Phillips Associates about one day a week to maintain her professional skills. Her full-time work is volunteer as Executive Director of the charity she founded in 2006, Living Sky Wildlife Rehabilitation. Its website explains that Jan, born in California, "became a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, working with small mammals and small birds," during her 14 years in Connecticut after University. She came to Canada in 2001. At first, Living Sky operated out of the Shadick home in Nutana, and sleep-deprived Jan still cares for animals there that need attention in the middle of the night. Days, she works at the rehabilitation centre at 100 Rayner Ave. that Living Sky acquired 3 years ago. Other volunteers, often veterinary students who attend daytime classes, take over evenings. Injured or orphaned animals are often referred by veterinarians. Among those treated have been skunks, racoons, bats, birds, and one "oh so cute" baby bear. But

as the number of animals treated has rapidly grown, reaching 1166 in 2018, so has the need for space at the centre, so Jan organizes fundraisers to expand it, build a new aquatic pool and other facilities, and some day hire a business manager. "An Evening of Jazz Fundraising Dinner" was planned for March 2 at the Greenbryre Golf Club. Living Sky also assists with school programs and has been working with the Government to establish a process, still lacking in Saskatchewan, to train and certify wildlife rehabilitators. Stan is also interested in wildlife and has worked to protect Saskatoon's NE Swale. With Stan at the telescopes many evenings and Jan working days, they make time some weekends to enjoy bird watching together. In early February they found a variety of owls.

While Stan has run the programs at his Department's three observatories, Ioannis (Yannis) Pahatouroglou has managed their infrastructure. Yannis earned his BSc in his native Greece, his MSc in Physics in Regina, and worked in Greece, Toronto, and Regina before his 1983 appointment as the Department's Senior Departmental Assistant. He taught as a Sessional Lecturer a 100-level introduction to Physics class, mostly in summers. The more routine aspects of his ASPA position have been preparing instructors' demonstrations in classes, managing the electronics and machine shops, timetabling classes, handling finances for a few years, and acting as liaison with Facilities Management on the Physics building as well as the Campus Observatory. He also handled equipment purchases for the Department. But he has especially enjoyed the multi-faceted special projects on which he has worked. Thus over the past two years

Yannis has been in charge of acquiring and refurbishing the telescope donated for the rooftop observatory. Earlier he helped to find the dark location for telescopes at Sleaford on the site of an abandoned school 50 km east of Saskatoon, nearby Colonsay, and partner in its development with the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, Saskatoon Branch. That project had legal, design, community, mechanical and other issues to address. Yannis is also interested in the collections of scientific artifacts that the Physics Dept. as well as other science units have retained and want to display. Physics has some artifacts dating to the early 1900s. Yannis has been active in finding safe storage space for their collection with an eye to future cataloguing, but it still lacks sustained funding for archival work. A recent first step has been his development of the Gerhard Herzberg display in the Physics Building.

Yannis' wife Linda Janzen helped with the Herzberg physical display before and after the designer of the project moved to Calgary. Originally trained in a business college, her first job was secretary for an advertising firm. She was in the Provincial 4-H office in Kirk Hall for about three years, then in the head office for three Saskatchewan retail outlets. She moved to Regina with her first husband and worked for an instrumentation company. Soon after returning to Saskatoon, her first husband passed away. For about 25 years now she has been a consultant in advertising and corporate communication, 17 of them freelancing. Her biggest task has been preparing annual reports, including 20 years for PotashCorp (predecessor of Nutrien). It involved layout, working with a designer, and supervising production. Like Yannis, she has enjoyed the ever-changing challenges of

her work: keeping up with new designs, procedures, and technology, and interacting with people. She and Yannis spent part of the first half year of their retirement travelling to Greece and elsewhere, and he has now taken his place as a member-at-large on the USRA Board.

Jean-Pierre St. Maurice (Ph.D. in Geology and Geophysics, Yale 1975) is now Professor Emeritus at both the University of Western Ontario, where he taught physics and astronomy for 17 years, and the U of S, where he served 14 years as professor and Canada Research Chair in Environmental Sciences. Earlier positions were research assistant for 2 years in the Space Physics Research Lab in Ann Arbor, MI, and research professor of Physics for 10 years at Utah State University, Logan. Jean-Pierre's research concerns physical (particularly electrical) processes in the ionosphere, 100 km and up above the ground. Many of his 160 publications ("and counting") are based on studies of processes taking place in the aurora borealis. He has often given public talks on the subject and is still "very busy at trying to 'complete' many research projects. It does not work: every time I complete a publication, I end up with more questions and queries that drive me to more research." As well as teaching physics, he has represented Canada on organizations connected with the United Nations: Union of Radio Science International (6 years) and Committee for Space Research (10 years, including 8 on the board).

He has shared with his wife Monique most of "my extravagant adventures for close to 50 years," including several long term stays in other countries: at MIT, Cornell and Los Alamos in the USA, and in Japan, Germany, France, Great Britain and India. "In all except India, she has joined me together

with the children when they were younger.” They have 4 children and 8 grandchildren and have moved back to London, ON, to be with their family in his second “retirement”. He describes Monique as “an incredibly devoted grand maman” who “was and is still at heart a great Math teacher.” She lectured at universities in Utah and London, ON, worked for French School Boards in London, ON, and Saskatoon, and in “retirement” became a math consultant, running a small business. They both like physical activity. Jean-Pierre refereed soccer for some 30 years, played the game to age 50, and coached for another 10 years. He still plays curling. Monique regularly walks 10 km a day, but she also loves to read, Jean-Pierre loves to play piano, and together they play bridge and continue to travel.

A common thread in all these interviews with the Physics and Engineering Physics retirees has been their enjoyment of work in that Department.

## Update from the Education, Social and Recreation Committee

Hi everyone! On behalf of President Tom, Alan, Rick, the Board and me, we are pleased to bring you updates on recent activities plus news of some interesting initiatives going forward. If you and/or your partner are planning to attend any of these events, please be sure to book at least a week in advance of the event by email ([ss.usra@usask.ca](mailto:ss.usra@usask.ca)) or telephone voice mail (306-966-6618). Space is limited at Manos, and on rare occasions we are full before the RSVP deadline. So, if you have booked and find that you cannot attend, please contact USRA to free your seat in case we have a waiting list. Merry and Rick recently

sourced out a small sound system, which we have purchased for use at Manos, to help ensure that everyone can hear the presentations. We hope to see you at these events.

Warmest regards from Merry (VP) and the USRA Board.

## Coming Up

Troy Harkot

[Adventures in Data World](#)

[Friday, March 29, 2019 at Manos](#)

With the world awash in data, the U of S has both substantial challenges and significant opportunities in dealing with its data assets. Troy will talk about how the university seeks to reap the benefits of the data it has on every facet of its operations now and in the future while addressing concerns about privacy and security.

Mr. Harkot is the U of S Director of Assessment and Analytics. The role of his unit is to safeguard and protect the University’s data while providing flexibility to support the broad range of academic, research and administrative activities.

Dr. Melissa Just

[Turning the Page with the New Dean of the U of S Library](#)

[Monday, April 15, 2019 at Manos](#)

Dr. Just joined the Library as Dean in February 2017 and is leading the University Library master planning project in order to continue enhancing the services available in the seven library branches at the U of S.

[Drs. Jane Richardson and Linda Suveges: Genealogy Detectives](#)

[Monday, May 13, 2019 at Manos](#)

Dr. Richardson retired from the Saskatoon Health Region as Coordinator of Clinical



Pharmacy Services and Clinical Assistant Professor with the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition. Dr. Suveges is Professor Emeritus of Pharmacy. Jane and Linda have developed a keen interest and knowledge of the study of families and tracing lineages and history.

Spring Barbeque: June 10, 2019 at 5:00 at Louis' Patio



Please pencil in the date! Details to follow to you all. We will look forward to welcoming 2018-19 Retirees and other folks

who have left the University and meet USRA eligibility for membership.

June Workshop on Keeping Your Computer Safe

TBA Please Watch for It

Are you worried about keeping your computer safe from spam, viruses, phishing attacks and other forms of malware? We are in negotiations with ICT (Information and Communications Technology) for a special workshop for retirees later in the spring. Watch for more information. We are planning to have refreshments and maybe a stretching period, so we can call this a Recreation event!

September AGM and Awards Banquet  
September 23, 2019 (tentative)

This is our annual banquet at which we recognize people who have continued to contribute to their discipline, to the University or to the wider community after their retirement. And, of course, it's preceded by the usually-thrilling AGM.

This Monday follows the U of S Homecoming Weekend, September 20 and 21, 2019. We are hoping that our members from away, who may be attending

Homecoming, can stay on and join the AGM and Awards Banquet. We look forward to seeing you!

Dr. Bill Waiser

In Search of Almighty Voice

Wednesday, October 16, 2019 at Manos

Dr. Waiser, S.O.M., B.A., M.A., Ph.D., is a western Canadian historian, who has published over a dozen books, many of them recognized by various awards. A *World We Have Lost: Saskatchewan Before 1905* won the 2016 Governor General's Literary Award for Non-Fiction. He most recently received the 2018 Governor General's History Award for Popular Media: The Pierre Berton Award.

**Your ideas for luncheon speakers and other events are always welcome. Please contact [merry.beazely@usask.ca](mailto:merry.beazely@usask.ca) or 306-652-0086. Thank you.**

Updates on Recent Activities

A Hidden Gem: The Nutana Collegiate Memorial Art Gallery

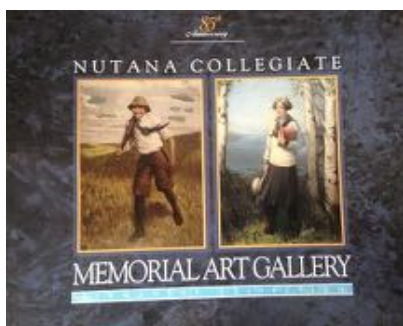
Ken Pontikes, Dr. Murray Scharf and Dr. Jim Blackburn, Proud NCI Alumni  
November 19, 2018 at Manos

Ken, Murray and Jim provided a rousing presentation on the *Nutana Collegiate Memorial Art Collection Restoration Project*. In 1919, the students and Principal of Nutana Collegiate (Saskatoon's original university) began a memorial project to honour alumni who had died because of the First World War. The resulting amazing Gallery contains 29 works by renowned Canadian and Saskatchewan artists. The restoration of four paintings in Nutana's Great War Memorial Art Collection has been completed and the paintings were returned to the school in early November.

The four paintings are: Harry Britton's March Thaw in Ontario, Farquhar McGillivray Strachan Stewart Knowles' The Thunder Cloud, Frederick Sproston Challener's Off to Flanders, and Emile Walters' Winter.

The restoration work on these paintings was undertaken at the Mackenzie Art Gallery in Regina. Brenda Lee Smith, the conservator at this Gallery, coordinated the restoration work. Two paintings in the Collection have been sent to British Columbia for restoration work and are anticipated to be returned to Nutana Collegiate soon. The paintings are John William Beatty's Madawaska Valley and Sybil Jacobson's Reverie. The restoration work is being done by Fraser Spafford Ricci Art & Archival Conservation Inc (FSR) in South Surrey, B.C., and is being coordinated by Sarah (Spafford) Ricci, an alumna of Nutana Collegiate. Sarah is the proud daughter of the late Duff and Shirley.

Many of our USRA members at the event took the opportunity to purchase the beautiful book describing the Collection and the valiant alumni honoured.



We were invited as well to attend the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration of the end of WWI, held at Nutana.



The lovely gentlemen above receiving their USRA Pens after their presentation are Ken, Murray and Jim.

Donations to support the restoration of the remaining 23 paintings in the Collection are most welcome and appreciated, and should be sent to the Saskatoon Public Schools Foundation (in order to receive an income-tax-deductible receipt):

<http://spsfoundation.ca/>. Please identify your donation as being for the "special project" (Nutana Collegiate Great War Memorial Art Project).

### The President's Holiday Reception

November 29, 2018

President Peter Stoicheff welcomed Retirees and other folks who have left the U of S to his Annual Holiday Reception at the President's residence on the afternoon of



November 29. We were warmly greeted by Peter and his wonderful Staff and enjoyed great company and great food.

Pictured are members of the USRA Board who were in attendance: back row, l to r, Rick Bunt, Ken Smith, Peter Stoicheff, Tom Wilson and Jacqueline Huck; front row, l to r, Merry Beazely, Lois Dumbovic, Judith Henderson and Yannis Pahatourglou. Thank you, Peter for your always wonderful hospitality!

Professor Norman Zlotkin  
Indigenous People of Canada and the  
Colonial Legacy

January 23, 2019

Professor Norman Zlotkin was our guest on January 23, and members greatly appreciated his talk on Indigenous People of Canada and the Colonial Legacy. President Tom introduced Norm, touching on his legal education at the University of Toronto and his move to Saskatoon. Norm served as Associate Dean Academic and Associate Professor at the College of Law University of Saskatchewan. He also taught at Osgoode Hall Law School at York University, the University of Waikato in New Zealand and the University of Toronto Faculty of Education. Although retired in 2015, Norman continues to serve as a Sessional Lecturer in the College of Law, teaching Aboriginal Law and Policy in Canada. Additional activities that keep Norm busy include Bridge Club (he is said to be very good!) and the Saskatoon Arts scene. Norman is co-chair of the Broadway Film Club and pre-screener for the Saskatoon Fantastic Film Festival. And he has recently joined the USRA!

Norman specializes in Aboriginal, Criminal and Constitutional Law. He has been an advisor to the Assembly of First Nations and



*Norman (right) talks more about the presentation with Beryl Radcliffe, a new member of the USRA.*

Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (northern Ontario) on constitutional law, and a member of their legal teams for the First Ministers Conferences in 1983, 1984, 1985 and 1987. He has served as an advisor to

First Nation governments, band councils, organizations and individuals in Ontario, Saskatchewan, Quebec, Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia and the Maritimes. He also served as Research Director, Native Law Centre U. of S. from 1982-86.

Prior to the luncheon, Norman encouraged attendees to view the video *Babakiueria*, which revolves around a role-reversal, whereby it is Aboriginal Australians who have invaded and [colonised](#) the fictitious country of Babakiueria, a land that has long been inhabited by white natives, the Babakiuerians. The video can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oUMpPgMGce8>.

This talk was divided into two parts, addressing (1) the destruction of Indigenous societies by Europeans and (2) positive developments in recent times. He kindly provided the following summary.

“Part 1 described the loss of lands and resources; the destruction of Indigenous families and communities through previously unknown diseases; the residential school system; and the loss of languages. Even after most residential schools were closed, the destruction of

families and communities continued through the child welfare system imposed upon First Nation communities starting in the late 1950s, when the federal government began funding the operation of provincial child welfare agencies on reserves. This led to the infamous “60s scoop”, which resulted in more Indigenous children being placed in care than during the time of residential schools.

Clean water and adequate housing are still not available on many First Nation reserves. Indigenous overrepresentation in the criminal justice system shows no sign of decreasing.

Part 2 described some positive developments since the 1960s. Some were political, and one was in fact a reaction to the 1969 White Paper of Pierre Trudeau and Jean Chretien, which called for the end of the treaty relationship and of special status for First Nations. This led to the revitalization of the “Indian movement”, i.e., of Indigenous political organizations. The participation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit organizations in the patriation process led to inclusion in the new Canadian Constitution of section 35, which recognizes existing Aboriginal and Treaty rights and the role of Indigenous people in future constitutional change. Indigenous peoples could no longer be ignored. In the 21st century, the Idle No More movement has provided a voice for Indigenous people not associated with mainstream Indigenous political organizations such as the Assembly of First Nations.

Legal developments have also been at the forefront of change. The 1973 Calder decision recognizing the existence of Aboriginal title led to changes in federal government policy, allowing the negotiation of modern treaties in Quebec, British

Columbia and the Territories. It also led to the creation of Nunavut. Courts have now recognized Aboriginal rights, Aboriginal title and the right of Indigenous peoples to be consulted prior to development in their traditional homelands.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which has been ratified by Canada, requires the consent of Indigenous peoples before development can take place on their lands. In Canada, the 2015 Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission made 94 recommendations for moving towards the goal of reconciliation between Canada and Indigenous Peoples.

The economic situation for some First Nations, especially those located near urban areas, has greatly improved. Examples include the creation of urban reserves, the economic accomplishments of the Whitecap Dakota Nation near Saskatoon, and the offer of a First Nation consortium to buy a pipeline. It must be kept in mind that First Nations are not monolithic in their approaches to economic development.

Changes in the education system should also be noted. There are now 3000 Indigenous students at the University of Saskatchewan, 1500 Indigenous lawyers in Canada and an increasing number of Indigenous academics at both the University of Saskatchewan and across Canada. A program run by the University of Saskatchewan’s College of Law is providing a legal education in Nunavut for Nunavut residents. Similar changes have taken place in other professions. Indigenous scholarship is being recognized in post-secondary institutions across Canada, and traditional knowledge and ways of knowing are being valued and studied in legal education and other fields. Indigenous people are taking

control of their future. Meaningful steps are being taken towards the goal of reconciliation. Much remains to be done.”

Dr. Ali Rajput

Islam and Saskatchewan

February 20, 2019

Dr. Ali Rajput, professor emeritus of Medicine and world-renowned physician-scientist, gave a presentation entitled “Islam and Saskatchewan”, to about 35 members on February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019.



Dr. Ali Rajput

He traced the history of Islam starting with Muhammad in early 7<sup>th</sup> century Arabia. The country was a desert, inhabited by nomadic tribes, who gathered once a year in Mecca, at a cube-like structure (the Kaaba) to worship their many gods. At age 40, Muhammad, while meditating in a cave, was given the precepts of the Quran. It included one and only one supreme god: Allah. It defined 5 principles of a religion known as Islam (meaning “in accordance with the will of Allah”):

1. Kalma. Declaration: *I bear witness there is no deity except Allah and Muhammad is his messenger*”.
2. Salat. Praying five times each day.

3. Fasting. From sunrise to sunset during the lunar month of Ramadan.
4. Zecat. Donating 2.5% of wealth to the poor.
5. Hajj. Embarking on a pilgrimage to Mecca once in a lifetime.

Muhammad was successful in proselytizing this new religion to Arabia, the Middle East, parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa. On his death, his followers, called Muslims, split into two groups: The Shia who wanted the successor to be of the bloodline of Muhammad, and the Sunnis who wanted “the best man for the job”. Today, of the 1.6 billion Muslims, 87-90% are Sunnis and 10-12% are Shia.

Muslims have a longstanding history in North America. About 15% of West Africans brought to America as slaves were Muslim. Their first mosque was in Iowa, USA in 1934 and the first mosque in Canada was in Edmonton in 1938.

When Ali came to Saskatoon in 1967 there were about 20 Muslims in a city of 100,000 people. Today there are about 10,000 Muslims who pray at 4 or more mosques. They came from 50 different countries.

Ali also discussed diet, women’s rights, marriage, prayers and holy days in some detail. You can find more information in the slides from his presentation, which is available via a link on the home page of our web site (<http://usra.usask.ca>). As usual, attendees had a number of interesting questions, which Ali handled with aplomb.

Finally, Ali is involved in studies of brains from his patients to better understand their diseases. For that he needs control brains to test at the same time as the patient brains. He asked if any member had suggestion on

how to go about getting control brains. You can contact Ali directly at [ali.rajput@usask.ca](mailto:ali.rajput@usask.ca).

## CURAC Conference 2019

The University of Guelph Retirees Association is proud to host the 2019 conference and AGM of the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada/Associations de retraités des universités et collèges du Canada (CURAC/ARUCC) May 22 to 24 on the Guelph campus.

This year's sessions focus on health, a major area of research strength at the University of Guelph.

Speakers will include Prof. Emma Allen-Vercoe, a U of G microbiologist who is world-renowned for her research on the microbial world inside the human gut. Other session topics include sexual health and aging, age-friendly cities and the health benefits of interacting with dogs.

U of G's renowned library archives will also be in the spotlight at the conference, with a session offering an inside look at the famed Lucy Maud Montgomery Collection, as well as the highly respected Scottish studies, culinary history and theatre collections.

For more information about the conference and how to register online, visit the website <https://www.ugra.ca/curac/conference>

## Academics Without Borders (AWB)

This organization was established 25 years ago to fill a gap in international development which had largely ignored universities in developing countries. It is one of several organizations that CURAC maintains relationships with.

Academics Without Borders' mission is to help developing countries improve their universities so that they can train their own experts and conduct research to assist in their countries' development. Academics Without Borders' projects are involved in the full range of university activities from expanding and improving existing institutions and programs to helping create new ones.

AWB sends volunteers to assist in projects in countries throughout the developing world. A significant proportion of the volunteers are retirees from Canadian universities, including academics and non-academic administrators and specialists. If you are interested visit their website at [www.awb-usf.org](http://www.awb-usf.org).

## Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Enhancements Starting in 2019

Effective January 1, 2019 changes have been introduced as a result of an agreement reached in June 2016 between the Federal and Provincial governments resulting in existing workers contributing more in CPP premiums which in turn will increase the benefits paid. This is impacting only individuals who are still working in 2019 and making contributions to the CPP. These changes will occur over a seven-year phase in period increasing the premium rate from 4.95% each (9.90% total) in 2018 for employees and employers to 5.10% each in 2019, eventually reaching 5.95% each (11.90% total) by 2023 on the first estimated \$69,700 of earnings. After 2023 a second earning ceiling of approximately \$79,400 will be established which will require a lower 4.00% (8.00% total) contribution rate between the first (\$69,700) and second (\$79,400) in earnings.

The net result is that the Canada Pension Plan will replace 33.33% of the average worker's lifetime earnings up to the Yearly Maximum Pensionable Earnings (YMPE) up from the current 25% once it is fully phased in 45 years from now over a worker's employment career. The YMPE is used to calculate contributions and pensions under the Canada Pension Plan (CPP). The current YMPE for 2018 is \$55,900. The need for an enhanced CPP is evident given the decline of employer sponsored pension plans. Latest figures, 37.5% (Statistics Canada, January 1, 2017), show a reduction from 2015 of the percentage of all paid members who were members of a registered pension plan. In 1977 46% of Canadian workers had a company pension plan.

## Call for Nominations for USRA Awards

The University of Saskatchewan Retirees Association (USRA) is calling for nominations for the **Prime of Life Achievement** and **Continuing Contribution** awards. These awards recognize University retirees who have continued to contribute to their discipline, to the University or to the wider community after their retirement. USRA defines a retiree as anyone who has retired from a staff position at the University of Saskatchewan and its federated and affiliated colleges, including staff employed under research grants and contracts.

Criteria for these awards and nomination forms for them are available on the USRA website ([http://homepage.usask.ca/~ss\\_usra/Award\\_s/mainAwards.html](http://homepage.usask.ca/~ss_usra/Award_s/mainAwards.html) or <http://usra.usask.ca/> and select the Awards tab). If you know of anyone worthy of these awards, please

complete a nomination form and send it to one of the addresses on the form. Nominations can be submitted at any time; but April 30 is the deadline for 2019 awards at USRA's September 23 banquet.

## Members No Longer with Us

USRA has learned of the deaths of the following members:

**Willi Karl Braun**, September 22, 1931 – January 16, 2019, predeceased in 2017 by his wife Ruth

**Lourdes Heber**, October 16, 1933 – November 20, 2018, survived by her husband Wes

**Cheryl M.M. Llewellyn**, October 4, 1951 – February 5, 2019, survived by her husband E. J. (Ted)

**Toliver Young (T.Y.) Henderson**, October 28, 1931 – December 24, 2018, survived by his wife Judith

We extend our sympathies to their families. Surviving spouses of deceased Life Members remain members of the Association.

For notices in memoriam of former employees of the University, as well as current students, employees, and others honoured when the flag on the Thorvaldson Building is flown at half-mast, please see U of S In Memoriam (<http://www.usask.ca/secretariat/documents/flag-at-half-mast.php>), maintained by the University Secretary.

## Renewing Your USRA Membership

Approximately 80 per cent of USRA's members hold Life Memberships. However, recent retirees and others with annual membership cards may be surprised to see that their membership expires on June 30. That is because USRA operates on the academic year, July 1 to June 30.

The June BBQ and September AGM or Awards Banquet are good occasions to renew your annual membership in person, but at any time you can renew by filling out and submitting with your cheque the membership application that you will find online at <https://usra.usask.ca>

Either way, you can pay \$20 for the academic year, or avoid in future the hassle of annual renewal by signing up for a Life Membership at a fee prorated by age:

- <60 years: \$200
- 60-64: \$180
- 65-69: \$160
- 70-74: \$130
- 75-79: \$100
- 80+: \$ 70

Often, Life Membership turns out to be less expensive than paying \$20 annually, and it can be inherited by the surviving partner of a Life Member who passes away, even if he or she is not a University retiree. Thus, a former Associate Member (the non-paying, non-voting partner of an Ordinary Member) can continue to participate as a Life Member in the familiar activities and fellowship of USRA and enjoy its other benefits after the death of a loved one.

If you have questions about membership, contact the Membership Committee. See USRA contact information at the end of this newsletter or consult the website.

University of Saskatchewan Retirees'  
Association  
221 Cumberland Ave N  
Saskatoon, SK S7N 1M3  
306-966-6618  
[ss.usra@usask.ca](mailto:ss.usra@usask.ca)  
<https://usra.usask.ca>