

RALU News



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CURAC/ARUCC CONFERENCE & AGM 2012 **Victoria, B.C.**

The 2012 Conference/AGM will be hosted in part by the UVIC Retirees Association. As the member of CURAC representing all retirees' interests, your association, RALU, plans better communication to coincide with the conference. This year we plan a more interactive approach to communicating the content of the presentations to members. The conference will be held at the University of Victoria, April 18-20, 2012. Complete information is in the latest CURAC newsletter.

http://www.curac.ca/?page_id=445

Security of Information.

This is a busy time of year for bank and other financial transactions and we all need to be vigilant as the following from member Wim Baarschers reminds us.

Subject line: HR at LU: You may send a warning NOT to send confidential information by e-mail. Since LU wants to save money (a laudable goal) and doesn't want to pay the commission charge on credit card payments of the health insurance premium, the request (command?) to have us all switch to automatic debit is not unreasonable. What is rather surprising is that HR is offering, "for our convenience" to allow us to scan the information (which includes bank account details) and send it by e-mail. Clearly, they have no clue about internet security and the danger of sending info like bank account numbers in unencrypted e-mail. After all, regular e-mail is similar to a picture postcard which can be read by the numerous hackers "out there" who are on the lookout for such gems. See, for example:

<http://luxsci.com/blog/the-case-for-email-security.html>

**LU Professional Pension Plan News –
Notes on the Presentation and Board
Meeting Dec 2, 2011.**

Most of the pension news from the Pension Board meeting on December 2nd was pretty gloomy. The Fund had lost 2½% in the first three quarters of the year and it hadn't picked up very much in October and November. There was no news from the Financial Services Commission of Ontario regarding the possible voiding of Amendment 2000/1. The one bright note was that Proteus, the Investment Advisor to the Board, is opening up the Board's website to all members of the Pension Plan. Simply go to either of the following two websites and type in the appropriate username and password.

Website #1

Username Password

<http://secure.proteusperformance.com/members/>

Website #2

<http://secure.proteusperformance.com/committee/> lakehead northwestern

Username/password will follow in a separate email.

Jim Stafford

**LU Professional Pension Plan News –
Notes on the Special Meeting of RALU. Dec
9, 2011.**

Fifteen members attended a meeting at the 55+ Centre on River Street to review progress with our vexatious pension issues.

David Kemp introduced our attempt to deal with amendments made to the Plan in 2000, specifically our submission to the Financial Services Commission of Ontario (FSCO) to report. He asked the people most concerned with drafting the submission, Jim Stafford and Clement Kent to detail the history of the situation surrounding the 2000 Amendments. He noted that FSCO invited RALU to submit in response to LU's recent submission expressed by the Board's lawyers, (Ogilvy-Renault submission of May 20, 2011).

The main points of the process of submission were summarized. It was noted that it was the work of many people, especially the members of the Pension and Benefits Committee. The request for help in submission

is built around the framework of fairness: that the number of administrators has swelled while faculty salaries have increased 50% since 2000. Within the letter is a challenge to the legal argument the Ogilvy-Renault submission was based.

There was a history of the Board's behaviour in achieving their ends; e.g., the timing of the effort to secure passage of the extension of the payback period. The letter of July 30th by LUFA President Glenna Knutson, which so far from an invitation to discuss, virtually orders compliance on the part of "Dear Colleagues".

The opinion was voiced and accepted by the meeting that the association should work toward and anticipate being better prepared in terms of legal support. It was again suggested we explore having access to our fund to support legal expenses and administrative costs, in the same way that LU has evidently done. It was noted that the question had been posed by Abdul Mamoojee at the September Board Meeting and rejected.

There was discussion of posting information and documents for members on the website. <http://ralu.la> It was noted that there may be ethical as well as legal considerations and that we should not behave in a damaging or untoward manner, which is in line with RALU's policy of taking the high road, in an effort to build a relationship with the university. Dave reported that the FSCO is known to take its time in deliberation, so the best course immediately is to await developments. It was agreed that the FSCO would be contacted for their approval of any such posting.

The fact of poor retiree attendance at the Friday meeting was noted. It hoped that the website offered by LU will apprise us of future meetings and good source of information, such as, minutes and agenda, so that more members can participate actively and knowledgeably in the process of understanding our pensions.

Dr. Satinder was again recognized for his contribution for providing a strong voice for pensioner rights. Many questions remain and it is worth pointing out the obvious: that time is of the essence because of the advancing age and fragile health of many of the older retirees.

This meeting mentioned but did not deal

with other major issues not touched in our conversation with FSCO, like the question of possible conflict of interest among Board members; questionable tactics of the Board; Later amendments (2007). The question of use of our funds for administration purposes has not been discussed so far.

Ian Dew

Thunderwolves



Lakehead University

Thunderwolves

Lakehead Thunderwolves Basketball

The men's basketball team ranked number 3 nationally at the mid-season break, their highest mid-season ranking ever! They are tied with Laurier for first place in the OUA. They are an exciting team to watch! The women's team is currently tied for 4th place in the OUA.

Lakehead Thunderwolves Hockey

The Thunderwolves are hosting the Carleton Ravens for the RBC Christmas Challenge at the Fort William Gardens on Friday, December 29th and Saturday, December 30th at 7:30 each evening. The last time the Ravens came to town in 2008, a power outage at the end of the second intermission ended up with the score tied at two apiece and a decision to have a shoot-out at the beginning of Saturday's game to decide the winner. Lakehead won to give them the victory but then went on to lose the official Saturday night game by a score of 3-2, so it should be an exciting series! The Wolves have been impressive so far this season. After losing two games to McGill in October, they have won 13 of 14 games in the

OUA and 15 of 16 for regular and non-conference games.

In early December the team was missing several players due to injuries, including their then top OUA scorer, Matt Caria. Hopefully they will all be back for the Christmas Challenge! We also have a new recruit, Thomas Frazee, who will be joining the team. He has played in the ECHL and attended the Washington Capitals training camp in September.

The second half of the season should be exciting as the Wolves play two strong contenders – Western and Waterloo. The Western games are usually sell-outs at the Gardens! Come out and support your Thunderwolves!

Margot Ponder

Events

December 29 Friday and 30 Saturday at 7:30 pm. Hockey Wolves entertain Carleton Ravens at the Fort William Gardens.

January 2 Monday. Cake and Too. Prince Arthur Hotel. Same format as previous years: members pay for supper. Symposium 6.30 pm, Supper 7.00 Impromptu Entertainment. RSVP to Ian ian@nextlib.com or Tony Scarcello General Manager, Prince Arthur Waterfront Hotel and Suites, tony@princearthurwaterfront.com 807-346-5123

January 21 Saturday. Consortium Aurora Borealis. An evening of music with Jeremy Bell <http://consortiumauroraborealis.org/> 349 Waverley Street, St. Paul's Church 8 pm. Admission for seniors \$10 and students, adults \$15

January 24 Tuesday. RALU Regular meeting. and program featuring Dr. Mary Lou Kelley speaking about health in aging. More details after the break. 55 Plus Centre Meeting Room on River Street 7 p.m.

Giant Digital Photography Workshops at Sleeping Giant, Kakabeka Falls and Pigeon River provincial parks! Early bird pricing now Available. Buy any 3 or more workshops per person and get a camera accessory as a free gift!

Barbara A. Rees
Natural Heritage Education/Marketing Specialist
Ontario Parks - Northwest Zone
435 S. James Street, Suite 221D
Thunder Bay, ON P7E 6S8
T: 807-475-1482
F: 807-475-1499
barb.rees@ontario.ca
www.OntarioParks.com

Thunder Bay International Fine Arts Association. Watch for notices. The Association invites all artists and would be artists to the regular monthly meeting. For more information write: Thunder Bay International Fine Arts Association, 97 Algoma Street South, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada, P7B 3B7. <http://sites.google.com/site/tbifaa/>

CURAC/ARUCC CONFERENCE & AGM 2012 Victoria, B.C.

The 2012 Conference/AGM will be hosted in part by the UVIC Retirees Association.

Look for a more interactive approach to communicating the content of the presentations to members.

The conference will be held at the University of Victoria, April 18-20, 2012.
<http://www.curac.ca>

Travellin' goes to Perth in Oz

In 1986, camping in Europe, we met two Australian couples who also were on a six-month camper tour. Our first encounter was in Olympia, Greece in late October. We moved on to Patras, and there right behind us were our new-found Aussie acquaintances. All of us were busy but we managed a few minutes of chat passing on the way to the showers and the like. Soon we were off to Italy – first stop, Pompeii. And there they were, two campsites over! As we set up camp in Rome, we were

astonished to find the very same Australians waving at us from across the field. All told though, we with our three children and they two couples travelling together, through four campsites none had time to learn much about each other. We did, however, exchange addresses and for 20 plus years we continued to build a friendship by touching base annually at Christmas. There was always the hope that we would meet again, somewhere in the world. In 2003 Jim and Judy from that Australian foursome did an Arctic tour which included a four-day orientation in Ottawa. Matt and I were living in Toronto then, and met them in Ottawa for a mini reunion. We marvelled at the time how it could be that what felt like an old and solid friendship could have evolved out of such brief face-to-face contact more than twenty years ago.

And so it was that, after at least ten years of their urging a visit to their home in Perth Australia, this September we took to the skies for the long "hop" Vancouver to Sydney (you KNOW that's 15 hours non-stop over water, said a friend). We had a fairly quick connection from Sydney to Perth via Virgin Australia and arrived in Perth to a lovely spring afternoon. Our first day, said our considerate friends, would be easy touring in Perth followed by a good night's sleep to take the bite out of the jetlag. Early during the day of touring Perth, I noticed a sidewalk sandwich board sign outside a grocery store advertising a sale on bananas – "only \$11.00 a kilo". I had an odd time/place-warp experience, doing a quick mental review of where we were and confirming that, no, the currency wasn't Mexican pesos, and that, yes, this was Australia with a dollar that currently was trading at five cents more than ours. To my shocked query, our hosts responded that we were lucky to have come when we did – we might be served a banana or two – because two weeks earlier bananas had been selling at \$18.00 a kilo. This banana-crisis was due to a continent/country, usually self sufficient in its banana supply, suddenly facing an extreme shortage due to the floods of Queensland. We shared bananas while we were there! Jim and Judy had long indicated that, when we came, we should aim to be there to experience the incredible wildflowers of Australia which tend to be at their proudest in the first month

of spring, September. To the north of Perth, the state shifts from arid topography into full-blown desert. It is throughout that area that the spring wildflowers are at their most abundant. This visit, we were unable to go that direction so, instead heading south and east, we relied on Judy's keen gardener's eye to locate patches of wildflowers off the roadside or the teeniest little orchid peeking out from the wild brush at the side of walkways. We saw blankets of homogenous color; patches of wildly undulating waves of many shades and isolated blooms poking out here and there everywhere we went. Spider orchids, donkey orchids, banksia, black kangaroo paw, red and green kangaroo paw, many-coloured pea flowers, golden wattle, everlastings and bottle brush, to name a very few of the near 1500 varieties which are native to the State.



Kangaroo Paw blossom

Western Australia's reputation as a canvas of wildflower glory in the early spring is well-deserved. We hope to return to see them again, this time in their preferred region north of the capital.

Day two began our motor trip, with our first three overnights planned for a family midway cottage near Yallingup. Judy's brother chose the location well and designed the cottage and its guesthouse to complement nature, rural simplicity and peace. It was a nice addendum to the day-one opportunity to get our inner clocks reset.

Side trips from our idyllic getaway took us first

along the coastline of the Indian Ocean, then through the eucalypt forests and the Margaret River valley. Along the way, we saw the mouth of the Margaret River at Prevelly and visited a small Greek Orthodox church built and donated by the people of Crete in gratitude for the help given to them by the Western Australian troops during the German occupation of Crete in WWII. Standing high in the village and watching the surf of the Indian Ocean pounding the shoreline -- wave after wave of deep turquoise, cobalt and ink blue, each crisply crested with brilliant white, rolling onto pristine sand -- was breathtaking and absolutely unforgettable.



Indian Ocean from Prevelly

That evening, we were dismayed to learn from the "telly" that at exactly the time we were standing there, mesmerized by the endless power of the sea, a young man surfing at a beach two kilometres north of us was attacked and killed by a great white shark. It happens about twice a year, Judy said. Her own son is a frequent scuba diver around Rottnest Island just north of Perth and wears shark repellent gadgets. However, since our return she's indicated that three more surfers/divers have lost their lives off that south-western coast this spring.

The second spectacular visit was to Canal Rocks, a natural phenomenon wherein rock formations jutting into the Indian Ocean have been breached by the force of the breakers to create a natural canal. This was the first of many moments where Jim and Judy displayed

exceptional patience while their Canadian friends simply stood and stared, taking photo after photo of a wild power and majesty, furling in the deepest shades of ocean blue which (we wondered) might be peculiar to the southern, cooler ocean waters.



Canal Rocks

The Margaret River region is, of course, world famous for its wine and where there isn't eucalypt forest there are vineyards. The wineries are not modest and the wine is not cheap. All over the country we were amazed to find that Australian wines selling in Canada for under CAN\$15 a bottle were tagged at AUS\$20 and up in the outlets there. It's not a subject that endears one to a retailer, who explains grumpily that we may pay less for their imports but the high taxes on their wines and liquor subsidize their better medical care! (To be continued in the next newsletter) Bev Stefureak

Benefits. A Case Study in Health and a Happy Ending. Thunder Bay's Hand and Upper Limb Clinic (HULC) Teaches an Old Dog Some New Tricks

I find myself keyboarding these days about as much as I did before retirement in connection with my business and my avocation (so far) as a writer. After ten further years dogged by pain in my right shoulder and arm, I find that I am on the mend. The good news is that I finally have found a practitioner (actually

a whole room full of them) who have set me on the road to health insofar as my skeleton is concerned. This positive turn of events is due to a resource to which everyone in the city of Thunder Bay and region has access: the Hand and Upper Limb Clinic, HULC for short. I reached them by way of referral from my doctor and a specialist to the Clinic. This amazing little factory is to be found on Villa Street, just behind what used to be the Cumberland Cinema. After struggling with pains in the shoulder and arm throughout my career and latterly back, culminating with my leaving LU to take early retirement, I find myself suddenly pain free.

It may be worth giving a little history. I have suffered with a shoulder injury at a summer job as a student working for Westinghouse way back when. Six of us were lifting a reel and I was slow letting go while dropping it, resulting in a dislocated shoulder. Thereafter throughout my life shoulder pain and weakness interfered with racquet sports and made me an acquaintance of pain. A career in the library systems business meant keyboarding and writing more of the same. A crash while skiing in April of this year at low speed brought the situation to crisis. It was a perfect three point landing on my camera, nose and shoulder, which caused intense pain and brought the ski season to a close. Thereafter I did what I always do: nothing. I waited for it to heal. Meanwhile it interfered with all activity, causing pain whenever I tried to canoe or lift an object. By the end of summer it dawned finally that I would have to go to the doctor. After some tests the problems found by Xray and MRI within my arm and shoulder are summed up in the diagnosis "tendinopathy", and the prescription a referral to HULC. Without being dramatic it has changed my life. A gentle exercise regime has the arm improving and me finding exercise like skiing to be energizing, exhilarating, and completely pleasurable. So far I have not ventured from the squirrel track at Waverley Park. I have my sights on the 48 K Loop at Sibley this year. More wishful thinking? Skiing is a new and useful addiction. It tunes balance as well as muscles and pumps endorphin into the system.

I attended only two visits which were made fun and conducted mostly in a common

room, in a setting with an astounding, panoramic view of the harbour and the Sleeping Giant beyond. Given the amazing benefit, the cost was really tiny at two visits of an hour or so for \$100 total. Staff are efficient and relentlessly cheerful. Expect good things.



Impromptu Ski Course, Looking down Red River Road with the Magnus Theatre – Dr. Penny S. Petrone Centre on the right

Comes the reckoning. The Green Shield Plan responded thus to my filing of the claim:

IAN,
 Please be advised that your statement was issued on November 7, 2011.
 If there is any claim payment to be paid, the amount will be deposited in your bank account on the next business day.

Green Shield Canada

My next bank statement showed a payment of \$16.00. Is this a mistake? Do I want to phone

somebody and find out? The good news is that I am in the last weeks of an “early retirement” from LU Library, so am in the market for a medical plan. An avid fan of the Marx Brothers, my GS medical plan reminds me Chico in the classic *Night at the Opera*. Under Chico’s plan, when you lose a leg, for instance, Chico will come help you find it. Finding irony and humour in things is a helpful way to survive the slings and arrows. It is ironic that LU helped create the problem in the first place. Below is my “work station” in January 2001, after the run up to implement the Voyageur system, which required many hundreds of hours intense work. The photo shows my attempts to modify it so as make it ergonomic and to avoid pain. This is not the one that caused problems: that was the training setup, which was not modified and which I was required to endure. The desks and chairs in the “Training Room” were tiny. We were held in the same position for long periods and I was not allowed to absent myself. After a couple of days I took the second six week time off, paid for by WSIB.



Physical pain, coupled with stress, poor conditions, and long hours added up to backache and tendonitis, which was diagnosed before I left there. I was given the option of taking LTD but elected to fight through. By the time I took early retirement; was in a confused state with bouts of severe pain which took a couple of years to dispel.

The really good news is that I don’t have back ache or any pain any longer that healthy exercise will not cure. In the HULC we have access to care that really works. Learn

how breathing and posture can improve health.

A Message from the COM TEAM

It is the holiday season and time to relax and “recreate”. It is time to consider: to celebrate, to look back and to look forward.

Celebrate the accomplishment of member Ruth Kajander, who brought glory with award of the honour, Member of the Order of Canada, we say Thank you and three cheers!! The order includes the highest awards given to civilians in our country, which speaks volumes for itself. In September our President, David Kemp, wrote a letter on our behalf thanking her and noting that “Most of our members have lived here for several years and noted your contributions to the local community and university. They see your award as richly deserved and wish to show their appreciation through this letter and to thank you for all you have done over the years.” Three cheers!

The citation reads:

**Ruth E. Kajander, C.M.
Thunder Bay, Ontario
Member of the Order of Canada**

For her dedicated service to mental health care in northwestern Ontario.

We bask in the reflected glow of your award. Another RALU member hiding their light under a bushel... Thank you and Bravo Dr. Kajander!

Communication is a therapeutic exercise in community building. Come join the COM Team in the new year. RALU is in its fourth year and can look back to some accomplishments and with united action, to finally having an

impact in our conditions. We hope to grow and fulfil the promise to provide a strong community for retirees. This newsletter provides a forum for members to speak and exercise their right and duty to speak out.

We need your help to find active, creative people who can carry our organization and help us represent you. Members are asked to find and recruit people who are eligible. We are under-represented in staff, sessional lecturers, and administrators. Help us to find courageous people who can make our organization a true community.

COM Team offers a sincere apology to those members who have no interest in the issues related to pensions. Lucky you! We have been consumed by the issues of health and pensions, which has been hard work and stressful for members involved. This has been to the exclusion of many things we should be doing, however, we believe our growing success will strengthen the organization and benefit the whole community. Others can feel free to write the C-J, the president, your MPP, or whoever you think can help fix the “fine mess” our pension and health insurance system and LU in particular have got themselves into this time.

As you can see, despite the problems there’s a lot of reason for celebration and excitement... so stay tuned! And Happy Holidays and when the time comes HAPPY NEW YEAR!! 2012 will be the best yet!

In the meantime. Let’s Party! Come to the Prince Arthur January 2nd for a night of conversation and good food: a night away from the children.

RETIREEES' ASSOCIATION OF LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY
Annual Membership Form – Sept 1st 2011 to Aug. 31st, 2014

First Name _____

Surname _____

Email address _____

Postal address _____

Postal code _____ **Tel. #** (_____)

Expertise, contribution

----- Cut here -----

Office use only

Paid _____ as Cash _____ or Cheque _____ _____/_____/_____	Date dd/mm/yy
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Membership in RALU

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 1st to Aug 31st. 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 Secretary, #3, 400 Red River Road, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 1B3. If you have any questions, please contact RALU President David Kemp, 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 all retirees of the university.

RALU News



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