



## NEWSLETTER / BULLETIN

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### 2008 CONFERENCE AND AGM

#### MONTREAL MAY 21-3

Copies of this rather abbreviated issue of the Newsletter/Bulletin will be distributed at the annual conference and AGM in Montreal. Rather than include conference program and other information in this issue we have decided to bring out a summer issue which will include a retrospective view of the conference proceedings and material from the AGM.

Back issues of the Newsletter/Bulletin in PDF format are always available for downloading on the CURAC website at

<http://www.curac.ca>

#### CONGRÈS 2008 ET ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE ANNUELLE, DU 21 AU 23 MAI À MONTRÉAL

Des exemplaires de ce bulletin seront remis aux congressistes à Montréal.

Au lieu d'inclure dans ce numéro le programme du congrès et d'autres informations pertinentes, nous avons plutôt choisi de publier l'été prochain un numéro qui présentera

une partie des actes du congrès et des nouvelles de l'assemblée générale annuelle. Les numéros antérieurs du Bulletin peuvent toujours être téléchargés en format PDF sur le site Web de CURAC, à l'adresse <http://www.curac.ca>

**College and University Retiree Associations of Canada**  
**Associations de retraités des universités et collèges du Canada**

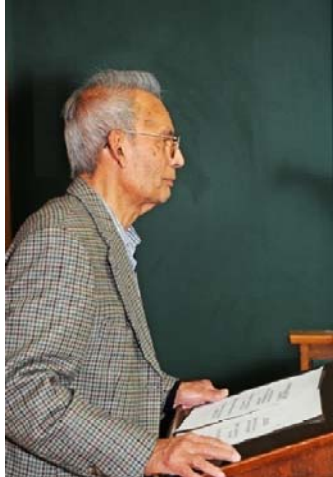
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## Le mot du président

English follows on page 3



Bien de l'eau a coulé sous *Le Pont Mirabeau* et bien des jours sont passés depuis la publication du numéro d'automne de notre Bulletin.

Pendant ce temps, nous avons subi un long et dur hiver. Contrairement à ce que prétend Eliot dans *Waste Land*, la neige ne nous a jamais « tenu au chaud » dans les Maritimes, et encore moins dans cette période d'augmentation des coûts du chauffage des maisons. Alors que les gelées tardives retardent l'arrivée du printemps, les aînés cèdent à l'invitation au voyage dans les pays éloignés de Baudelaire où le soleil se réveille dans l'éclosion des roses et fait disparaître les préoccupations et les soucis de l'hiver.

Cet hiver, nous avons connu l'augmentation des prix et observé la recherche du fric. Nous discuterons de fric et de régimes de retraite plus tard, car pour l'instant, il nous faut revenir sur les choses du passé. Toutefois, il y a des dangers à se souvenir et à raconter. Nous avons tendance à nous souvenir seulement de ce qui fait notre affaire, et les choses déplaisantes appartiennent au royaume des oubliés.

Ces réserves faites, je reviens sur l'année 2007-2008 de CURAC/ARUCC. Nous avons connu de bonnes et de moins bonnes choses. La structure d'organisation de CURAC/ARUCC a été renforcée, et quelques nouveaux membres se sont joints à l'organisation. Le petit nombre de nouveaux membres est amplement compensé par l'importance que revêtent les nouvelles recrues. Je fournirai des détails dans le rapport que je soumettrai à l'assemblée générale annuelle : il n'y a donc pas lieu de les reprendre ici. Toutefois, il faut examiner nos échecs, car les échecs ont tendance à se perdre dans la mémoire du temps.

La communication est la *raison d'être* de notre organisme. Le rendement du Comité des communications a été tel que tous les autres comités de CURAC/ARUCC veulent s'en inspirer. Pourtant, même nos réussites sont minces, selon nos membres. Je me suis cassé la tête (ou ce qu'il en reste après avoir perdu tous ces neurones) pour découvrir comment faire comprendre à nos membres de la base que CURAC/ARUCC a besoin de leur implication active non seulement pour connaître des succès, mais même pour survivre. J'attends de recevoir vos commentaires et suggestions.

Une enquête de Statistiques Canada récemment publiée a confirmé nos soupçons : le revenu réel de la classe moyenne au Canada est resté stable depuis vingt-cinq ans, même si la taille de

l'économie a doublé au pays pendant ce temps. Par ailleurs, le coût de l'énergie et des denrées de base (p.ex. le pain, le riz et le lait), et le montant des taxes foncières et des autres taxes ont crû rapidement. En conséquence, les régimes de retraite non indexés ou faiblement indexés sont devenus des autoroutes vers la pauvreté. Pour corriger le tir, nous avons besoin de tous les agents bienveillants, y compris les administrations universitaires, qui sont elles-mêmes aux prises avec le faible rendement des marchés et le plafonnement justifié des frais de scolarité.

J'aimerais terminer sur une note plus réjouissante. Le comité local d'organisation du congrès de Montréal, coprésidé par Howard Fink et Roch Meynard, est à mettre la dernière main au premier congrès intégralement bilingue de CURAC/ARUCC. Je voudrais, en votre nom à tous, remercier ce comité de son excellent travail. Les préparatifs ont pris plus de temps que n'en prend la période de gestation des humains, avec l'excitation, la crainte et les appréhensions qui les accompagnent. Mais nous sommes maintenant prêts à donner naissance dans la joie et la créativité. Je vous invite tous à faire acte de présence.

–Tarun Ghose

## President's Message

Much water has flown beneath *Le Pont Mirabeau* and many a day has gone by after the publication of last year's Fall issue of this Newsletter.

In the interim, we struggled through a very long and bitter winter. Unlike Eliot's *Waste Land*, snow never "kept us warm" in the Maritimes and less so in these days of escalating home-heating oil prices. So, when the lingering frost slows down the approaching spring, seniors succumb to invitations to voyages to far-off Baudelaire lands where the sun wakes up roses and makes winter's cares and worries vanish.

Unfortunately, this winter rising prices and matters of filthy *lucre* have intervened. We will discuss *lucre* and pensions later because this is the time to give an account of things past. However, remembering and recounting might be tricky. We tend to remember only what we want to remember and the unpleasant is banished to the land of memory lost.

With the above caveat, let me briefly review CURAC's 2007-08 year. There have been successes and there have been failures. CURAC's organizational structure has been strengthened and a few new members have joined the organization. Arguably, the paucity in the number of new members is offset by the importance of the new recruits. The details will be in my report to be submitted at the Annual General Meeting and do not need repeating here. However, our failures need a closer scrutiny because failures tend to become memory lost.

Communication is the *raison d'être* of this organization. And indeed our Communication Committee's performance has set a gold standard that all other CURAC Committees vie to follow. Yet even our success is perceived by our Membership as "thin". I have been wracking my brain (or whatever is left after losing all those neurons) as to how to impress our grass-root members that CURAC needs their active participation not only to succeed but to survive. I look forward to your helpful comments and suggestions.

A recent Statistics Canada survey has confirmed what was suspected for quite some time, namely, that the real income of the Canadian middle class has remained stagnant for the last twenty-five years even though the size of the country's economy has doubled during this period. On the other hand, the cost of energy and staple foods (e.g. bread, rice and milk), and the amount of property and other taxes have been rising steeply. Thus, un-indexed or poorly indexed pension plans are now fast-lanes to poverty. For route correction, we need the help of all potential friendly forces including university administrations who themselves might be hamstrung by poor returns from the post-subprime market and the well-justified caps on tuition fees.

I would like to end on a happier note. The Montreal Organizing Committee, chaired by Howard Fink and Roch Meynard, is completing preparations for the first fully bilingual CURAC Conference. On behalf of you all, I would like to thank this Committee for their hard work. These preparations took longer than the human period of gestation with all its antecedent excitement, fear and foreboding. But now we are ready for the pure joy of a creative birth. I invite you all to be part of this joyous occasion.

–Tarun Ghose

## **CURAC and Aboriginal Affairs**

Peter Russell

Résumé – CURAC/ARUCC et les affaires autochtones

Quand CURAC/ARUCC a créé son système de comités lors du congrès de Guelph, en 2006, elle a établi un comité sur les affaires autochtones. On croyait qu'une association de retraités universitaires pourrait contribuer aux besoins des autochtones du Canada, peu présents dans l'enseignement post-secondaire. Nous entendrons au congrès de Montréal deux éducateurs reconnus qui nous parleront des perspectives éducatives des peuples autochtones du Canada et nous permettront de déterminer ce que CURAC/ARUCC pourrait faire sur cette question.

Je suis heureux d'annoncer que Mme Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux, professeure à la Faculté d'éducation de l'Université de Toronto, et l'Honorable James Bartleman, ancien Haut-Commissaire du Canada en Australie et ancien Lieutenant-gouverneur de l'Ontario, ont accepté de s'adresser à nous dans une séance qui se tiendra le 22 mai.

CURAC members may be surprised to find that the program for this year's conference in Montreal includes a panel on Aboriginal Education and Culture in Universities and Colleges. When CURAC set up its committee system at the Guelph conference in 2006, it established an Aboriginal Affairs committee. In doing so, the general idea was that an association of retirees in higher education might be able to contribute something to the educational needs of Canada's Aboriginal peoples whose participation in post-secondary education is relatively low.

Last year following the CURAC conference in Windsor a small group of us went on a field trip to visit the Chippewa, Odawa and Potomatomoni three-nations community on Walpole Island. The island is not a reserve. It is unceded First Nations land. Walpole Island forms the delta where the St. Clair River flows between Canada and the USA into Lake Huron. It forms a beautiful and bountiful stretch of forests, fields and wetlands on which, the people of three nations much older than Canada or the USA, over two centuries, have come together to build a thriving community – although a community that still falls far short of its economic and political aspirations. We enjoyed our visit and learned much from it.

At this year's conference, in response to the CURAC Board's query – should we continue with a "committee" on Aboriginal education? – I suggested that we ask some leading Aboriginal educators to attend our Montreal conference and talk about the educational conditions and prospects of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Their knowledge and insights might help us figure out what, if anything, CURAC might do in this field in the future.

I am happy to report that Professor Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux and the Honourable James Bartleman have accepted invitations to speak at our conference on the afternoon of May 22. Cynthia is a professor in the University of Toronto's Faculty of Education and also teaches in the University's Aboriginal Studies program. She is a dynamic speaker with an exceptional ability to draw from Aboriginal peoples' past and project positively on their future. Jim Bartleman is a remarkable Canadian whom I first met when he was Canada's High Commissioner in Australia. After a distinguished diplomatic career, he served with equal distinction as Ontario's Lieutenant Governor. Now in the kind of "retirement" so many of us know so well, he is carrying on with his work in providing books for Aboriginal communities in remote areas, and with his successful writing career. His most recent book is *Raisin Wine: A Boyhood in a Different Muskoka*, published by McClelland & Stewart in 2007. Like his first two books, it's a wonderful read.

Cynthia and Jim both have Anishnabek (Ojibwa) backgrounds. But I think you will find that they illuminate for us a larger picture of the possibilities of fruitful relations with Aboriginal peoples in all parts of Canada.



## 2008 Atlantic Region CURAC Conference

Raging flood waters failed to dampen the spirits of attendees at the 2008 Atlantic Region CURAC conference held at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton, NB, on May 2nd 2008. As usual the conference focussed on issues of particular concern to retirees from post-secondary institutions in the Atlantic provinces. A summary of the proceedings will be posted on the CURAC website shortly.



Front row: Sheila Laidlaw, President, UNB Retired Employees Association; Evan Simpson, [Memorial University of Newfoundland Pensioners Association](#); George Young, Saint Mary's University Retirees Association; Kay Robinson, St. Thomas University Retired Faculty Association.

Back row: Paul Huber, [Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners](#); Tarun Ghose, President, CURAC, ([Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners](#)); Jim O'Sullivan, UNB Retired Employees Association; Francis Weil, Association des bibliothécaires et professeur(e)s retraité(e)s de l'Université de Moncton; Merrill Edwards, UNB Retired Employees Association; Phillip Welsh, [Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners](#).

*Photo by H. Orville Scott, UNB Retired Employees Association (who also supplied the photo on page 2)*

## Opinion

### The War on Academic Freedom: Google @ Lakehead University

By Ian Dew

Résumé – La liberté académique en péril : Google @ Lakehead University

Dans l'espoir d'économiser de 2 M\$ à 3 M\$ par an, et 6 M\$ en coûts d'infrastructures, Lakehead University a confié à la société Google Inc. la gestion de son réseau de données et de son infrastructure informatique.

Le problème est connu à la grandeur du pays depuis un récent article du *Globe and Mail*. Mais à Thunder Bay, de rares personnes osent parler du problème. Peu s'objectent. Will Wilson a démissionné du comité de direction de l'association des professeurs (LUFA) pour protester contre l'utilisation du système dans le cadre des négociations et des griefs. Il prétend que « l'administration peut visionner nos courriels sans avoir à obtenir de mandat » et qu'il y a beaucoup de désinformation sur le campus. Plusieurs professeurs se sont retirés du système informatique de l'Université et fonctionnent comme ils peuvent.

Même les professeurs qui ont la permanence (tenured faculty) plient l'échine et attendent de prendre leur retraite. Étant moi-même une personne qui a été remerciée après s'être exprimée ouvertement sur le sujet, je peux affirmer qu'il existe de sérieux problèmes d'information à Lakehead University. Pourquoi l'association des professeurs a-t-elle refusé de se joindre à l'initiative de la CAUT sur la liberté académique, devenant ainsi la seule université (sur 56) au Canada à le faire ?



There are now so many things wrong at Lakehead University (LU), Thunder Bay, it is hard to know where to start. Added to perennial “reputational” problems reported by Maclean’s and the longstanding problems with IT and academic freedom, now Google Inc. is running the network on campus. At issue are basic concepts of academic freedom and intellectual property, which are under direct assault. And so this small university finds itself front and centre in the battle for academic freedom.

An article in LU’s student newspaper *The Argus*, Jan 8, 2007, reports the previous head of Information Technology as declaring Google is “not really email anymore”. He wasn’t just whistling Dixie: it is a whole new computing paradigm. The VP Administration, Michael Pawlowski is quoted as saying the advent of Google heralds a “brave new world of technology in education”. In the same article estimates are that it will save “\$2 to 3 million annually and an additional \$6 million in infrastructure costs”. The networking and IT business on campus is big business. This function has had a chequered past with a shell game of hirings, firings and rehiring over the years, which reflects the struggle for control. In the information economy whoever controls the network has control and in Northwestern Ontario that is LU.

The debate is wide open nationally. An article in the *Globe and Mail* recently outlined some of the characters and events of Google mania. However, in Thunder Bay and at LU just about nobody's talking. Not openly anyway. There is a grievance on academic freedom and Google filed with the Ontario Ministry of Labour and CAUT is rumoured to have weighed in with a war chest of \$200,000 to prosecute the campaign on behalf of beleaguered academics. The facts and who's who exactly are shrouded by the fog of war.

Only a few brave souls on campus are willing to speak, much less fight. Will Wilson, who quit the faculty association (LUFA) executive over the use of the system for official union business, like negotiations and grievances, said that "as part of the switch to Google LU administration can look at our email without a warrant". He concluded that there is a lot of disinformation on campus. Many faculty have opted out of the system and rely on their own makeshift systems. Most are on the defensive. Even tenured faculty whose duty it is to find and speak the truth, are "hunkered down", in the local phrase, hoping that they can at least retire with a pension. Speaking as an historian (B.A. University of Alberta, 1968) and as the academic librarian (M.L.S. U.B.C. 1978) in charge of library systems at LU from 1987 to 2002 and, more to the point, as one who was let go after speaking out, I can safely say that the information functions at LU, including the library and IT, had and still have major problems. Free speech and academic freedom have been precious commodities at LU. Now why is that? Few facts are known. Questions abound. Most serious for the university community is the Faculty Association's refusal to join CAUT's Academic Freedom Initiative. LU is the only university in Canada out of 56 ranging in size from the University of Toronto (\$100,000) and Brescia University College (\$500). What is going on?

On the positive side the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities is finally awakening to the situation. Meanwhile, the grievance launched by the previous executive has reached the stage of arbitration via the Dispute Resolution Services of Ontario Ministry of Labour. An award is expected very shortly. It is expected that the whole issue will end up in the lap of the federal Privacy Commissioner. So stay tuned and get involved. This is every Canadian citizen's fight.

**For more information on the issues at Lakehead:**

"Email Outsourcing Threatens Privacy & Academic Freedom," *CAUT/ACPPU Bulletin*, Vol. 54, no. 5, May 2007.

Simon Avery, "Patriot Act haunts Google service," *Globe and Mail*, 24 March, 2008.

"US Patriot Act deters Canadians from Google service," *Out-Law news archive*, March 2008, <http://www.out-law.com/page-8988>



## Seniors Living Project at UBC

*[Adapted from an article by Chuck Slonecker in the UBC retiree group's Newsletter.]*

Résumé – Le projet de résidence pour les aînés à l'Université de Colombie-britannique. Mise à jour de mars 2008 [adapté d'un article de Chuck Slonecker dans le bulletin des retraités de UBC] La société Concert, responsable de la construction d'une nouvelle résidence pour aînés sur le campus de l'Université de Colombie-britannique, a reçu de l'Université son permis de développement. La construction commencera à l'été ou à l'automne 2008. L'ensemble de 180 appartements (dont 46 en copropriété) sera constitué de deux édifices de six étages et sera appelé Tapestry at Westbrook Village UBC.

La vente et la location des appartements commencera en 2009. Pour obtenir plus d'information, se rendre à [www.DiscoverTapestry.com](http://www.DiscoverTapestry.com).

Ce projet n'est pas réservé exclusivement aux retraités de l'Université de Colombie-britannique. Des retraités d'autres universités qui prennent leur retraite à Vancouver peuvent aussi faire application.



Concert, the company chosen to build a new senior living project on the UBC campus has received the Development Permit from the University of British Columbia. With building design and specifications underway, construction is anticipated to commence in summer/fall 2008.

Modelled on Concert's award-winning The O'Keefe, in downtown Vancouver, Tapestry at Westbrook Village UBC, as the new facility will be called, will feature two six-storey concrete midrise buildings with 180 suites. The 134 rental homes are located in the larger building on the northern portion of the site, while the 46 for-sale condominium homes will occupy the building located on the south side of the site.

Owned and developed by Concert, Tapestry at Westbrook Village UBC is Concert's third seniors' living community operated exclusively by Leisure Care. Expected to be ready for occupancy in the fall of 2010, sales and leasing will commence in 2009. In addition to the usual amenities, Concert is emphasizing the unique "campus lifestyle" which will be available to residents of the new facility.

If you have been out to UBC lately, you will also have noticed that UBC has begun construction on the commercial village, including the new grocery store, greenways and parks.

It should be noted that this project is not exclusively for persons associated with the University of British Columbia – emeriti or retirees from other Universities who might migrate to Vancouver on retirement can also apply. More information is available online at [www.DiscoverTapestry.com](http://www.DiscoverTapestry.com)

### ***University of Victoria Retirees Sponsor Lecture Series***

The *Victoria Times-Colonist* recently (Monday, April 21, 2008) ran an interview with Helen Kempster who provided an interesting account of some of the public service activities of retirees from the University of Victoria. Helen noted that part of the mandate of the retiree group there was to "establish meaningful links with the community", an objective they were seeking to achieve through projects such as an annual public "Masterminds" lecture series featuring the expertise of former faculty members, all of whom are part of the retiree organization. The lectures are free and open to the public.

## **Queen's Retirees Reach Partnership Agreement with University**

Résumé – Après de longs mois de discussions, l'Université Queen's (vice-recteur académique Patrick Deane) et l'Association des retraités de Queen's (présidente Arlene Aish) ont produit une lettre d'intention concernant l'établissement « d'un centre, ouvert aux professeurs et employés retraités, afin de faciliter l'implication des retraités dans la vie académique de l'Université. »

On se propose

- d'organiser des activités susceptibles d'augmenter la visibilité de l'université par le biais de conférences et d'ateliers;
- d'augmenter la qualité des apprentissages à l'université;
- d'augmenter la bonne réputation de l'université sur les plans national et international;
- d'organiser d'autres activités d'intérêt mutuel.



Several months of discussion between working groups of the Retirees' Association of Queen's (RAQ) and the administration of Queen's University, led by Vice-Principal (Academic) Patrick Deane, culminated in November with the signing of a Statement of Intent by Vice-Principal

Deane and RAQ President Arlene Aish. In the Statement, the University and RAQ pledge to continue working toward the establishment of “a centre to facilitate the continuing partnership of retirees in the academic life of the University. Such a centre will be open to all retired faculty and staff of Queen’s.”

This partnership is intended to foster and support the continued scholarly and creative lives of retirees, promote the continuing sense of membership in the "Queen's family" and, through its programs, benefit the University and the community. RAQ has already created a series of “Monday Morning Forum” lectures by distinguished speakers throughout the academic year. As well, we are undertaking an “Oral History of Queen’s” project to capture the memories of retirees covering the period since the 1960s. Both of these activities have received sponsorship from the University. Retirees have also participated in reviewing and ranking scholarship applications, releasing working faculty from this pleasant but time-consuming task. One objective of the partnership is to find activities that enhance the learning environment at Queen’s. At a January open meeting on the quality of education, Vice-Principal Deane said, “Much thought has been given to how resources might be put back into the system to improve faculty/student contact. For example, discussions are under way with associations representing retired faculty on ways they might become involved with students.”

In general terms, the objective of this initiative is to formalize the partnership between RAQ and Queen’s in such activities as:

- Organizing events that enhance the visibility of the university through lectures and workshops
- Enhancing the learning environment of the university
- Enhancing the national and international reputation of the university
- Other activities of mutual interest

The next step will be to set up administrative arrangements to enable the deepening and broadening of interactions between Queen’s and its retirees.

For further information, please visit [www.queensu.ca/retirees](http://www.queensu.ca/retirees)

## **AROHE CONFERENCE – LOS ANGELES OCTOBER 24-26 2008**

The fourth AROHE (Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education) international conference will be held October 24-26, 2008 at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California. The theme of the conference is "Retiree Organizations in Higher Education: Values and Opportunities". CURAC is a member of AROHE and wishes to encourage member organizations to send representatives to the AROHE conference. Details with respect to registration and other information about the conference can be obtained from the AROHE website at

[www.arohe.org/conferences.shtml](http://www.arohe.org/conferences.shtml)

### **About the Newsletter/Bulletin**

This newsletter is published several times a year to provide a forum for the exchange of information among the member organizations of CURAC/ARUCC. It is edited jointly by Ken Rea and Roch Meynard who invite members to submit news, opinion pieces and other material likely to be of interest to post-secondary retirees across the country. Submissions can be in either of the official languages and should be sent as email attachments to [curac@curac.ca](mailto:curac@curac.ca) or by post to CURAC/ARUCC

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