



# RALU news

March, 2013

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The Retirees' Association of Lakehead University (RALU) was formed in 2007 to give a unified voice to retirees, their spouses or partners; to provide social and creative interaction and debate; to be a forum for discussion of matters of common interest; to provide contact with similar associations, monitoring retiree activity; to pursue benefits and considerations from the University that match the best practices of other institutions.

There are eight meetings of the full membership per year; September (AGM) to April. A field trip is organized in the Fall.

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### **Communications Team:**

Kathy Crewdson, Ian Dew, Walter Momot, Brian Phillips, Margot Ponder, Beverley Stefureak

### **Executive Committee:**

**President:** Dave Kemp

**Vice President:** Clem Kent

**Corresponding Secretary:** Ian Dew

**Membership Secretary:** Beverley Stefureak

**Treasurer:** Bonny Wigmore

**Past President(ex officio):** Brian Phillips

## President's Message

By the time you read this spring will be here – officially at least – and despite winter seeming to be reluctant to go this year, no doubt better days are ahead.

Your executive and volunteers on other committees continue in their work for RALU, but we have reached the time of year when we should be looking for replacements for retiring committee members, so that the good work can continue. To do that we need to establish a new Nominations Committee to help search for new volunteers or to persuade existing committee members to continue to serve. The work of the Nominations Committee is not particularly time-consuming and it would be a way for recent retirees to become involved in RALU committee work. If you are interested and feel able to help, I would be very happy to hear from you.

The RALU Pensions and Benefits Committee continues to monitor the challenge to the University's amendments to our Pension Plan. As you will know the dispute went to the Financial Services Commission (FSCO) for resolution. Late last year, FSCO released an opinion that Lakehead University had acted contrary to parts of the Pension Benefits Act when it introduced the amendments. That being the case, members of the Plan should expect some level of recompense. While RALU has responded to FSCO in support of the decision, the University will undoubtedly prepare a

legal challenge to the finding and it may well be some time before members see any positive results reflected in their pension cheques. We will of course keep you informed of any developments in the situation.

In the meantime, I wish you the best for the coming spring and summer.

Dave Kemp

## Upcoming events ...

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**Tuesday April 9th, 7:00 p.m.**

**Craft Room. 55 Plus Centre on River Street, Thunder Bay.**

Detective Constable Diane MacLaurin, Crimes Against Seniors Unit, Thunder Bay Police Services: "What do you Know About Fraud? Learn about how seniors are being defrauded and how to protect yourself from being victimized." Detective Constable MacLaurin will speak on current fraud trends and arm you with tips to prevent you from becoming a victim.

**Monday, April 15th**

**Special RALU meeting, 7.00 pm  
Craft Room 55 Plus Centre on River Street, Thunder Bay.**

You are invited to learn about the potential of a powerful movement to provide free university level courses around the world to anyone with access to the web. Our objective is to provide free tutorials and otherwise mentor students taking these courses who live in our region.

Please send questions to Clement Kent  
[cfkent@tbaytel.net](mailto:cfkent@tbaytel.net)



## **Tough Old Birds Hiking in Wales and Ireland**

We saw many beautiful landscapes as we hiked the trails of Southern Wales and Dingle Peninsula, Ireland. We were five Tough Old Birds, retired women who like to hike, from Thunder Bay.

We stayed in the village of Llangwn, near Pembroke, Wales. The village has one street and one store, and an interesting cemetery. We observed the tide of the River Cleddau from the house of our host couple. The water level varied 8 meters! Close to midnight when we left the house to go to our B&B, the water covered the road between the house and the river. We had to walk on the ridge along the road. The river was salty. We ate lots of wild spinach that our hostess had gathered from the river, delicious!



We hiked on the coastal trails of Pembrokeshire. The first one started from St. Brides Haven and ended in Little Haven. On the second day, we saw the Deer Park. No deer in the park, but instead, white seal babies on a rocky beach. We peered at them down from the cliffs. Darker animals were adult seals basking in the sun. Next we hiked on the coast opposite Ramsay Island and the Bitches. The latter are rocks protruding from the sea. They are still causing shipwrecks. The trails were surrounded by

beautiful heather. We descended to Marlowe's Sands, a lovely beach, where we had our lunch. Climbing up the escarpment was troublesome for us as we now had our bellies full. On the last day, our host took us by his motorboat to a beautiful Sesile Oak forest. I have never seen oak branches so twisted. They looked artistic.



We left Pembroke for Rosslare, Ireland, on a ferry, and took several buses to reach Tralee. Here we joined a guided hiking group and during the week crisscrossed the Dingle Peninsula by foot. These walks were organized

by South West Walks Ireland. Our group had 16 people from Canada, USA, Holland, Italy, and Australia. The guide was a retired major of the Irish army.

Our luggage was transported in a van to our next B&B while we hiked. The hikes were around 10 kilometers each day. First day we hiked to Inch Beach, famous for a Hollywood movie *Ryan's Daughter* (1970). We admired the lush green color of the hills and meadows spotted with cows and sheep.



Uninvited, a herd of cows joined us for our walk for a while. We hiked around Dingle town overlooking the sea and some historical sites, such as Gallarus Oratorio from the 7th-9th century and the Riasc Monastic Settlement from the 6th century. We were impressed by their dry masonry, nothing to cement the stones to each other. We hiked through mud and over hills to the westernmost tip of the peninsula called Slea Head. The last few days we stayed near the shores of Brandon Bay and climbed the

slopes of Mount Brandon. Wild Wild flowers such as fuchsias, montbretias, ragworts, and gorses decorated our path. Ireland is truly beautiful – if only there was less rain...



After our week of hiking, the five of us rented a car and headed north along the west coast with no particular plans. We saw a horse ranch B&B in Lahinch, and stayed there for two nights. Following our hostess's suggestions, we went to see the Cliffs of Moher and the Burren stone desert. Both were spectacular. We also attended a Sunday afternoon dance at the Matchmaking Festival at Lisdoonvaarna. It was a nice change to wear dance shoes after two weeks of clumsy hiking boots.



On the way east towards Dublin, we stopped at Bunratty castle, built in 1400s. Lots to see in this outdoor museum area that featured the 19th century Irish houses from all over Ireland. I was intrigued that in a farm house the upstairs bedroom was reachable only by a ladder. In one old house, horses shared the kitchen with humans. At a Kildare B&B, we learned that *kil* in many place names does not mean 'to kill' but

'church'. Kildare means 'church oak.'

In Dublin we visited some sites, such as Trinity College, the Guinness museum, and the Kilmainham gaol museum. This old gaol was dedicated to the Easter revolution for independence in 1916. The British army crushed the rebellion and the leaders were brought to this jail and executed here. The main hall has been a scene for several Hollywood movies, one of them the thriller *Mackintosh Man* in which Paul Newman starred. Tragedy and glamour were thus united in the same hostile building.

Raija Warkentin

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### **The Buzz....about books**

For your reading pleasure - three novels about seniors who are on the move. All three feature main characters who decide to leave on unplanned adventures.

***The unlikely pilgrimage of Harold Fry*** by Rachel Joyce (longlisted for the 2012 Man Booker Prize)

***The 100 year old man who climbed out a window and disappeared*** by Jonas Jonasson

***Mrs. Queen takes the train*** by William Kuhn

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### **edX and the Online Course Movement**

The online course movement presents us with the opportunity to assist our university and students. The movement, with edX in the lead, provides free university level courses around the world to anyone with a computer and access to the web.

edX, presents excellent quality courses, in the physical sciences and mathematics, but increasingly wide-ranging. The movement began at MIT

and Harvard and now includes U of T and McGill in Canada. MIT and Harvard have joined, and each has contributed 40 million to their joint effort. MIT mounted a course in spring 2011 which drew 140,000 registrants worldwide, where they had expected a max of 10,000. These courses are not for credit, therefore we expect to assist rather than compete with LU.

We would like you to consider participating in this important movement. Our objective is to provide free tutorials and otherwise mentor students local taking these courses who live in our region. We expect that we thereby will assist in the distribution of online courses with the objective of improving academic standards for the whole university community.

RALU member Clem Kent reported briefly on this at the RALU general meeting in fall 2012, and suggested ways that RALU might make a meaningful contribution. Such an effort would require substantial information collection and advanced planning. Last spring, Keith Devlin, a well known popularizer of mathematics at Stanford, mounted a math course which drew 64,000 registrants. His experience indicates that grading in most of mathematics and physical

sciences, and all of the social sciences and humanities can only be accomplished by knowledgeable people, therefore there is a great need for tutorials. His website MOOCTalk is at <http://mooctalk.org/>. Clem has broached the idea of retiree tutorials to the MIT edX group and reports an "embarrassingly enthusiastic response". Whether you are interested in taking or tutoring courses, Clem will report complete details at a special RALU meeting at 7.00 pm, Monday April 15th, to be held at the Fifty Five Plus Centre on River Street, Thunder Bay.

Please send questions to Clem Kent, [cfkent@tbaytel.net](mailto:cfkent@tbaytel.net)

Clement Kent



## Thunderwolves

**Women's Volleyball:** Our hats are off to this team in an amazing effort this year. With new coach, Chris Green, who was named OUA Coach of the Year, the team made their first trip to the playoffs since 2006. Although they were defeated by fourth-ranked York Lions in the first round single elimination game, they should be proud of their efforts this year. We should continue to see

great improvements in this team in the next few years.

**Women's Basketball:** Coach Jon Kreiner's women's team finished 7-14 on the season. Their hopes for a playoff spot were dashed for the second year in a row in the final game of the regular season. They faced a very good McMaster team in the final outing and although they fought valiantly they came up short. This was starter Carolyn Fragale's final game as a Thunderwolf player and she unfortunately missed out on the opportunity to finish off her career in the playoffs.

**Men's Basketball:** The men's team made it to the CIS finals for the fourth time this year. For six veteran players it was their last opportunity for a shot at the national title.



For the past three seasons they were defeated in their opening game. Not this year!

Despite the fact that they were missing one of their top scorers and OUA West 1st all-star team player, Ryan Thomson, due to injury, they defeated the number two ranked team in the country, the Cape Breton Capers on Friday, and advanced to the semi-finals on Saturday to play the Ottawa Gee-Gees. The home town fans in Ottawa were hoping to have both their teams in the championship game on Sunday, however the gritty Wolves defeated the Gee-Gees 66-62 in a

closely fought game. The championship game on Sunday against the number one ranked team in the country, the Carleton Ravens, proved to be a rather lopsided win for the Ravens. They had won the national title eight times in the past and were out to achieve their ninth title and there was no stopping them. It was a disappointing loss for the Thunderwolves, however considering the fact that they were thought of as the underdogs in the tournament they should be proud of their achievement – winners of the silver medal.

Our team was composed of some excellent veterans who will be missed next year; Joseph Jones, named a tournament all star, Yooorie Salhia, an OUA West 1st all-star team member, and Greg Carter who was named the CIS defensive player of the year for the second straight season. He was also named the most valuable defensive player in the OUA West for the fourth time. Other departing players are Ben Johnson, Brendan King and Matt Schmidt. Next season will be an interesting one as they look to recruit players to fill these positions. Ryan Thomson, Joe Hart, a player from England, who was named to the OUA West rookie team, and Dwayne Harvey, who played well at the CIS nationals this year should be an integral part of next year's roster.

**Wrestling:** The national competition was held in London recently. Eight students from Lakehead attended and Dustin Helwig captured a silver medal, the sole medal for the Lakehead contenders. The women's team finished in seventh place while

the men's team finished in eleventh position.

### **Men's and Women's Skiing:**

Lakehead's skiers once again dominated in the OUA Nordic Skiing Championships. Scott Hill, Harry Seaton and Leif Lennie cruised to a 1-2-3 finish in the men's 10 km. Race, which resulted in a second straight championship crown. This was the seventh win for them in the last nine years. The women also captured the top spot for the ninth consecutive year. Alannah MacLean and Anna Lee finished 1-2. Hill and Lee were named OUA most valuable players, while Amanda Holdsworth was named Coach of the Year.

**Men's Hockey:** What can one say about the men's hockey team? After a tumultuous year, with the firing of coach Joel Scherban and the release of Thomas Frazee, one of the top scorers, fans were left wondering what was going on behind the scenes. For whatever reason the team ended up with an up and down season for the most part. Their inconsistency and lack of discipline on several occasions did not help the situation. However, they ended up in the playoffs and fans were expecting a solid effort on the part of the players. Unfortunately they lost their first game against the Waterloo Warriors in Waterloo. Matt Caria, our top scorer, was suspended for two games (a repeat of last year), and we were also missing Mike Quesnele, one of our top defensemen, due to injury. When the Wolves returned home, the fans came out to cheer them on, as a defeat would mean the end of the hockey season. Behind by three goals the Wolves skated hard, especially in the third period, outshooting the Warriors, but

their goalie stood tall, and once again we were out of the playoffs in the first round. Waterloo also defeated us in the first round two years ago.

The challenge now will be recruiting for next season, as we are losing several senior players due to graduation, and we are not sure whether Mike Busniuk, the temporary coach, will be given the coach's job as a permanent position. Hopefully the decisions that are made during the summer months will result in a winning team on the ice next season!

Margot Ponder

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## Just for Fun

In a Restaurant window:

"Don't stand there and be hungry,  
Come on in and get fed up."

In a Veterinarian's waiting room:

"Be back in 5 minutes. Sit! Stay!"

At a Propane Filling Station,

"Thank heaven for little grills."

On a Plumber's truck:

"We repair what your husband  
fixed."

Pizza Shop Slogan:

"7 days without pizza makes one  
weak."

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## Texas is Big, but ....

Tweaking the tail of a lion is generally an inadvisable sport, but can be fun in the right circumstances. The version of the game suggested here is "How to piss off a Texan, if you dare". Bearing in mind that Texans, as most residents of the southern States, have an inclination to be a walking arsenal of both visible and hidden weaponry, this game could be a little tricky. But, if one feels in the mood to drive around the level crossing gates just before the train comes, let us proceed.

It is a well known fact that everything is bigger in Texas. There is certainly some basis for the claim, King Ranch (founded in 1853) alone being 1,289 sq miles (3.340 sq km) in area. Texas itself is big. Driving the I10 from El Paso to San Antonio through the raw and rugged scenery of west Texas, one truly begins to wonder whether plate tectonic forces are stretching the intervening distance more rapidly than one is driving. It has to be the longest 551 miles (887km) in the Southwest.

I recall buying a T-shirt from the bookstore in the University of Texas at Austin, on which a map of the the State extended from below the belt to nipple level. North of this large abdominal and thoracic region was a thin sliver of land labelled 'Oklahoma'. Beyond, reaching under the chin, lay the edge of an uncharted, unknown land. This 'mental map' of Texas well summarizes the relative importance of Texas in the eyes of Texans.

Did you realize that Texas won the Gulf War in 1991? It is true that some very large armed forces bases are scattered across the Texas plains, and while on sabbatical leave in Austin, the radio and TV reported daily on the action of the 'boys' from this base or that base. There was nary a mention of any other US forces involved, let alone any mention that allied troops from other nations were involved. So, at the end of the war, one was left with the indelible impression that Texas, singlehandedly, was the victor. It would probably be ill advised to contest this significant historical fact.

Yes, in many respects it is true that Texas is 'big', but such a claim is arguably an exaggerated one. It is time to get down to 'brass tacks' (a phrase claimed by some to have been coined in Texas in about the 1860's).

The area of Texas is 268,804 square miles (696,200 sq km). Compared with, say, California at 163,700 sq miles (424,000 km<sup>2</sup>) or Montana at 147,042 sq miles (380,838 km<sup>2</sup>), Texas can indeed claim to be the largest of the 48 contiguous States, similar in size to Burma.

Way up in Canada, reached by following the I35 north from San Antonio, through Austin, and passing Dallas and Fort Worth, into the 'terra incognita' beyond the collar of the T-shirt, there are some 'big' chunks of land called Provinces and Territories, largely beyond the ken of most Texans.

British Columbia, that small, mountainous coastal province, is known for its Similkameen valley wines and for Vancouverites who regularly tote both umbrellas and swimwear in anticipation of changing weather. British Columbia encloses 944,735 sq km (364,764 sq mi) and is thus 1.357 times the area of Texas.

Ontario, believed by most Torontonians to peter out somewhere north of North Bay, and who are wholly unable to digest the fact that Thunder Bay lies south of the 49th parallel, is 1,076,395 sq km. (415, 598 sq mi ) in area, including 250,000 lakes and about one-third of the world's surface fresh water. Ontario is 1.546 times the size of Texas.

The NW Territories, far flung from the ecumene, that narrow strip within 100 miles of the US border, in which most Canadians huddle, is 1,346,106 sq km (519,734 sq mi) in area and 1.933 times the size of Texas, almost double its area.

Quebec, where Québécois speak a 'lingua Franca' barely understood by the French, yearns to cut loose its moorings and independently drift off into the Atlantic Ocean, leaving behind all Anglophiles as castaways on the newly created beaches. 'La Belle Provence' is 1,542,056 sq km (595,391 sq mi) in area and is 2.2 times the size of Texas.

Canada's Nunavut Territory is beyond the pale to most urban Canadians, let alone Texans, and is generally perceived to be vast, sparsely populated but rich in mineral potential. Nunavut is 2,093,190 sq. km (808,185 sq. mi) in area and 3 times the size of Texas.

Alaska, USA, at 663,267 sq mi (1,717,854 sq km), is smaller than Nunavut but a little larger than Quebec, and is 2.47 times the size of Texas.

Canada has a total area of 3,855,000 sq mi (9,985,000) and the US a total area of 3,794,000 sq mi (9,827,000 sq km). So, despite the way in which the respective governments carefully chosen map projections that portray the relative size of Canada (Lambert Conformal Conic) and the US (Albers Equal Area), Canada is the larger of the two.

In summary, 5 of the major administrative divisions of Canada are larger than Texas, and 8 are smaller. Only 1 major US administrative division is larger than Texas and 48 are smaller.

Having memorized and inwardly digested these figures, you are now armed with an arsenal of statistical evidence to challenge the next Texan you may happen to meet, assuming that you can persuade yourself that the power of the word is a worthy match for a loaded six-gun or worse.

So, Sally forth thou brave Canadians and spread the word. Texas is 'big' but we can legitimately claim to be bigger! Actually, come to think of it, Texas is quite 'titchy', but one might be well advised not to vocalize that in the presence of Texans.

Brian Phillips  
(Safely in CA, a long way from Texas.)

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### **One for the Older Golfer**

Arthur is 90 years old. He's played golf every day since his retirement 25 years ago. One day he arrives home looking downcast.

"That's it," he tells his wife. "I'm giving up golf. My eyesight has got so bad. Once I've hit the ball, I can't see where it went."

His wife sympathizes. As they sit down, she has a suggestion: "Why don't you take my brother with you, and give it one more try."

"That's no good," sighs Arthur. "Your brother is a hundred and three. He can't help."

"He may be a hundred and three," says the wife, "but his eyesight is perfect."

So the next day, Arthur heads off to the golf course with his brother-in-law. He tees up, takes an almighty swing, and squints down the fairway. He turns to the brother-in-law. "Did you see the ball?"

"Of course I did!", says the brother-in-law. "I have perfect eyesight."

"Where did it go?" asks Arthur.

"Can't remember."

### SENIORS WORD SEARCH

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| SENIOR     | BIFOCALS      | WALKING          |
| PERKS      | CREAKY JOINTS | SURFING THE NET  |
| RETIREMENT | NAPPING       | BRIDGE           |
| LEISURE    | GARDENING     | HEARING AID      |
| CHALLENGE  | READING       | MAGNIFYING GLASS |
| PENSION    | SLEEPING IN   | ARTHRITIS        |
| BENEFITS   | BINGO         | FITNESS          |
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Select this link and scroll down to the section on hotels:

<http://www.lakeheadu.ca/alumni/article/benefits-of-being-a-lakehead-alumni-116.asp>

Thanks to Meghan Hanbury, Advancement Officer – Annual Giving, 807-343-8910  
Fax: 807-343-8999 Email: [mhanbury@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:mhanbury@lakeheadu.ca)

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

2012 was another good year. Important issues which RALU has been involved should be coming to a resolution in short order, particularly academic freedom and the professional pension plan.

Membership is growing in number and diversity. This is the first year we have produced four numbers and quality of design and content is improving — thanks to new members, Margot and Kathy. Take a bow.

Help us with our upcoming membership drive: feel free to call up folks you think might eligible to join. We are still light in sessional and support staff. Take time to assist your colleagues at RALU to represent retirees. There's a lot of reason for optimism and excitement... Help us achieve our potential in looking after your interests. Make a donation. Write us a letter giving us a piece of your mind... we'll publish it.

If your passion is learning and teaching, come out to the April 15<sup>th</sup> meeting on the online course movement presented by our founding member and teacher, Clement (Clem) Kent. Whether you want to take a course or give one, expect to receive first hand information. For those interested in the health or our university community how you can help improve academic standards and help students really excel.

Please decide how you can help and jump right in. The Communications Team meets bimonthly.

Finally, as this is the last issue of this year, all of all the regular contributors on the Communications Committee, would like to thank the Thunderwolves. Thanks to all our athletes, for carrying the torch of amateur sport and for giving us all something real to get excited about. THANK YOU!

Ian Dew

**Benefits of Membership in RALU**

\*Social support. Be informed and active in a group of like minded people who share the same interests and background.

\*Economic fairness. RALU Pensions and Benefits Committee represent retirees and aims to be a consultancy for all members.

Membership is \$10 annually or \$25 per individual per three years, with equal status of membership for retirees, spouses and partners. Annual membership is from Sept 1<sup>st</sup> to Aug 31<sup>st</sup>. You are encouraged to support the association by joining us, even if you live far from Northwestern Ontario. Complete the membership form and return with a money order or cheque made out to the Retirees' Association of Lakehead University to Membership Secretary, 2717 Government Road, Thunder Bay, ON P7G 1V4. For further information please contact RALU President David Kemp, [panddkemp@shaw.ca](mailto:panddkemp@shaw.ca) Please note that there is a new area for expertise, contribution. Tell us how you want to assist RALU, for example, by contributing to the newsletter, giving us a presentation on your expertise, and so on. The Association is inclusive and its membership is open to retirees of colleges and universities.

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**RETIRES' ASSOCIATION OF LAKEHEAD / ASSOCIATION DES RETRAITÉS DE LA LAKEHEAD**

**Membership Form – Sept 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 to Aug. 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016**

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