CUPARUC

newsletter of the
concordia university
pensioners association

bulletin de nouvelles
de l'association des retraité(e)s
de l'université concordia

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There have been several expressions of interest in creating an Association newsletter. This very modest beginning is intended to provide a basis for future development, in accordance with members' interests and needs. While the great majority of members live within a hundred miles of Montreal, we are anxious to keep in touch with more distant members. You will find in this issue accounts of the retirement experience of two members living as far apart as England and Victoria, B.C. We are anxious to know what <u>your</u> experience has been.

We also plan to keep you up to date on seniors' affairs, and Jean-Pierre Pétolas, your Vice-President and representative on the Quebec Coalition des Aînés, a lobby group, has written a brief account of what that group is doing.

It is our intention to produce issues of the newsletter during the summer and winter, at points in between the regular meetings of the Association.

I invite you to send me, Jim Whitelaw, at 10, Spruce Crescent, Beaconsfield, QC, H9W 1X5, contributions for the summer issue <u>by June 15, 1992</u>, as well as suggestions for directions which the newsletter might take. Texts are welcome in English or French.

Plusieurs membres ont proposé la création d'un bulletin de nouvelles pour l'Association. Ce début très modeste a pour but d'établir un point de départ pour l'avenir, selon les intérêts et besoins des membres. Alors que la grande majorité des membres demeurent à moins de cent kilomètres de Montréal, nous tenons à maintenir un contact avec ceux qui sont plus éloignés. Vous trouverez donc ci-dessous des comptes-rendus de l'expérience de la retraite de deux membres lointains - Angleterre et Victoria, C-B. Nous aimerions connaître <u>votre</u> expérience.

Ensuite, nous nous proposons de vous tenir à jour sur des matières touchant la vie des retraité(e)s. A ce propos, Jean-Pierre Pétolas, votre vice-président et représentant auprès de la Coalition des Aînés, a préparé un bref compte-rendu des activités de ce groupe.

Il est notre intention que des numéros du bulletin paraissent en été et pendant l'hiver, à mi-chemin entre nos réunions régulières.

Je vous invite donc à m'envoyer, Jim Whitelaw, 10, Spruce Crescent, Beaconsfield, QC, H9W 1X5, des textes pour le numéro d'été <u>avant le 15 juin, 1992</u>, aussi bien que des suggestions quant aux orientations qu'on devrait donner à notre bulletin. En français ou en anglais.

Mag Flynn writes from Victoria, B.C .....

Three years before retirement, Joan and I bought a home in Saanich - a community which is part of Greater Victoria. On the day when we finished our active working career we packed everything we owned and headed for an area where we knew only one couple and had no knowledge of community politics or social service resources.

The term "western hospitality" is not an idle phrase, as, on arrival at the house, we were greeted with a dinner invitation and advised that a welcome reception would be held for us the following Saturday.

Once settled in, Joan made it apparent that I had better become involved in some voluntary activity for my health - if I hung around the house, she would kill me! Our first venture was working on the organization of Victoria's May Day parade. Shortly after, I was asked to take over the presidency of the Seniors' Festival, and, in revenge, got Joan on as Executive Director. Joan is president of the local United Church Women, and I am Chair of the church's Board of Trustees. Along the way, I served as resource person on a commission studying the impact of an increasing senior population on the economy, and on a parks and recreation advisory committee. Four years ago I became President

(contd. on p.4)

..... and George Snowball from Gloucester, England.

On 1st July, 1986 I entered on my fourth career - I retired. Apart from two shortly-held jobs, my other three careers were museum curator in England, general editor and librarian at the Geological Survey of Northern Rhodesia (subsequently Zambia) and librarian at Concordia.

We stayed in Montreal until September 1987, and that year provided the opportunity for some planning - including searching for a bungalow with no garden. In the end we bought a house with a postage-stamp garden. Also, the house should have been on the south coast of England, but is in the south-west midlands!

We keep busy - both of us playing bridge and I lawn-bowling. The bridge club is only five minutes away and the bowling club occupies the middle of the square in which we live.

Lastly, we have done some travelling. We didn't manage to get to Asia from either Africa or Canada, but have rectified that omission with two visits - the first to Bangkok, Singapore and Hong Kong, and the second back to the first two then on to Kuala Lumpur, Bali, Australia, New Zealand and the U.S.

You will no doubt understand why I say that we are enjoying my last career the most! How did I find time in those other careers to go to work?

CUPA and the Coalition of Quebec Seniors

CUPA is a member of the Coalition of Quebec Seniors (Coalition des Aînés), a lobby group formed of a number of associations (e.g. Golden Age Association, Pionniers d'Air Canada, etc.). It operates in both French and English and represents about a half million Quebec seniors, whose number is continually increasing; some are rich, some are poor, some healthy, others not, but all pay taxes except the very poor, and together tbey form a strong political force in the Province. The purpose of the Coalition is to consult with its members and to act on issues relating to living conditions, to mobilize the political and social power of seniors, to defend and protect seniors' rights. Its offices are located at 5700, Westbury Avenue.

Recently the Coalition fought successfully against the de-indexation of the Old Age Security pensions, fought for federal reforms on taxation, demonstrated against the GST, the PST and the "claw-back" of seniors' pensions. It is also fighting against unreasonable increases in fees for public nursing homes and long-term care institutions. Other topics of interest to the Coalition are income security, affordable housing and adequate public transportation.

On February 6, 1992 the Coalition presented a brief to Minister Côté and to the Commission parlementaire on the danger of destroying the Medicare system. With a population increase of about 12% during the past decade, MDs' fees increased by about 40% and the cost of medication by 50%. Federal grants to the provinces have in effect diminished, but the solution to the financing problems faciung the Quebec Government lies not, according to the Coalition, in decreasing services and charging user fees. The Coalition criticized the Minister's financing plan, proposed that medical costs be supported by every tax-payer, and that better allocation of funds within the budget be instituted - such as improving preventive medecine and home care. An audience with Minister Daniel Johnson is being requested.

All the candidates suppported by the Coalition were elected in the local CLSCs and hospitals in the recent voting. Spring elections for the future "Conseils régionaux des Hôpitaux" are being organized by the Provincial Government, and the Coalition will try to see that at least one senior is elected in each region.

CUPA is represented on the Coalition by Michael Sheldon and J.P. Pétolas. Any member interested in these matters should contact them.

J.P.P.

Flynn (contd. from p.2):

of the golf club. Through all of these involvements we were simply applying the skills and experience that had been passed on to us by the students, faculty and administrative staff during during our service at Concordia. In a way, many of those individuals shar the recognition that we have received on the Island and elsewhere in B.C. All in all, it has been a fun and exciting retirement.

Volunteering

(The following advice to prospective volunteers is taken from an article in the March 1992 issue of Good Times. Members are invited to write and tell us of their own experiences in this area)

According to Mary Hardwick of United Way, the first thing you should decide is why you want to do volunteer work. "You should decide why you are doing it, and keep that in the forefront", she says. While many volunteers have altruistic motives, some want to learn new skills, meet people, or use skills they are not using in the workplace.

Next you should decide how much time you are willing to donate and what type of commitment you want to make. "There is an implicit contract between the volunteer and the organization", says Robert Elton, communications director of the CNIB. "It can't be just a token relationship to fill an hour a week."

Hardwick notes that, as a volunteer, you should expect: 1) some kind of training or orientation; 2) a job you like to do; 3) regular communication with a supervisor; 4) the information you need to do the job properly; and 5) some recognition for your work.....

When you consider volunteering for an organization, ask a few questions before committing yourself: What should your relationship to paid staff be? What happens if you are simply unable to meet your time commitment? What kind of training will you get? Can you change jobs? Do you need insurance - for example, if you are using your car to drive a client? Will you have any out-of-pocket expenses?

(There was also a good article on memory, - but I can't remember what it said. Good Times is published ten times a year, the subscription rate being $20.60, incl. GST. The address is: Good Times, 1231, Yonge St., Toronto, ON, M4T 2Z1 - J.H.W.)

HAVE A GOOD SUMMER!