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

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Inspirational Sentiments

Words and ideas strike us sometimes as carrying a message that rings true for us. We take notice, and we think, "I should heed that." And while the moment lives for us, we should take advantage of our new found motivation and follow through, for resolutions to live and do better have a short half life. And we never know from whence such inspirations will come. One such sentiment came to me while watching a documentary on Marvin Hamlisch, well-known song writer and conductor. I learned that his last Broadway musical, "The Nutty Professor," included a song entitled, "While I Still Have the Time." As one living in retirement, time does not seem so endless as it once did, so the title caught my attention, and I suppose that each of us can imagine how that title could be unpacked in our own song. Rather than spelling out what I feel more inspired to do while I still have the time, I'll quote a couple of stanzas from the song, and let you find your own inspiration.

"And while I still have the time,
I'll stop to savour each drop of time,
Taste every flavour, and never rest, and never sleep.
But ever keep this view my way,
And while I still have the day,
Each hill I'll climb.
I'll own each day until I've had my fill
While I still have the time."

Marvin Hamlisch and Rupert Holmes
(See and hear Maria Friedman's beautiful performance of the song on YouTube.)

Message du président

Sentiments d'inspiration

Les paroles et les idées nous portent parfois un message qui sonne vrai pour nous. Nous nous disons , «Je dois tenir compte de cela.» Et en ce moment-ci, nous devons profiter de notre nouvelle motivation et la suivre immédiatement, car les bonnes résolutions ne durent pas longtemps. On ne sait jamais d'où ces inspirations vont apparaître. Un tel sentiment m'est venu tout en regardant un documentaire sur Marvin Hamlisch, compositeur bien connu et chef d'orchestre. J'ai appris que sa dernière comédie musicale de Broadway, «The Nutty Professor» comprenait une chanson intitulée «Bien que j'ai encore le temps.» Comme retraité, le temps ne semble plus sans fin comme dans le passé, le titre a attiré mon attention, et je suppose que chacun de nous peut imaginer comment ce titre pourrait nous appliquer. Plutôt que d'écrire ce que je suis inspiré à faire pendant que j'ai encore le temps, je vais citer quelques strophes de la chanson, et vous laisser trouver votre propre inspiration.

"Et pendant qu'il me reste le temps,
Je vais savourer chaque goutte de temps,
Goûter chaque saveur, ne jamais me reposer, et ne jamais dormir.
Mais garder toujours mon chemin,
Et aussi longtemps que je vis,
Je vais monter chaque colline,
Je vais posséder chaque jour jusqu'à ce que j'ai eu mon plein,

Pendant qu'il me reste le temps"

Marvin Hamlisch et Rupert Holmes

(Voir et entendre belle performance de Maria Friedman de la chanson sur YouTube)

SOCIAL EVENTS UPDATE

Wendy Hedrich

Last April about 20 people attended the play "Last Night at the Gayety" held at the Centaur Theatre. And their reports make it sound like the rest of us missed a great Bowser and Blue comedy musical ode to Montreal's Sin City era of the early 50's.

Our Christmas luncheon, which is a highlight of our social activities will take place on Tuesday, December 6 at the Loyola Jesuit Hall and Conference Centre. Further details will be sent out by mail and email. Please consider attending this year as it is always a lot of fun and a great way to reconnect with former colleagues and friends.

Plans are underway for the upcoming year. Please keep in mind that we need a minimum number of attendees to obtain group rates, etc. so we will cancel any event that does not get good response.

The following social events are being planned. Please check the appropriate website for further details about the plays and exhibits.

Centaur Theatre:

You Will Remember Me
Wednesday, March 22, 2017 at 1:00
Ticket cost is usually $28.00 per person (to be confirmed)

Clybourne Park
Wednesday, April 12, 2017 at 1:00
Ticket cost is usually $28.00 per person (to be confirmed)

Segal Centre:

Million Dollar Quartet
Wednesday, May 10, 2017 at 1:00
Ticket cost is usually $40.00 per person (to be confirmed)

For the following 4 museum exhibits, we will select the dates once we know if people are interested in attending

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

Chagall: Colour & Music (from January 28 – June 11, 2017)

Pointe-a-Calliere Museum

From the Lands of Asia (from November 17, 2016 – March 19, 2017)

Hello Montreal! Bell's Historical Collections (from February 17, 2017 – January 7, 2018)

Centre d'histoire de Montréal

Explosion 67 – Youth and their World (an exposition on Expo 67) (starting April 28, 2017)

If you are interested in attending any of these events, or would like to help out with the Social Committee, please RSVP to Wendy Hedrich at wendy.h@bell.net or by phone at (514) 695-3626.

Next CUPA General Meeting will take place November 2 from 10:00 to 12:00 in room H-763 on the Sir George Williams Campus. Graham Dodds, Political Science professor at Concordia, will be speaking to us on

"Understanding the 2016 U.S. Elections."

PENSION PLAN UPDATE

George Tsoublekas

2015 has been another bumper year for our Pension Plan. The return achieved last year reached 9% net of fees, which is above the objective of 6% that is the rate at which the Plan's future liabilities are discounted. When comparing our performance with that of other Canadian pension plans of similar size, our Plan ranks in the top quartile. What is important is that we were able to achieve these returns while being exposed to significantly less risk.

Net assets available for pension benefits at the end of 2015 stood at almost $913 million. The Plan is still underfunded. However, thanks to the performance, the funding ratio has improved.

The end of 2015 also saw the completion of the process of the transfer of funds to the new investment managers, in accordance with the asset allocation dictated by the new investment policy that has been adopted since 2013. In total, the funds have been allocated to 23 investment managers representing a wide variety of investment strategies.

The emphasis of this new investment policy is put on capital preservation with about 67% of total assets being allocated to strategies with emphasis on strong risk management. In addition, about 23% is allocated to growth strategies, and about 10% in diversification. Obviously, this investment policy is not very aggressive, the reason being that our Plan is a mature one and pension payments cannot be covered by contributions alone.

A substantial amount of our investments are in U.S. dollars. Thus, the strengthening of the American dollar in 2015 has played a beneficial role in our returns.

In November 2015, the Quebec government tabled a new law, Bill 75, which was adopted in June 2016. This law is intended for the regulation of the defined-benefits pension plans of the universities to ensure their long-term viability. Our Plan is found to be on a sound basis, which means that no major adjustments are required. However, the active members of the Plan will have to shoulder a larger share of the costs of the Plan in the form of higher contributions, unlike what was the practice until today where the University was heavily burdened with these costs. On the other hand, the existing pensioners are not required to bear any additional burden.

This will be George's last report on the Pension Plan and the Pension Committee. In the coming weeks Hal Proppe will take over from George on the Pension Committee. The Pension Committee has confirmed their acceptance for Hal to finish out George's mandate until the end of this year and he is your Executive Committee's candidate of choice for the two year term commencing January 1, 2017.

"It's paradoxical that the idea of living a long life appeals to everyone, but the idea of getting old doesn't appeal to anyone."
— Andy Rooney

Remember to visit the CUPA website at

http://CuparucConcordia.ca

There are archives of past newsletters, information about our scholarship fund and links to many other resources of interest to retirees.

GUEST SPEAKER - Graham Dodds

On November 2 Professor Dodds will be the guest speaker at our CUPA General Meeting and will be speaking on

"Understanding the 2016 U.S. Elections."

With Election Day in the U.S. fast approaching, this talk aims to help Canadians understand what's going on and what's at stake. Beyond the Trump-Clinton headlines, where do the various races stand at present, what's driving voters' decisions, what issues and policies are at play, how might it all turn out, and what could it mean for Canada? This talk won't be able to answer every question, but it should help to provide some perspective and insight as the long U.S. election season approaches its finale.

Professor Graham Dodds is an awarding winning teacher and expert on United States politics and law. Much of Professor Dodds's research concerns American political development, especially the U.S. presidency. His book *Take Up Your Pen* examines the evolution of unilateral presidential directives such as executive orders. He has published dozens of journal articles and book chapters on the presidency, the press, political culture, constitutionalism, political theory, and the use of governmental apologies for political reconciliation, among other topics. He is currently working on a book manuscript about the U.S. president's use of mass pardons or amnesties, provisionally entitled *Talk the Walk: Presidential Pardons and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation.*

NEW MEMBERS Since April 2016

Nancy Brennan
Tai Luong
Mary Millar
Peter Shizgal
Zsolt Szigetvari *
Richard Lande *
Jean-Roch Laurence
Antonio Petrozza *
Marthe Verron

* announced at the April 2016 Annual General Meeting but not included in the April 2016 Newsletter.

CONDOLENCES - DECEASED MEMBERS

Irena Bubniuk, Music
Pierre Duschastel, Management
William Hooper, Psychology
James Jans, Psychology
Robert McDevitt, Journalism
Heather McLaughlin
Warren Sanderson
Matthew Santateresa, Human Resources
Adolphe Smith, Physics
Dorothy Staniland, Registrar's Office
Abraham Tarasofsky, Economics
James Whitelaw, Associate Vice-Rector, Academic Planning

The Newsletter continues with the Internet only version from this point. We apologize to those not having access to this however, it is necessary to control printing and mailing costs.

SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

Mary Baldwin

The undergraduate scholarships and bursaries are awarded in the fall, and as yet there is no information on recipients.

Over the summer Cynthia Raso has been appointed Manager, Graduate Awards and Post-Doctoral Studies, taking over from Joanne Beaudoin, who was looking after this area while some reorganization was taking place in Graduate Studies.

The choice of candidates for Retired Faculty and Staff Graduate Awards is now made at the level of the individual Faculty in which the program falls, while Graduate Studies determines the distribution of our awards between Faculties, and provides oversight that the criteria for specific awards are met. In our case the recipients must be Canadian citizens or Permanent Residents, and have successfully completed one year of studies. With the decentralising to the faculties, and the fact that Graduate students enter programs in Fall, Spring and Summer terms, the Graduate distribution takes place on a continuous basis.

Since last spring there have been two Awards in Faculty of Arts and Science:

Aria Alavi, MA in Journalism & Franz Villaruel, MA Psychology, Creative Arts Therapy.

Two have been awarded in Faculty of Fine Arts programs:

Ana Pau Duran, MA in Art Therapy and Samanti Merritt, MA Art History.

Two have been awarded in Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science:

Miriam Kharma, MCompSci; Spencer Foley, MAppSci, Mechanical Engineering.

There are two remaining for 2016-17 which have been allotted to John Molson School of Business, but the candidates have not yet been chosen.

GUEST SPEAKER - Elizabeth Langley on "Discourage Diminishing"

Elizabeth Langley, Professor Emeritus in the Contemporary Dance Department of Concordia University, was our guest speaker at the April 2016 General Meeting. The title of her talk was "Let Us Discourage Diminishing" and it was as much a demonstration as it was

a talk showing us how to take care of our bodies so they don't diminish. We are constantly fighting against gravity and good muscle tone helps to prevent shrinking and sagging, the results of our losing battle with gravity.

Elizabeth talked about how good posture starts from the ground up. Rock gently from your toes to heels and when you are well

balanced in the middle, you will be sending a good posture message right up the body.

Tension was described as 'energy locked in' and this is not good. She mentioned several areas where we can release tension. Our faces can become tense and to reduce facial tension she suggested relaxing the jaw by bringing your lips gently together and let the jaw hang loose. Standing with your shoulders down and shoulder blades back reduces tension in your chest by opening the lungs and heart. Opening up all the joints in your arms and hands further reduces tension.

Between your rib cage and your pelvis the only thing supporting you are your vertebrae and they need good abdomen muscles to help them. Elizabeth demonstrated a simple abdominal exercise. Simply lie down on your belly and work to lift your tummy up. (At least she made it look simple!)

Walking is a great form of exercise that we should all be doing daily. She suggested that the proper way to walk is to lean slightly forward so that your torso weight is leading and then the legs simply follow along. Walking with a little twist of the body also helps to tone the waist too.

Elizabeth advocates that we should sit on our thigh bones instead of our bums. Slouching compresses the front of the back and stretched the back of the spine, which is bad for posture and health. We should go from sitting up to standing at least 6 times a day for thigh toning and there can be no 'bum dumping' on the way down.

Elizabeth demonstrated a good relaxation position using 5 pillows. Lying on a thin mat, like a yoga mat, put one pillow under your neck and part of your head. Then place a pillow on each side a little under your body and supporting your arms. The fourth pillow goes under your knees to relax your thighs and the last pillow goes under your feet to help relax your ankles.

Elizabeth ended by advising that we use just enough energy that is needed in any activity. Using too much energy will lead to tension like white knuckles to grip a cup. We should think of our bodies as the only Rolls Royce that we will ever own.

THE CLOCK THAT ROCKS

Alex Sengbush

"One, two, three o'clock, four o'clock, rock!" Bill Haley had it down pat. Telling time has never been more fun than with him. "Five, six, seven o'clock, eight o'clock, rock"!

For a generation like mine, raised on Rock'n Roll, the cuckoo clock is probably one of the last things on your mind today. Or, maybe not? Count on me to make it possible and palatable. Common wisdom has it that this venerable clock comes from Switzerland. That's the problem with common wisdoms, they are mostly

Figure 1 Chalet style

wrong! Actually, the cuckoo clock comes from the Black Forest in Germany, just like the Black Forest cake, which is really named after a cherry grown in that area, whose potent liquor forms the main ingredient.

The Black Forest, or Silva Nigra, as the Romans used to call this densely wooded mountain range, borders on the Rhine and France in the west and on Switzerland in the south. This mountain range is about 200 km long and 60 km wide, huge by European standards, with at least eight mountain peaks that reach 4000 to 5000 feet. Here is also the source of one of the greatest rivers, the Danube, which flows all the way into the Black Sea, some 2800 km away.

Everyone is familiar with the cuckoo that emerges from the housing and produces this delightfully annoying cuckoo's call every hour on the hour. That leads to some serious questions, when, why and how, referring to the invention and the inner workings.

Keeping time was not always easy. First there was the sundial (3500 B.C.), then the Egyptian water clock (1400 B.C.) Finally in 1500, Peter Henlein invented a spring powered clock in Germany, and in 1656 Christian Huygens added the pendulum, to make it more precise. It took another 100 years for the pendulum driven "cuckoo" clock to be developed in the Black Forest region. The sound comes from a system of bellows and pipes that are triggered by the weights and the swinging pendulum, at each hour, which releases the bird and starts the sound.

That leaves us with the 'why'.

Hand carving was already a major occupation during those long winter months in the Black Forest, wood was plentiful and the cuckoo bird is a very common bird in that region. The carvings of the clock housings are unique, intricate and astonishing with all kinds of hunting or landscape scenes.

Cuckoo clocks come in all price ranges, with the top of the line chirping in at way over $10k. The chalet style, see fig 1, is about $2000, and the entry level hunting style, see fig 2, is just over $400.

Do I have one? I've thought about it, but on second thought, I am waiting for a free mobile app with an authentic sounding cuckoo ringtone.

Figure 2 Hunting style

What do I know?! I was 'stationed' in the Black Forest region for some time* and got to know the area very well during numerous field trips. Better yet, I understand the local Swabian dialect, which gets easier with the consumption of each slice of cherry laced genuine Black Forest cake.

Historical footnote.

*At that time, Bill Haley and the Comets were on tour in Germany. There were mini-riots everywhere they played and in the city of Stuttgart, an army private attended the show. His name, Elvis Presley. He was stationed close by where he recorded the song Wooden Heart with a few lines in the local Swabian dialect “Muss i denn” (must I then...) for the movie G.I. Blues. His favourite cake, undoubtedly the Black Forest cake.

“When the clock strikes two, three and four, and the band slows down”, what do we do? “We’ll yell for more”. This clock rocks!

CUPARUC Newsletter editor: Craig Buchanan

If you would like to contribute an article to a future newsletter, please contact the editor at craiglangbuchanan@gmail.com.

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