

RALU News



The Back-to-School Issue

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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE RETIREES OF 2014

RALU welcomes twelve bright new faces with fresh ideas, capabilities and energy to its ranks to begin this academic year 2014/2015. It is now our policy to offer all new retirees a one year free membership in RALU. Congratulations to these new members!

RALU is an inclusive, diverse, democratic and welcoming organization. Our constitution states that: "Membership in the Association is open to all retirees, their spouses or partners, academic and non-academic" and further, "There shall be one class of membership: retirees, spouses or partners being individual members."

Richard Berg
Susan Cole
Jane Crossman
Hope Arlene Fennell
Allan Gilbert
Patricia Jason
Bob Payne
Linda Pisco
Peter Puna
Norma Smith
Cathy Trojan
Dolores Wawia

ENVIRONMENT NEWS: NATURE CONSERVANCY OF CANADA

Northwestern Ontario and Thunder Bay have been at the centre of a series of major events related to the environment over the past year with controversies over mercury in water and the annual conference of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Cities' Initiative held in June in Thunder Bay.

On a distinctly positive note, Barb and Lynn Barber, members and active environmentalists, attended the commemoration of a new nature preserve. Of the experience Lynn writes:

My wife Barbara and I were very lucky to be able to attend a recent event (August 20th) held at Alex and Kim Paterson's cottage on Lambert Island to celebrate the acquisition of 631 acres on the south facing side of Caribou Island.

This we undertook not without some considerable trepidation as I am no longer able to drive. I have double vision in my good eye and Barb is unfamiliar with our larger vehicle, a Toyota RAV4. Everything went well until she had to cross the short little bridge onto Lambert. The all wood bridge seemed to follow the arch that would support it if it were a stone structure. Starting up one side and she was, being only 4 feet nine, unable to see much over the top of the rise and we ended up taking it at a virtual snail's pace. On the return trip she balked and I took it over the hump for her.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada had been working for some time on the acquisition of a portion of Caribou Island to preserve the habitat there the present and future generations. As Alex said in his welcoming remarks: "The Paterson Foundation is delighted to have the opportunity to work with the Nature Conservancy of Canada to conserve a portion of Caribou Island. I personally have been working on an opportunity to see Caribou preserved in its natural state for over twenty years and have been visiting the island since I was a child. The fact that the south side of the island will remain natural conservation land in perpetuity excites me to no end!" This was accomplished by the Nature Conservancy of Canada with the assistance of the Government of Canada's Natural Areas Conservation Program, the Paterson Foundation, John Andrews Foundation and Barrett Family Foundation.

The north facing part of Caribou Island facing cottagers' properties at Lambert Island and other popular cottage sites along Lake Superior in Shuniah Township had already been purchased for private use. Caribou is environmentally significant as the island is home to a pair of nesting bald eagles, peregrine falcons and many white tail deer but despite the name of the island, no caribou. The Nature Conservancy plans to do a complete ecological inventory next spring to see what other unique species make the island their home. Caribou Island consists of mixed forests, exposed bedrock bluff and mixed beach on Lake Superior that provides an oasis for rare plant and animal species. Two and a half kilometres of that frontage on Lake Superior will now be totally off limits to development.

The Paterson cottage, high atop a rock outcrop on Lambert Island, furnishes a gorgeous view of the Amethyst Harbour area which, on the evening that we were there, as smooth as glass. When Barb wended her long way down to their dock she was greeted by a pair of loons and family of mergansers.

The large group there (close to fifty people) were treated to a delightful cocktail dinatoire served by waiters and waitresses from the White Fox Inn. We were somewhat intimidated as we were sure that we would not know anyone but were delighted that a husband and wife (Bill and Karen Covello), cottagers at Birch Beach, recognized us from their days at Lakehead University. We had met Don and Lori Paterson earlier as they were fellow members of the same book club. We were well received by Dana Kleniewski and Jim Duncan of the Nature Conservancy of Canada and enjoyed a lengthy talk with a kayaker who was attempting to complete a tour of the north shore of Superior going a fair distance each summer.

I was reluctant to venture far from my perch on the railing of the deck outside the main cottage as the deck was stained very dark, and with my vision, I would be very likely to take a head over and end up a cocktail casualty, assuredly not due to my intake. Once ensconced there, a glass of claret in hand, I thought I was seated on the edge of paradise! But even the experience of having to answer a call of nature in that beautiful spot was not without its benefits. I was escorted to a small cabin on that part of deck closest to Amethyst Harbour and found myself in washroom with a gorgeous view almost directly below. The view

was such that it could entice even unruly children to spend some time in the simple act of hand cleansing. I am not sure of the range of people invited. We were invited as we have been long term donors to special projects that the Conservancy has been involved in both here and in the Eastern Townships of Quebec. Others there were the Paterson's neighbours and representatives of the Anderson and Barrett Foundations, the Lakehead Regional Conservation Authority, other donors and volunteers and the head of Sleeping Giant Provincial Park and, key perhaps, the realtor who arranged the purchase of the land.

If you have not contributed to the Nature Conservancy of Canada we would highly recommend it. They have been instrumental in saving many natural areas of our beautiful land from development. The two that we have assisted with are located in areas with which we are most familiar: near Sleeping Giant Provincial Park and part of Sutton Mountain, near the Quebec border with Vermont. One location Barb and I have enjoyed since our arrival in the Lakehead and the other is the same mountain where my maternal relatives are buried. We are emotionally and spiritually involved with both locations.

Lynn Barber

The photograph is of Caribou Island emerging from a Lake Superior mist, taken from Lambert Island



Courtesy of The Nature Conservancy of Canada

More Environment News

The first and biggest international event of the year, with connections to Thunder Bay and which is still reverberating, is the announcement by our own Neil Young (honoris causa) of his alliance against the reckless development of the oil sands: AKA the tar sands. These are strange times when a geriatric rocker champions the use of science to guide decisions and to insist that the federal government honour treaties.

The Council of Canadians' redoubtable Maude Barlow visited this spring to give a platform for members of the many solitudes of Northwestern Ontario to present grievances and warnings, as well as to strategize and look forward. Oil transportation is on the mind of everyone who lives in a potential blast zone close to a railway. A major change this year is that there are now two unit oil trains in the yard at Westfort at any given time.

Deliberations on a \$60 to \$100 million project to clean up mercury contamination in the North Harbor of Thunder Bay are underway with no recent information publicly available to citizens. These deliberations over the best and most practical course for the remediation project are only a part of this unfolding story related to this heavy metal in Northwest Ontario. In a new chapter of the Grassy Narrows tragedy, scientists are telling the Ontario Mercury Disability Board to compensate victims. In this case the scientists are from Japan who have been concerned with the aftermath of the Minamata disaster. According to a report on the CBC, only 27% of applicants are eligible to receive compensation.

Ed: These and other stories are unfolding now, so expect much more later.

CULTURE AND LANGUAGE. PARDON MY APOSTROPHE: '

The word says it all. In the original Greek, *apostrophos* meant what the apostrophe does: 'turn (*strephein*) away (*apo*)'. Ancient grammarians conceived this sign to mark a 'turning away', the euphonic omission of one or more final vowels in words (mostly prepositions and conjunctions) followed by an initial vowel in the next: e.g. *ap'emou* (from me) for *apo emou*, *all'ou* (but not) for *alla ou*.

The device entered modern writing some 1500 years later, when European humanists saw its convenience and adapted it to their own vernaculars, giving French *l'apostrophe*, instead of *la apostrophe*, and *c'est la vie*. In Italian, the aria is accordingly *l'aria* rather than *la aria* and *quest'uomo* (this man) becomes a smooth alternative to *questo uomo*. German identifies Aristotle's Works as *Aristoteles' Werke*, avoiding the awkwardness of *Aristoteless Werke*, and the greeting "how goes it", *wie geht es*, can be colloquially *wie geht's*. The Greek-derived apostrophe has found a similar role in more European and European-based languages including Portuguese, Welsh, Danish, Swedish, Dutch and Afrikaans.

The English apostrophe is hardly more complicated. Introduced from the French in the 16th century and standardized in the 18th, it performs the same traditional function of denoting an elision: "It's (it is) the cat wagging its tail". "Who's (who is) there whose ears are deaf?" "There's (there is) proof the property is theirs". The elision usually consists of a contraction, but occasionally it can be an abbreviation: "the roaring '20s (1920s) preceded the dirty '30s (1930s)". Use of the apostrophe to form a plural is an aberration allowed exceptionally and on cosmetic grounds in the case of single-lettered words: "mind your p's and q's, cross your t's, dot your i's and learn the three r's". Yes, the apostrophe also serves to show possession, 's for singular and s' for plural nouns and admissibly proper names ending in s or a sibilant like z or x: "James' cat's tail is its own, not other cats". This extends to indefinite pronouns such as one's, others', everybody's, someone else's, not personal pronouns like I, we, you, he, she, it, they or the interrogative/relative pronoun 'who', for the simple reason that the latter have their corresponding adjectives of possession: my, our, your, his, her, its, their, whose. But even this possessive application comes from eliding the vowel e or y from an antiquated genitive inflection of Medieval English. Chaucer's *Nonne Preestes Tale* translated into the current *Nun's Priest's Tale*.

The concept of the English apostrophe is indeed so straightforward that the basic principle of its operation can be explained in a few minutes to a child in elementary school. Despite its plain logic, however,

misuse of the apostrophe has proliferated into a pandemic. With ever growing nonchalance offenders insert it where it does not belong, omit it where it does and misplace it in the wrong position. British vigilantes on apostrophe watch have been flagging shockers like "TAXI'S" next to Leeds railway station; "New's & Mag's" in a Tesco store (presumably an extraordinary concession from the big-box to small retailer 'New and Mag'); "CURRIES PIZZA'S BURGERS" on the signboard of a fast food outlet (where Pizza, you see, cooked the burgers but not the curries). Global anthologies of such horrors can be sampled at apostropheabuse.com, apostrophecatastrophe.com, apostropheprotectionociety.com and in the relevant chapter of Lynne Truss' delightful *Eats, Shoots & Leaves* (2003). The plague is by no means the preserve of placards and posters on display at public amenities, commercial establishments and front yard sales. It infects daily newspapers and magazines. University students' papers are not immune and the contagion is rarely treated by professors who have generally ceased to care and sometimes ceased to know as well.

Widespread ignorance of the apostrophe is, in large part, one of the educational fallouts from the trendy permissiveness implanted in so many schools by "progressive" educators. Obviously, it deserves to be remedied and the remedy would be no herculean labor if the rationale of this sign were intelligently taught to early learners, as it used to be. Unfortunately, remedial action has become entangled in a creeping denial of the subject's value and demonization of its existence. Unapologetic offenders now seek to legitimize the offence and pose as victims of what they deem to be an unnecessary and obtrusive nuisance, "annoying", "arbitrary", "confusing", "distracting", "wasteful", "useless", "redundant", even "an impediment to communication and understanding", and "snobbish" too. Armed with such characterizations, the activist author of killtheapostrophe.com actually promotes disregard of "this weird little appendix" as a means of accelerating its total extinction. A linguist weighs in as expert witness on the evolutionary nature of language, a psychologist testifies on the brain's adaptability to change, and George Bernard Shaw comes in handy as advocate of spelling reform (*CBCradio*, "The war on the apostrophe", 25, aired 17, June, 2013). After all,

the apostrophe has dropped out of most geographical names in the USA and from a number of abbreviations like (omni)bus, (tele)phone and (aero)plane.

The complaints are well taken. A shopper out to buy some cucumbers only to find “cucumber’s for sale” would certainly consider the disappointment “annoying”. Patrons of a store that displayed the warning “Restrooms for customer’s use only” should have denounced such extreme monopoly as “arbitrary” and “snobbish” discrimination. Occupants of one apartment building encountering the placard “Residents refuse to be placed in bins” must have felt it “confusing”, “distracting”, and somewhat “weird”. Editors and university professors who do attend to basic rudiments of style are undoubtedly put in a position to be “wasteful” of valuable human resource. But is the apostrophe “useless”? Only if no difference in meaning exists between “well, we’ll dig a well” and “well, well dig a well”. “Redundant”? So long as one can fathom “you cant use cant in formal prose”, whether the sense is (a) “you can’t use cant” or (b) “you can’t use can’t”. Can it be “an impediment to communication and understanding”? One would have to suppose that clarity is present in “my brothers clients accounts” while obscurity befogs (a) “my brother’s client’s accounts”, (b) “my brother’s clients’ accounts”, (c) “my brothers’ client’s accounts” and (d) “my brothers’ clients’ accounts”. News came the other day of “Robin Williams death”: was that comedian’s name “William” or “Williams”? Sorry, reader, *you* go figure!

The English apostrophe is an outcome of methodical and international attentiveness to a legible delivery of non-oral communication. It exists as part of a conventional system established over centuries by humanists devoted to the illumination of the written and the printed word, the task of making the text as intelligible and nuanced and pleasing for a reader as its spoken counterpart would have been to a listener. Oral speech reaches an immediate audience in a context of voice intonation and modulation, pronunciation and enunciation, pause, facial expression, body language and, in a dialogue situation, the opportunity to elaborate. Written communication, aimed at a distant recipient and devoid of such supports, is more exposed to difficulties of

comprehension and therefore depends on a combination of compensatory aids such as spacing between words, punctuation, paragraphing, capitalization, orthography, diacritics, type-face. A succession of painstaking scholars have labored at the progress of this equipment, the work of facilitating reading by the improvement of writing from the perplexing scrawl of the primitive *scriptio continua* (JAMESCATSTAILISITSOWNNOTOTHERCATS) to the ease and elegance of today’s printed word. Notable among the heavy-lifters in this long process are the Alexandrian librarian Aristophanes of Byzantium (257-180 BC), the Carolingian calligrapher Alcuin (735-804) and the Venetian printer-editor Aldus Manutius (1450-1515).

The abolitionist treats the apostrophe as if it was some accidental freak peculiar to English. He ignores the logic of its genesis as one component in a broader structure of European writing, understates its semantic relevance, fails to fully address the chaotic consequences of its indiscriminate removal, and offers no solution better than its presence. Absurdly, he attributes to the apostrophe the faults that have arisen from violation of its rule, most of all its random intrusion to form a plural noun. On that false premise, the reformer would eradicate something of proven usefulness for the sake of obliging the negligent and the lazy, folks who can’t be bothered to learn its use even in one language, all too often the same slob who expect the “snobs” to pick up a litter of misspellings, flawed grammar and mangled syntax and somehow sort out substance from stylistic rubbish. To spare a gaggle of offenders the little trouble of mastering basics, he does not mind troubling generations of patient readers a great deal more with undue strain on their comprehension. One might as well throw away the baby to save the bath water and be done with traffic regulations to humor reckless drivers. What the abolitionist calls for – the linguist and psychologist cheerleaders may note – is not evolution but change for the worse: an inhumane disservice to literacy.

Abdul H. Mamoojee

Ed: This piece is valuable as it deals with what appears to be a tiny piece of grammar in many languages, the size of which size belies the fascination

it has exerted throughout history. The champion of free speech in America, Frank Zappa, wrote so enigmatically, "The crux of the biscuit is the apostrophe" in his 1974 opus, *Apostrophe*. It was also with great care that the apostrophe in our Association's name was chosen. It denotes the fact of ownership of our association (Retirees' Association of Lakehead University) by the individual members: retirees, their spouses or partners rather than by any particular organization.

RALU 2014 AGM: NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

The list of Nominations is required by our constitution to be circulated prior to the AGM. Listed below are nominees proposed for election at the forthcoming September 24th, 2014 meeting of RALU. These nominees have expressed their consent to serve during the year 2014-2015.

Executive Committee

President: Dave Kemp
 Vice-President: Clem Kent
 Secretary: Bev Stefureak
 Treasurer: Bonny Wigmore
 Immediate Past President (ex officio): Brian Phillips

Communications Committee

Kathy Traynor, Margot Ponder, Ian Dew, Walter Momot

Program Committee

Jenny Phillips, Ernie Epp, Jim Stafford, Raija Warketin

Nominations Committee

Brian Phillips, Les Miller, Abdul Mamoojee

Note: Our Ad Hoc Committee does not require re-election each year and meets only when it has work to address. The members listed have agreed to continue.

Pension & Benefits Ad Hoc Committee

Clem Kent, Tony Cappello, Jim Stafford, Abdul Mamoojee, Les Miller, Don Watson, Peter Mah, Pentti Paularinne

Note the following provision of the RALU Constitution:

"Nominations from other members shall be accepted at a general meeting provided they are nominated and seconded, agreed upon by the nominee, and are submitted to the Secretary at least seven days before the Annual General Meeting".

This report of the Nominations Committee is being submitted for circulation to the membership in time for this due process to take place. New, additional members on committees would be very welcome.

Your voice and energy are needed to propel the association and achieve its goals, so you are invited to come out to the meeting and have your say.

Les Miller

Brian Phillips

Nominations Committee

EVENTS 2014

September 12. Harvest Party. LUSU's Sustainability Initiative Garden Project is having a market – garden party. At the Outpost and venues on the Thunder Bay Campus.

11 am to 2 pm. For more information call 343-8999 or email lusugardens@gmail.com

8 pm to the wee, small hours. A **Fundraiser for all Ages presented by LU Radio 102.7 and the LUSU Food Bank.** At the Outpost on the Thunder Bay Campus. \$5 cover charge. Dynamic live music and a DJ party starting at midnight. Proceeds to LU Radio and the LUSU Food Bank.

September 13. Miles with the Giant Marathon.

Marathon, 1/2 Marathon, 10K, and 5K family fun run. 11.59 pm Deadline for registration. Run. Walk. Volunteer. Raise your pulse rate. Get involved.

For more information and to register.

<http://www.thunderbaymarathon.com/>

September 19 – 20. Music for the Masses. At the Outpost on the Thunder Bay campus and other venues. For details read *The Argus*.

September 21. Miles with the Giant Marathon.

Marathon, 1/2 Marathon, 10K, and 5K family fun run. Run. Volunteer. Get involved.

For more information.

<http://www.thunderbaymarathon.com/>

September 22 Lecture by member Walter Momot on the benefits of the lamprey. St. Paul's United Church on Waverley Street, Thunder Bay. 7 pm.

The author promises to give you "all you wanted to know about the lamprey and why the past fifty year's attempts to eradicate the fish with chemicals represents an ongoing disaster of collateral environmental damage"

September 24. Retirees' Association Dinner and AGM. Airline Hotel, Madrid Room. Dinner at 7:00 p.m. to be followed by AGM. The dinner will be a buffet including a selection of salads, vegetables, entrees and dessert, plus coffee or tea. The cost will be \$28.00, which includes taxes and gratuities. Please note, there will be no general menu available. RSVP to Dave Kemp at panddkemp@shaw.ca or 767-2280, by **Wednesday September 17**

September 26. "Science Friday" of the Large Lakes Observatory. A presentation by Amy Myrbo of the Limnological Research Center of UMD. R/V Blue Heron, tied up at the Great Lakes Aquarium, (353 Harbor Drive, Duluth, Minnesota). For details see website

<http://www.d.umn.edu/llo/sciencefriday.html>

October 4. Fall Colours Field Trip: Details TBA for this annual event
Bring a packed lunch, good walking shoes, and warm rain gear.

DVD of past years. Stills and video. \$20

October 22. RALU October meeting will be held at the Northwestern Ontario Aviation Heritage Centre (NOAHC), 430 Waterloo Street, Thunder Bay (at the southern end of the DaVinci Centre parking lot) on Wednesday, October 22, at 7:00 pm.

Dave Kemp will give a presentation on the aims and activities of the Centre, whose members are working to preserve and celebrate the diverse history of

aviation in the northwest, through the collection and preservation of artifacts and the stories of the persons and events that made this region unique in aviation history.

ON YOUR MARKS. GET SET FOR YOUR THUNDERWOLVES



Men's Hockey

Another season is about to begin and fans are looking forward to seeing our Wolves in action again. Expectations seem to be high that we will have a more high calibre team with the addition of several highly regarded recruits. At the moment training camp has started and new hopefuls and veterans are putting forth their best efforts in order to make the team. The recruits who committed in the summer include Nathan Cull, Dylan Butler, E.J. Faust, Austin McDonald (brother of goalie Justin), and Brennan Dubchak (brother of Carson). Several other walk-ons have also shown up at training camp hoping to be successful. Within the next two weeks Coach McDonald will have whittled the roster down before the first exhibition games on September 19 & 20th against the Mount Royal Cougars at the Fort William Gardens. Game time is 7:30 PM.

Men's Baseball

Little attention has previously been paid to LU's men's baseball, however there has been more media attention recently it seems, so thought it was important to bring this to everyone's attention especially if you are a baseball fan.

Their season is divided into two parts. They play in September and October and then again in the Spring. The team is included in the District 6 North Conference which includes the University of Minnesota, the University of Wisconsin at Superior, Minnesota State

at Moorhead and North Dakota State University. Their first home appearance is an intersquad game on September 16th at Baseball Central at 6:30 PM. Their home schedule will open on September 20th with a double header against MSU Moorehead at Baseball Central. Game times are 3:00 PM and 5:00 PM.

Men's Basketball

A surprise announcement a few weeks ago has left the men's team with a new coach, after Scott Morrison accepted a new job as head coach with the Maine Red Claws, a feeder team of the Boston Celtics. He spent last year as an assistant coach and scout with the Celtics, and was expected to return this year to resume his coaching duties. Scott was one of the most successful LU coaches, spending ten years here and amassing a record 185-174 with a Wilson Cup and CIS Silver Medal awards. His replacement is Manny Furtado, who brings a wealth of experience to the team after spending the last two years as an assistant for the current CIS champions, the Carleton Ravens. His toughness and desire will hopefully propel the team to the top of the OUA this season.

New recruits include guards Ryan Doornick, DJ Smith, and Ashaunti Hogan, and wings Michael Poirier, Stephen Shields and Addy Ogunye. According to Morrison, Ogunye has "one of the highest ceilings for development of any player we have added to our roster in recent years." Injured forward Ryan Thomson should be back with the team for his final year after a major knee injury in February, 2013.

They are scheduled to play Brandon at the Thunderdome on Friday, September 26 at 7:00 PM and Saturday, September 27 at 2:00 PM.

Women's Basketball

Coach Jon Kreiner has announced the recruitment of the following players for the 2014-2015 season: Mozanga Ekwalinga (guard) from Red Deer College, Bridget O'Reilly (wing) formerly with the London Ramblers, August Ricketts (forward) and Lindsay Edwards (guard) both from the Barrie Royals, and Corina Bruni (point guard) who was LU's rookie of the year in 2010, and has returned to LU after playing for the Algoma Thunderbirds in Sault Ste. Marie. Judging by the information on these recruits, their skills should provide needed depth for the team this season, which will be exciting for the fans.

Look for your sport and follow your favorite wolf all year long.

<http://www.thunderwolves.ca/>

Margot Ponder

CURAC / ARUCC 12TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

College and University Retiree Associations of Canada / Associations de retraités des universités et collèges du Canada held at Hamilton, Ontario—28-30 May 2014

Representatives of twenty-two college and university retirees associations met at McMaster University in Hamilton at the end of May. Representatives came from twenty-two university associations, spanning the country from Memorial University of Newfoundland to the University of Victoria. Associations at Mohawk College and Niagara College were represented, as were the Ontario College Retirees Association and the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations. The Retirees' Association of Lakehead University was represented by Ernie Epp—who is providing this report—and by Beverley Stefureak, who was elected to the CURAC/ARUCC Board of Directors at the Annual General Meeting on May 29th. Congratulations, Bev!

The first day of the conference was dedicated to sessions of general interest to retirees and the second, to matters of more immediate concern to retirees associations. The Annual General Meeting on Thursday was followed by a reception and the conference banquet at The Arnie on the Mohawk College campus. This evening provided the opportunity for presentation of CURAC Awards to a number of people, including Jack Boan of the University of Regina (whom I had the pleasure of seeing in action three years ago at the 9th CURAC Annual Conference in Regina). Jack, who is in his early nineties, was not able to attend, but the CURAC Award caps a sterling career of service at the University of Regina and to the people of Saskatchewan. (I have learned of these contributions from my lead Assistant in Ottawa when I was MP for Thunder Bay-Nipigon,

who went on to serve Premier Roy Romanow as Chief of Staff and Premier Lorne Calvert as Secretary of the Executive Council.) The banquet was followed by entertainment from the Burlington Silver Swing Band, which included more than a dozen players and two soloists!

The first presentation by Sue Becker of McMaster University described how McMaster researchers have developed a leading-edge hearing aid. She provided a fascinating account of the factors involved in hearing loss and the limitations of the hearing aids commonly available to people. The problem is: How much to amplify sound in each frequency channel. An audiogram measures the hearing loss, this is translated into the amount of gain needed, and the device amplifies and compresses the sound. The devices commonly available cannot compensate for the reduced frequency resolution and distorted timing in the impaired ear. The idea behind the NeuroCompensator was to develop computer software to compare healthy ears with impaired cochleas and develop a NeuroCompensator to overcome the discrepancy in sound. The “neurogram” has provided a basis for the Gennum Corporation, succeeded by Vitasound Audio Inc., to develop a new kind of device that may be compared to a blue-tooth device and has the computing power of a desktop computer. The Audioenhancer is available online from Vitasound Audio Inc.

The second presentation by Dr. Brenda Vrkljan, of McMaster’s School of Rehabilitation Science, reported on research relating to medical risk and driving. She noted that younger drivers were responsible for the largest number of automobile accidents but that the crashes in relation to the miles driven by older drivers do rise as they age. The CanDrive Research Project at seven sites across four provinces—Dr. Michel Bédard’s research here in Thunder Bay is part of that study—is working on tests that address the medical fitness of drivers. The study involves three tests, one dealing with cognitive capacity (including the impact of depression), a second focused on driving patterns using GPS devices, and the third looking at crashes and lesser violations. The bad news/good news aspect of the study is that they need more drivers because they haven’t been seeing enough crashes! She also told us that the majority of stroke victims can return to driving.

The third presentation by Dr. Ellen Ryan, Professor Emeritus in Gerontology at McMaster University, focused on “Fostering Resilient Aging Through Social Participation.” She spoke of inspiration she drew from super-centenarians such as Naomi Wingfield (1912-2014) and asked us how we might respond through the 20-30 years of the Third Age, when we can no longer drive but are not yet frail in other ways. Age-Friendly Communities surely help and Social Participation is essential. She noted the importance of Interdependence, Intergenerational Involvements, Access to Transportation Options such as grocery vans, the importance of Pedestrian Safety, the value of Volunteer Opportunities, and Access through Technology. Having a range of alternatives in the way of community, so that people can age in community and develop social networks, and the potential of a village model for seniors to obtain services such as information and referrals, help with transportation and shopping, and household and computer maintenance were also part of her presentation. She pointed to *The Seniors Cohousing Handbook* as an additional inspiration. See also www.writingdownouryears.ca.

The first of the two afternoon sessions involved Dr. Byron G. Spencer, Professor of Economics and Academic Director of the Statistics Canada Research Data Centre at McMaster University, who spoke about “Population Aging in Canada: Implications for our Standard of Living.” His SEDAP (Social and Economic Dimensions of an Aging Population) Research Program seeks understanding of the consequences of our inevitably aging population. He pointed out, for example, that Canada’s median age in 1966 was 25, had risen to 35 by 1996, and may reach 45 by 2030. Where the Baby Boom produced a demographic dividend for the work force through the fourth quarter of the twentieth century, that is now past and the future involves a shrinking proportion of the population in the work force, although immigration can offset the decline. Delaying retirements can lessen the impact as well, but Dr. Spencer was more interested in the possibility of increasing output per capita, i.e., increasing productivity in Canada.

The last of the Thursday presentations, by Dr. Mark Oremus, McLaughlin Foundation Professor of Population at McMaster University, focused on “The

Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging and the Labarge Optimal Aging Initiative.” The Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA) is recruiting 50,000 participants between the ages of 45 and 85 to be followed for at least twenty years. A combination of in-home and telephone interviews and the gathering of data at CLSA sites is designed to gather a vast amount of information about the participants, including their disease experience, their use of medications, their employment and retirement experiences, their transportation and mobility experiences, and their injuries and falls. The resulting data will provide information to design policies to encourage healthy behaviours and discourage unhealthy behaviours. The study will also point to high-risk subgroups of the population who may require specialized interventions to promote good health. The McMaster Optimal Aging Portal, still in development, is designed to bring healthcare information, including research findings, into the hands of citizens, healthcare professionals, public health practitioners, and policy makers.

The sessions on Friday began with Sharron Johnston’s presentation on “The Awesome Power of Humour.” Retired from a full time position in psychiatric nursing and a faculty position in the Department of Psychiatry and Neurosciences at McMaster, she currently works as a part time therapist at the Ennis Centre for Pain Control where she coaches humour as a coping skill. She co-developed and facilitated the Canadian humour conferences for fifteen years. Her presentation WAS very funny! May I suggest her illustrated self-help book, *Take the wheels off your worry bus?* Her motto is: “There’s not a lot of fun in medicine, but there’s a lot of medicine in fun!”

The sessions that followed were focused on the activities of various retirees associations. Datta Pillay, of the Windsor University Retirees’ Association, described how a Joint Consultative Committee had been developed by his association and University President Alan Wildeman, with three members each from the association and from the University Administration. A list of Suggested Best Practices has lessened the bitterness that some faculty felt about the way they had been treated as employees and has made retirees generally welcome in their respective areas. In a similar mode, Ken Craig described how the UBC Association of Professors Emeriti had developed relations with the academic departments from which

they had retired. Hiromi Matsui informed us that Arts and Social Sciences Dean Craig at Simon Fraser University had established a fund of \$50,000 in 2011 to fund research by retired professors and that the success of this initiative led to discussion with other faculties to do the same. And Peter Russell, a prime mover in the establishment of CURAC early in this millennium, described activities at the University of Toronto, especially in the raising of money for the “Seniors College” initiative.

Loren Calder of the Wilfrid Laurier University Retirees Association described means they are using to engage their membership, including a University President’s Dinner at Christmas time, a quarterly newsletter, monthly social and cultural meetings featuring talks by faculty and members of the larger community on subjects of interest, participation on the University’s pension committee, and organization of social events. They had used a focus group to explore the *raison d’être* of the Association. John Lennox described how the York University Retirees’ Association facilitates volunteer opportunities on campus and in the community through the Memorandum of Understanding negotiated with the University. The Association also has Co-Presidents recognizing its membership of faculty and staff. Ihor Stebelsky described their succession planning, preparing retirees for executive positions in the Windsor University Retirees’ Association.

In the last group of presentations, representatives of the retirees’ associations at Humber, Mohawk and Niagara Colleges described how they work collaboratively. David Swayne described how the University of Guelph Retirees Association had launched a series of information forums in April 2011 and currently offer them in the Fall and Spring. Topics have included tax and estate planning; life changes in retirement; lifestyles, health and fitness; and electronic and other types of fraud and how seniors are affected. In the last presentation, Peter Liddell of the University of Victoria Retirees Association described two projects to mark the University’s 50th Anniversary in 2013. One was a history of the first twenty years of the Retirees Association and the second was a series of interviews with retirees who wish to share personal or institutional memories of their experiences. Fifty hour-long interviews were planned but seventy-five have been completed, with

many running to ninety minutes in length. As Liddell observed, “The approach was deliberately subjective, with frankness as the goal—we got a lot of that!” The fact that the idea sprang from the former Vice-President of Finance and Operations makes the project all the more interesting.

Participation in the annual conferences of CURAC/ARUCC is most worthwhile. I enjoyed both the Regina 2011 and the Hamilton 2014 conferences a great deal and hope that my reports give the

membership some fair return on the investment. May I add that having dinner on Friday evening with an old friend, Dr. Richard Allen, former member of the Departments of History at the University of Regina and McMaster University as well as MPP for Hamilton West from 1980 to 1995 and the Minister of Colleges and Universities in the Rae NDP Government, was “the icing on the cake” for me!

Ernie Epp

Communications Team

The Communications Team needs talented and enthusiastic volunteers for all functions. We meet every second month. For more information about the next meeting ask any member of the Team or email ralu.communications@gmail.com

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Editor Ian F. Dew

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