

CUPARUC

newsletter of the concordia university pensioners' association
bulletin de l'association des retraité-e-s de l'université Concordia



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RESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Summer is finally here – at least it looks so with a week of sun and over 21C in the forecast! I used to like winter as well as summer but, with advancing age, summer seems infinitely more desirable!

Summer has come in a couple of other areas also! Recent financial advances have returned our Pension fund to virtually the level it was before the recent downturn. In the Benefits area, your executive decided we should expend some of our scarce funds and get a legal opinion as to where we stand. We did and received one that indicates Benefits form a contract between the University and each of us individually when we retire and cannot be unilaterally changed. While this is just an opinion, (albeit based on a couple of supreme court cases), the University has acknowledged it and it looks like any benefit reductions will only affect those currently employed and not retirees. Good News!

The Annual General Meeting on April 29 had an excellent talk by Pearl Eliadis on human rights issues in Canada. At that meeting, Peter Paquet and Steve Kumerapeli stepped down from the Executive after many years of excellent service. We thank them most sincerely! Roger Kenner (computers) and Geoff Adams (social activities) will replace them. We are always looking for volunteers so if you are interested, please contact us!

Several new social activities are planned for the Montreal Area. For those of you outside this area, I would encourage you to consider setting up a branch operation with some events. We can provide contact information and support for any part of the country. Just let us know!



Message du Président

Finalement, l'été semble être revenu pour de bon. Une semaine de soleil et la mercure qui indique plus que 21C, ça fait du bien! Auparavant j'aimais l'hiver autant que l'été, mais en vieillissant, l'été semble devenir infiniment plus agréable.

Le soleil plombe également sur d'autres aspects! Des avances récentes du marché financier ont fait rebondir notre régime de pension presque au niveau existant avant les déboires de 2008. En ce qui concerne nos avantages sociaux, l'exécutif a décidé qu'il serait prudent de dépenser une partie de nos maigres ressources financières afin d'obtenir une opinion juridique de notre situation. L'opinion émise par nos avocats conseils affirme que l'université ne peut pas modifier unilatéralement les avantages consentis à ses anciens employés. Malgré le fait qu'il s'agit d'une opinion (basée cependant sur des décisions de la Cour d'appel et des dispositions du Code civil), l'université en a pris connaissance et il paraît que des changements qui réduiraient les avantages s'appliqueraient seulement aux employés courants et non aux retraités. Bonnes Nouvelles!

À l'Assemblée Générale du 29 avril, Pearl Eliadis nous a fait un discours très intéressant au sujet des droits de la personne au Canada. A cet assemblé Peter Paquet et Steve Kumerapeli ont quitté l'Exécutif après plusieurs années d'excellent service; nous les remercions sincèrement. Roger Kenner (informatique) et Geoff Adams (activités sociales) vont les remplacer. Nous sommes toujours à la recherche de bénévoles, contactez-nous si vous êtes intéressés.

Plusieurs activités sociales sont planifiées dans la région de Montréal. Pour nos membres à l'extérieur de Montréal. Je vous encourage de vous réunir afin d'organiser des ac-

Remember to keep your e-mail address current and check the web cupa.concordia.ca !

Have a good summer!

Graham Martin

tivités. Nous pouvons vous fournir les noms des contacts ainsi que du soutien n'importe où au pays. Faites nous le savoir.

Souvenez vous de maintenir votre adresse courriel à date et regardez souvent notre site web cupa.concordia.ca!

Profitez de l'été
Graham Martin



GUEST SPEAKER - PEARL ELIADIS

The guest speaker at the CUPARUC Annual General Meeting of April 29 was Pearl Eliadis, noted Human Rights Lawyer. Pearl was introduced by Mair Verthuy, who

noted that she is the Director of the Shield of Athena, a prominent social organization dedicated to preventing violence against women and children.

Pearl Eliadis then spoke on her main theme, ie: "Canada faces many challenges today: Key players in the international community are concerned that Canada's

place and reputation in the international community are slipping, largely because of human rights failures at home. Second, we seem to be seeing a hardening of our approaches to managing diversity, at least in Quebec. At the same time, other human rights issues have slipped off the policy agenda entirely."

Pearl Eliadis feels that Canada is deciding much foreign policy based on the expectations of the US government, citing the Khadr case, which has been roundly condemned by the international community, and demonstrates our government's lack of support for its citizens in not repatriating Khadr, as all other governments have done regarding their nationals incarcerated in Guantanamo Bay.

However, Pearl says Canada is achieving success with its efforts to improve Women's Rights in Afghanistan, but there is still much to be done in this area.

She went on to describe the situation of the Human Rights Commissions in Canada, which have received considerable negative press as of late. She attributes this to the fact that in the last little while, writers for journals, specifically MacLeans Magazine have been charged with Human Rights violations. Until this happened the press was relatively benign towards the Human Rights Commissions and Tribunals. She points out that the commissions perform a necessary gatekeeper role, preventing many frivolous claims, and also that the normal court system is far too slow and expensive a route to undertake in these cases. This itself could be seen as an issue that should be addressed.

Pearl touched on the recent and very divisive Bill 94 in Quebec which she feels is a definite attack on Muslims, even though it is presented as an effort to defend the secular face of the government.



CURAC/ARUCC 8TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

CURAC/ARUCC is the federation of retiree associations at colleges and universities across Canada. The CURAC Conference is in progress as this newsletter is being prepared at York University. Howard Fink is attending, representing CUPARUC. The conference theme is "Pensions and Benefits ... and Beyond", so Howard should return with some interesting information on events at other Universities and with other pension and benefits plans.

More information on the conference and the activities of CURA/ARUCC are available on their website at <http://www.curac.ca/>



What Goes Into the Rubbish Heap After Latin?

Graeme Decarie

Think History. Think Political Science. Think Psychology. Think Sociology. Don't stop. There are more. Think all of the departments in a university that are designed solely to train professionals in the field (and poorly designed to do even that). Think of how many people can hope to make a living as professionals in those fields. Then get ready for the rubbish heap.

As student debt rises (and that in a falling economy), students are going to take courses which will get them a job. Oh, I know. History (Poli Sci, Psych, Soci.) trains people in research so they can be valuable to a firm needing research skills. Nonsense.

The amount and type of research training for a typical BA major doesn't amount to poop for any business. Ditto for a largely mythical training in judgement, analysis, or comprehension of anything, including basic writing. I sat one year as an examiner for the writing test; I was astonished at how many third year students had passed at least 25 courses without knowing how to write.

Those students will leave Concordia as semi-literates. But that semiliteracy will not protect them from realizing that tens of thousands of dollars that don't lead to a job that will pay back tens of thousands of dollars was a bad investment. That's what happened to Latin over thirty years ago.

The fundamental interest and source of status for most professors is research, digging for information and up to date insights. They see it as essential to pass on to their students the very latest. The reality is it doesn't matter how up to date the course is. It's almost all of it going to be forgotten with months of the exam because the students will have no use for that information. And if they did, it would start being out of date as soon as they walk off the stage on graduation day.

What students could get from most arts fields might be understanding how to read at a university level (no, I don't mean big words). They might get an understanding of how to organize material, how to make judgements,

how to communicate, how to feel competent in doing such things. This would be useful to them all their lives, and would not be forgotten.

Instead, they will sit in a class of 80 learning "things". A handful will go on to higher studies in the field thanks to responding well to this early stage of the cloning process. Of the handful, one will become a professor remarkably similar in all ways to the people who shaped him. God is not the only one who creates in His own image.

Students could learn a great deal in a BA. But professors would first have to radically rethink the nature and objectives of their courses. They would have to think about what their disciplines could do for their students. Then they would have to learn how to do it. And we know that's not going to happen.

Ego, arrogance and a desperate fear of losing status among peers will not only prevent professors from considering change. It will make them angry that anyone could even suggest it. I've watched them for forty years, heads (or at least noses) held high as they edge towards the rubbish heap.

Too bad. There was good stuff there.

Oscar Wilde's Famous Last Words

Either that wallpaper goes, or I do.

Oscar Wilde (1856-1900) Anglo-Irish playwright, novelist.

Attributed last words, as he lay dying in a drab Paris hotel room.



**CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY RETIRED
FACULTY and STAFF SCHOLARSHIPS
and AWARDS PROGRAM**

Mary Baldwin

The Concordia Retired Faculty and Staff Awards Endowment fund was established in 2002 through the generosity of CUPARUC members at that time, and the hard work of the late John Hall. The endowment is the result of an agreement between the University and CUPA to use the proceeds of the demutualization of the Sun Life Retired Life Insurance policy to fund scholarships in the name of the retired Concordia employees. The income from this fund provides in-course undergraduate scholarships, bursaries, and graduate awards for students across all faculties.

After the initial year '02-'03 when fewer awards were made, we have been able to provide four awards in each category each year. At the undergraduate level one bursary and one scholarship is awarded in each of the four faculties. In 2009-010, these undergraduate bursaries and scholarships were valued at \$2,500. The recipients are determined by the Financial Aid and Awards Office.

At the graduate level, the four \$4,500 awards may be made to students in either Masters or PhD programs. These awards are administered through the School of Graduate Studies. To date 31 graduate awards have been made.

Due to the general financial situation in 2008 and 2009, the capital value of our endowment fund decreased, with a corresponding decrease in income, which makes it difficult to maintain or increase the number of awards and level of support we would like to continue to offer students. Students who have received awards are most appreciative, as they too struggle with financial constraints. Many write thank-you letters – the following extracts are from three 2008-2009 recipients.

“This scholarship is a clear manifestation of the rewards for excellence in academic studies, and a great encouragement for me to continue to excel at the University level. I am currently in my second year of a three year BSc. with a Specialization in Actuarial Mathematics, in the Cooperative program, and I am enjoying the excellent academic environment that Concordia offers.” (Steven Caluori B.Sc. Actuarial Mathematics)

“I would like to say how grateful I am to receive this financial award. This bursary will greatly relieve the added pressure I have been under to earn a wage while attending full-time studies. The bursary awarded me will help me to finish my last year of studies with renewed energy and concentrated focus as financial concerns will occupy less space in my daily routine.” (Natiea Vinson, BFA Art History)

“I would like to express my sincerest thanks to you. I am very excited to have been selected for this award this year. It will be of great help to lighten my financial burdens and enable me to concentrate more on my studies. Currently I am a fourth year PhD student in Economics and do not have enough money to support my study. Your help not only enables me to continue my studies without worrying about finances, but also makes it possible to graduate as soon as possible. Furthermore, I am honored to be recognized for my hard work and persistence. It motivates me to continue to strive for excellence.”
(Hua Shang, PhD Economics)

If we wish to continue to support students and assist them to complete their studies, then our CUPA scholarships and awards fund needs to grow. We are asking for your support because donations to this fund have a direct and positive impact on students, and help to ensure wider access to a university education.

To make a donation, please send a cheque, payable to Concordia University with a note on the memo line specifying the funds are designated for the Concordia University Faculty and Staff Scholarships and Awards Endowment, to Advancement & Alumni Relations (1455 De Maisonneuve Blvd W., FB 520, Montreal, QC H3G 1M8). In the recent letter from Dr. Woodsworth requesting support for the *I Choose Concordia* campaign there is a box on the donation card to designate funds for the retired Faculty and Staff Scholarship and Awards Endowment. You may also use your credit card to donate by visiting giving.concordia.ca and using the online form. Alternatively, you may call 514-848-2424, Extension 3884 and make a donation over the phone.

All donations \$10 and above are eligible for a tax receipt. Please make sure to include your name, your current address and a telephone number where you may be reached. No matter what method you choose, your support in helping this endowment fund to grow will be greatly appreciated.



SOCIAL NOTES

We are pleased to note that Geoff Adams has put himself forward as a new CUPARUC Social Organizer. We look forward to Geoff's 'offerings' in the future. In the meantime we will continue organizing a few summer events that may interest the membership (and anyone else they would like to bring along...).

A special mailing will go out in the near future describing these events in more detail, but since we are sure you are itching for a preview, we are looking at:

A Trip to the Glengarry Wood Fair/Aug 21, 2010

Wood has been a huge ingredient in the lives of Pioneers and the shaping of this country. The Glengarry Wood Fair will showcase all aspects of forestry and the crafting of wood products then and now. Discuss planting a woodlot with forestry professionals, or watch demonstrations of all the wood arts from turner and carver to timber framer or chainsaw carver. Travel back in time and view the Glengarry Pioneer Museum's collection of antique wood handling and crafting tools. Also, don't miss the highlight of the Fair, the Glengarry Wood Auction at 1pm. Sponsored by the Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry Certified Forest Owners Inc., SD&G Resource Stewardship Council and the Glengarry Pioneer Museum.

The Upper Canada Playhouse - Morrisburg

Introducing the 27th Season of fabulous theatre! Every year more people discover The Playhouse experience — terrific productions of entertaining shows, talented professional actors and a space where everyone's close to the action! We aren't sure of the date on this yet.

L'Autre Montréal Tour

L'Autre Montréal's guide/researchers are passionately committed to the project of understanding and explaining the city. With backgrounds in architecture, history, urban planning or the social sciences, they bring to the tours their zest, their extensive knowledge and their unusual, thoughtful and thought-provoking analyses. L'Autre Montréal guides don't just show you the city... they also give you tools to understand what you see. The tours are stimulating, enriching... and fun! Again, date TBA.



MEMBERSHIP

One of our ongoing challenges is to reach all retirees. We are not allowed access to all non-member retirees' names and addresses due to University Confidentiality restrictions so if you know of anybody who is retired and not a member, please try to persuade them to join. \$20 per year is not a major amount and our strength in protecting pensioners' issues comes with numbers. If you need information, we will be producing a flyer very shortly and please refer to our web site – cupa.concordia.ca – or feel free to contact me directly.

gmartin@vax2.concordia.ca or 514-697-1838.

The Fees for 2010/2011 have been held to \$20 (same as last year), which just allows us to break even. IF YOU HAVEN'T DONE SO, PLEASE SEND THEM IN. We need all your help! Legal opinions are expensive! Send cheque payable to "Concordia University in Trust" to:

Concordia Pensioners Association
Concordia University,
1455 De Maisonneuve W
Montreal, H3G 1M8

Où nous trouver ?

cuparuc@alcor.concordia.ca
<http://cupa.concordia.ca>

Concordia University Pensioners' Association,
Annex MI, Sir George Williams Campus, Concordia University, 1455 de Maisonneuve W, Montreal, QC H3G 1M8

Association des retraité-e-s de l'université Concordia, annexe MI, campus Sir George Williams, Université Concordia, 1455 de Maisonneuve ouest, Montréal, Qc., H3G 1M8

Phone no. (514) 848-2424 Local 8755 (please leave message)

Téléphone : 514 848 2424, poste 8755 (prière de laisser un message).

UNIVERSITY FUND RAISING

The University is embarking on a \$225 Million comprehensive campaign covering all aspects of the University from Student support, Research, Library, Buildings, etc. They would like to get support and participation from all members of the University Community whether currently active or retired – Students, Faculty, Staff, Alumni, etc.

Participation is a key factor. Any donation, regardless how small, which indicates participation in the campaign is welcome. We would like to get the participation rate as high as possible as a high participation rate generates more support from the outside community.

You can specify where you want your donation to go or just generally to support the University.

One option we have arranged is for it to go to the “Concordia University Pensioner’s Association Scholarship and Bursary fund” which provides scholarship and bursaries under our stewardship should you wish.

Graham Martin, CUPA representative, Community Awareness Committee.

NEW MEMBERS

- Wendy French
- Michael Keefe
- Ralph Carter
- Jacques Gagné

CONDOLENCES - DECEASED MEMBERS

- Charles Leduc
- Thomas Nogrady
- Mervin Butovsky
- Jack Goldner
- Dorothy Clarke

Prophetic Thoughts...

When I retire, I'm going to spend my evenings by the fireplace going through those boxes. There are things in there that ought to be burned.

— Richard Milhouse Nixon



NEXT MEETING

To Be Announced...

The CUPARUC Newsletter

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The CUPARUC Newsletter continues with the online section.



the joy of sailing

by Alex S.



You're standing on shore and are looking at all those sailboats out on the lake, thinking how great it would be to be there too, to play and to harness the wind. Ah, sailing would be the thing. No engine, no gas, no noise, attacking the waves, hanging over the side of the hull. That would be it, nirvana on the water.

There comes a time in a man's life when he needs to be a captain. Captain of his own boat to sail the seven seas or start with the local lake, like Lac St Louis, in Montreal.



"Ding, dong", goes the doorbell on the house in this upscale Bay d'Urfy neighbourhood, on the island of Montreal, Quebec, right next to the Lac St. Louis. A charming woman with a glass of Martini answers the door. "Yes?" I take a step back, this is not the first drink she had this morning and it's only ten o'clock. I motion towards the boat in the driveway. She turns around and hollers: "John, someone for the boat".

John comes out and we talk about the 'boat for sale' ad he had in the paper. He shows me the boat and all the components. I can tell it was not his idea to sell, but it looks like he has to. I sense a distress sale and stall on his price point, finally he gives up, throws in the outboard engine, and we shake on the deal. The 16' Tanzer, trailer, engine, lines, fenders, life jackets, bail bucket, paddle and fog horn are now mine, he keeps the wife. Ship ahoy.

That's how easy it is to become a captain. But, as you might imagine, there is more to it. Any water sport is dangerous business and needs to be taken seriously. As you know from my previous articles, I am used to the water and boating, but let me say this; to handle a 1000 ton ship is a lot easier than a 16 foot sailboat. It's one thing to stand on the bridge, 60 feet above sea level and bark your commands to the engine room and the helmsman, then to sit on the hull of a sailboat, 6 inches above the water, which is lapping at you and the occasional wave swamping the boat especially in the wake of a 1000 ton ship. You need to trim the sails, steer a course, bail out the water and balance the boat all at the same time.

But I am prepared, and certified to pilot a Laser sailboat, the world's most unstable sailboat, certified to pilot a cruising sailboat up to 30 feet, and a member of the Canadian Power Squadron. I am ready.

I'm towing the boat into my driveway and can't wait to rig it for the first time. A little problem with the mast, wow, it's taller than my house, I'm installing the boom and practice tacking, just getting the sail from one side to the other.



Figure 1 Ideal Sailing-

Now I need to listen to the marine weather report and when ready, head out to the lake. Pre launch rigging takes a while, but all goes well and I'm off. I'm having a blast and use all of my small boat sailing skills. I am at the mercy of the wind, the current and my skills.

There are three ways to sail a small sail boat. In Figure 1, we see can the ideal sailing position, notice the angle of the boat, the hiking on the hull, this is sailing at its best, nirvana.

Next, let's take a look at Figure 2, you notice the mast and sail is in a horizontal position, not good for making headway. In this situation, you need to swim out from under the sail, provided the mast did not knock you out and make your way to the keel, which all of a sudden looms 2 feet above you. You grab it, swing your leg over it and stand on it to righten the boat. The dosage of force needs to be carefully calculated, to prevent tipping the boat in the opposite direction.

This type of sailing is not recommended and best to be avoided. My sources tell me that a man of average fitness can execute this manoeuvre a maximum of three times in one afternoon. Also the 'getting back on board' exercise needs to be accomplished within



Figure 2 A Slam Dunk

a certain time frame, especially early in the boating season, or hyperthermia will set in, an unpleasant condition, where the limbs loose feeling and the mind loses its resolve.

The third and final way to sail is demonstrated in Figure 3. This manoeuvre is called 'dry sailing' and is one of the safer ways to do your boating. This method can be used when the wind is too strong and you don't want to get wet. This is also the preferred way of sailing for those who abused the manoeuvre shown in Figure 2, and exercised it too often.



Figure 3 Dry Sailing

Like all professions, sailing has its own vocabulary, and like it or not, you need to learn the lingo. Many expressions originate from our seafaring history, some obvious, some not, like, 'Bigwigs', often disliked senior officers in the English Navy, who wore big wigs; 'A1', top ranking of ships in the Lloyd's Register; 'bamboozle', a Spanish custom of hoisting false flags for deception; 'binge', cleaning a cask of rum; 'gung ho' a Chinese expression to describe a crew joining together to make it through a difficult situation and finally 'Hunky-Dory', all is pleasant, from a street named Honki-Dori in Yokohama, Japan, where all of a sailor's needs are catered to.

"Ding-dong", goes the doorbell. This time I'm the one with the Martini. It's someone for the boat. I explain everything and in the end I throw in the small outboard. Oh, the joy of selling!

ANUAL BICYCLE TRIP UPDATE

Once again the Annual Bicycle Trip was a huge success.

The invited guests Lance Armstrong and Alexandre Vinokourov failed to show, citing some less spectacular events in Europe preventing them from attending. We won't invite them again. In the meantime,

Roger Kenner had a brief encounter with a hedge...



Whereas John Woodrow had better luck taking a shortcut through an SAQ store.

Remember, still time to register for the Tour de l'Île de Montréal on June 6....