



## **P**RESIDENT'S MESSAGE

While spring is the season in nature for renewal and new beginnings, for schools and universities it's the fall when we start anew. And this fall for Concordia is a special season for new beginnings since we have a newly appointed president of the University in the person of Alan Shepard. He comes to us from Ryerson University, where he was Academic Vice-President, and he comes with high recommendations and very positive reviews. His appointment closes a chapter in the University's history of malaise and uncertainty in connection with the early departure of two successive presidents. President Shepard's term will be a fresh start for the University. And I'm sure that I speak for a all of us in CUPARUC when I wish him and Concordia every success in the course of his tenure as President.

Dr. Shepard has expressed an interest in meeting with all segments of the University community. In response, I have indicated our interest in meeting him, and I have invited him to speak to us at our next general meeting on October 31st. President Shepard has graciously agreed to come to speak to us at our general meeting. I hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to hear Dr. Shepard in person.

## **M**essage du Président

Dans la nature, le printemps est la saison du renouveau et de nouveaux départs; pour les écoles et les universités, c'est l'automne où nous redémarrons. Pour nous à Concordia, il s'agit d'une saison spéciale, comme nous avons un tout nouveau président à Concordia en la personne d'Alan Shepard. Il nous est arrivé de l'Université Ryerson où il fut Vice-Président aux affaires académiques; il nous arrive avec de fortes recommandations et de commentaires très positives. Sa nomination clôt un chapitre dans l'histoire de malaises et d'incertitude suite aux départs précipités des deux présidents successifs. Le terme du Président Shepard annoncera un nouveau départ pour l'Université et je suis certain que je parle au nom de tous les membres de CUPARUC quand je lui souhaite tout le succès possible au cours de son mandat comme Président.

Le Dr. Shepard a fait connaître son intérêt à rencontrer tous les segments de la communauté universitaire. En réponse, j'ai exprimé notre intérêt à le rencontrer, et je l'ai invité à nous adresser la parole lors de notre prochaine assemblée générale qui aura lieu le 31 octobre. Le Président a consenti avec grâce. Je vous prie donc tous de prendre cette belle occasion de l'entendre en personne.



## C ONDOLENCES - DECEASED MEMBERS

- Geoffrey Adams
- Dawn Johnson
- Hilda Squibb
- Bill Condie
- David Taylor
- Hardy George
- Marc Gervais
- Agnes Wilcock
- Daniel Plamondon
- Appaswamy Padmanabhan
- Paul Hrasko
- Pierre Simon
- Isabelle Naubert Rioux

## NEXT MEETING

October 31, 2012 – H-767, SGW campus

10:00 (09:30 to ask questions of HR representatives.)

Guest Speaker: Dr. Alan Shepard

President of Concordia University

## N EW MEMBERS

- Hugh Hazelton
- William Curran
- Sandra Allen
- Suzanne Huot
- Sean Hartz
- Barbara Woodside
- James E. Jans
- Clement Lam
- Teresa Zuccaro
- Tuan Mai

## S OCIAL EVENTS

The Social Events Committee has nothing to announce at this time, but look forward to our Annual Christmas Luncheon in early December. Details and an invitation will be sent to you in November.

Meanwhile, Do you consider yourself to be *plugged into* the social scene? Are you a good organizer? The Social Events Committee is looking for some more volunteers. Contact Ms. Wendy Hedrich (whedrich@bell.net) if interested.

## *Memorial for Our Late Friend and Colleague, Geoffrey Adams*

*by Mair Verthuy*

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A memorial was held on September 23 2012 in the former Loyola chapel in honour of our late and beloved colleague, Geoffrey Adams, formerly a much prized member of the Loyola then Concordia History departments.

Geoff died in June after an extremely difficult period filled with pain and a variety of physical handicaps.

His last wish, so to speak, was that his close friends remember him at a party. In the end, however, his closest friends decided to organize a memorial grouping that would be open to a larger number of people. And so I too attended and, like others, spoke briefly.

It must be said that I was somewhat stunned and disappointed by the attendance. Members of Geoff's family attended and a few friends from the outside world. Senior citizens, mainly from the pre-merger Loyola History department, were certainly present, but the pre- or post-merger colleagues from the downtown campus were mainly noticeable by their absence. This was difficult for me to understand because of the very important rôle played by Geoff in the consolidation of the merger and the development of common causes, such as the union, various



Photo taken by Doreen Hutton at the annual CUPA Christmas Luncheon on December 7, 2011

benefits, etc. Indeed for some time he became the very active President of the Concordia University Faculty Association. Later, after his retirement, he also presided over the destiny of our Senior Citizens by taking on the task of running the Concordia University Pensioners' Association. Just over two years ago, at what I can confirm is an advanced age, he took up arms once more and chaired the Social Activities committee, up until he was admitted to hospital.

This is a man who gave his life for others, including running for the NDP, because he believed that we must all work for the betterment of the world.

He was also an excellent professor, an erudite person with three Rhodes scholars among his graduating students.

He tells us in his own epitaph that a Black American called Jack was the love of his life, and his homosexuality was discussed by

several people who obviously held him in the highest regard. The world has changed since he first entered the Loyola/Concordia community. Sometimes I wonder where all the closets have gone! A good title for a film perhaps?

Let me just finish by reminding us all that he was also somewhat of a hedonist - and a joker. He loved good food, good wine, good parties and good jokes.

A great loss.

If you have not paid your CUPARUC dues for 2012-2013, the coming General Meeting on October 31 is the ideal time. The dues are used to defray mailing and printing costs, and more importantly to defend the interests of our members when it comes pension and benefit issues.

In the past we have found it necessary to seek legal advice regarding certain proposals made by the University administration. This may become a more frequent occurrence in the near future. We know that the University is attempting to reduce costs where ever possible, and there have already been indications of an attempt to modify the Health Benefits, essentially reducing the level of coverage. We are not alone in this problem. We are also aware, via the CURAC association, that 15 other educational institutions in Canada are in the process of having to defend their retirement benefits from attempts to decrease the level of coverage (thereby lowering costs) by the respective administrations.

Help us defend the retirement benefits we have in place - pay your CUPARUC dues, and encourage other retirees you may know to join the association. The stronger the association is in terms of numbers, the more influence it can have in such negotiations. If you would like further information about the CUPARUC dues, contact Colin Waters at: colin.waters1956@gmail.com

John Woodrow: Newsletter Editor

The Newsletter continues with the Internet only version from this point. This is available from our website at: [cupa.concordia.ca](http://cupa.concordia.ca) If you still cannot obtain a copy, contact the webmaster by email at [roger@rogerkenner.ca](mailto:roger@rogerkenner.ca) and he will send you a copy by email as a Pdf document. We apologize to those who still cannot get access to this however, it is necessary to control printing and mailing costs

I have handled the CUPARUC web site for several years now, as well as the electronic mailing list. During this time, I have fairly well taken the Newsletter for granted.

Recently, however, editor asked me to complete the final assembly of this edition of the Newsletter, as he would be out of town. Most of the editorial work had already been done; the articles and contributions had been gathered or commissioned. All I had to do was to receive the final entries and then put them together, using *Microsoft Word*, based on the template of the previous issue.

Well, I must say, I've gained a new respect for those who do page layout on a computer. I realize that *Word* is not the tool that professionals use, but it is supposed to be good enough for productions like this. And I use *Word* myself all the time, but for much simpler projects.

It has become a mystery to me why *section breaks* and *text boxes* seem to take over and decide for themselves where things should end up on the printed page. To make things worse, for this guest editorship to happen, everything had to be moved from a *Mac* to a *Windows* machine, two solitudes which rival those written about in Quebec.

I have done my best to fill the editor's shoes, but I will be happy to return to my Web domain, where I simply have to worry about posting the already-completed Newsletter. (and where text boxes stay where they belong.)

Roger Kenner

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## *The Chain Link Fence*

by *Graeme Decarie*

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For these retirement years, I have turned to painting, writing daily and intemperate blogs about the quality of the Irving press in New Brunswick, and writing an autobiography for my children. To my surprise, I discovered in the latter endeavour that my whole life could be summed up in one, childhood moment. I submit this moment to you in the hope it may provide insight for what must be a host of retired autobiographers with children and grandchildren to serve.

### THE CHAIN LINK FENCE

In the beginning, there was the Dick and Jane Reader, authorized by the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal as the official text for grade one. The first page was a big picture of a neat, white bungalow with a big, green lawn. The bungalow had a clean, white path to the sidewalk where a boy stood, smiling. He was very clean, too. At the bottom of the page, it said: "See Dick." The next page had a picture of Dick running. The words said, "See Dick run." Building on that theme, the next page said, "Run, Dick, Run."

Then there was another picture, this time with a neat, clean girl in front of the neat, clean bungalow. The word at the bottom was, "Jane." Then the next picture showed Jane running; and at the bottom it said----well, you get the drift. Jane's appearance on stage was followed by that of Spot, their neat, clean dog. He or she (the illustration was unclear on this point) was a runner, too.

It was all fiction; and doubly so for us kids in grade one of Crystal Springs School, a four-room brick schoolhouse in the Villeray District of Montreal's North End. We knew it was fiction because none of us had ever seen a neat, white bungalow – or a lawn. Nor had we ever seen a Dick or a Jane dressed in clean clothes that fit, and each with his or her very own room in the neat, white bungalow.

Most of us lived in second-storey flats of two rooms. Our neighbours were manual labourers or

occasionally, like our neighbour, a small-time hood and gambler. Alas! Our neighbour would die early of a severe illness occasioned by falling into a river with chains wrapped around him. (It was to be my first lesson in the importance of hygiene.)

But he was still alive when he and his wife made the defining moment of my life possible. It happened in the summer after grade one. A member of our church had a shack improbably called Killarney Cottage, way out in the country in a village called St. Rose, and with a free beach on a river just a ten minute walk away. By sharing the cottage with our neighbour, we could have it really cheap for a whole week complete with outhouse, water barrel, and just everything.

I loved the beach; and walked to it every day. One day, though, I got a bit off track while heading back to Killarney Cottage. I turned a corner just to see what was there. I stopped. I stared. Ahead of me was a chain link fence that surrounded a big, neat lawn with a clean, white house. I recognized it right away. But this time it was different. It was real. There were even real children playing on the lawn. I went closer, gripping the wire to stare through at the children. Their clothes were neat, so neat they looked new. And they looked healthy, just like Dick and Jane.

I don't know how long I stared at them as they played on their very own swings and a slide. I knew I couldn't ask to play with them. So I just stared. Then, at last, I turned back to the path.

It was still a story book world, not mine. I couldn't be a part of a storybook world. I sensed, even then and with only a slight regret, that I would never play with Dick and Jane. Not ever.

My whole life, though, would be formed by chance meetings with Dicks and Janes and Spots, each set of them more alien than the one before. At each step, I learned of new horizons to life, wider possibilities, new values, new attitudes. And, with a lot of luck, it all worked out to a fuller life than I could have imagined.

But, like that day I stood clutching the fence and looking on, I always knew I could never become one of them. Nor, as I would also learn, did I want to.

Graeme Decarie



For most people, grammar ranks right up there with root canal. But then, our Con U members are not like ‘most people’, they are more receptive to an intellectual challenge, open to new ideas, concepts and understand rules and exceptions and their application, right? So what better way to have fun with grammar right here? With that, I sense that our English Majors and former English Professors are getting ready for an easy kill. I saw that one coming, so I added a small twist, for the rest of us!

You’ve seen the ads from a certain car company on TV and in newspapers that talk about “Das Auto”. You conclude that ‘Das’ simply means ‘the’ and you are right. Case almost closed.

Actually, it tells us more, much more. Here is where the fun starts and the twist kicks in.

Allow me to explain the significance the ‘article’ plays in the German language. In short, the article specifies the gender of the noun and whether it’s single or plural. Therefore, articles are indicators of the grammatical case. Articles, mostly used in front of nouns, are important to understand the gender of the noun, of which there are three, as follows: der (masculine), die (feminine) or das (neuter).

But the article does not define the noun, the gender of the noun defines what article to use, which in turn tells us the gender of the noun and it is then used to construct the correct singular or plural version of the noun. It’s as simple as that!

In our case, thanks to the article ‘das’, we now know that the gender of ‘Auto’ is neuter, and we are talking about one car, singular. The plural version would be “die Autos”. The article ‘die’, (pronounced ‘dee’) does not change the gender of Auto to feminine, but only indicates that we are now talking about more than one Auto, as indicated by the appended ‘s’.

That does not mean that all plural nouns get an ‘s’ appended. In fact, there are six different endings for plural nouns, like ‘e’, ‘en’, ‘nen’, ‘n’, ‘er’ and ‘s’.

However, the plural of some nouns is only indicated by the plural article like in the word for ‘window/windows’, das Fenster (singular) /die Fenster’ (plural). And finally there is the famous ‘umlaut’, which is two small dots over an ‘a’, ‘u’ or ‘o’, but only in some nouns. That also changes the pronunciation and may or may not use one of the above mentioned appended plural endings.

By the way, the actual ‘thing/noun’ you are talking about does not have a gender, but the word that describes it has. For example, there are two different words for car, “das Auto” (neuter) and “der Wagen” (masculine). But if you talk about the brand name of a car it’s always ‘der’ (masculine), like in ‘der VW’.



**Figure 1** the « umlaut »

This seemingly simple ‘article’ business creates a great divide. It separates non-native speakers from the native German speakers.

Non-native speakers will never get the articles exactly right, ever! Guessing will not work!

Quick reality check: What would be the article/gender for the German word for ‘girl’ or ‘old woman’? If you think ‘feminine’, you guessed and you are wrong. It’s ‘neuter’!

Linking gender to a specific concept will not work either. For example, there are three different words for bodies of water: ocean, sea and lake, like in “der Ozean (m), das Meer (n) and die See (f)”, each one with a different gender!

That leaves you with no choice but to learn the gender of all nouns by heart, along with the article! Good luck! Fortunately the nouns are easy to detect, they all start with a capital letter.

But there is a hitch! The German language allows you to create compound words on the fly, made of several nouns, where each one may have a different gender! In this case, what would be the gender for a compound word?

The rule says that the gender of the last noun of the compound word determines the gender and therefore

the article of the entire compound word, as long as you can figure out what the last word is because *it could be a very long word like this*.

But, compound words don't have to be nouns, they could be 'adjective+noun' or vice versa, 'preposition+noun', 'preposition+verb', just to name a few.

For the sake of completeness, I need to mention that a handful of nouns have multiple genders, based on region, which work with either 'der, die or das'. And then, there are those nouns that are spelled and pronounced the same, but depending on their article they have a totally different meaning! Like the words for 'contents or salary', 'der Gehalt' or 'das Gehalt'. In this case, the article in conjunction with the noun defines the meaning!

If you're still with me, let's look at the 'indefinite' articles. The indefinite articles (like 'a', or 'an' in English) are different depending on the gender of the noun and whether it is single or plural, but since there is no plural for the indefinite article it is omitted!

## **OH ! Canada! Ehhh!**

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- If the speed limit on the highway is 80 km -- You're going 95 and everybody is passing you, you may live in Canada.
- If driving is better in the winter because the potholes are filled with snow, you may live in Canada.
- If you know all 4 seasons: Almost winter, winter, still winter, and road construction, you may live in Canada.
- If you have more miles on your snow blower than your car, you may live in Canada.
- If you find -2 degrees 'a little chilly', you may live in Canada.
- If you install security lights on your house and garage, but leave both unlocked, you may live in Canada.
- If you carry jumper cables in your car and your wife knows how to use them, you may live in Canada.

The definite article is of course used to indicate specific nouns, therefore 'der', 'die' or 'das' are the definite articles, hence "Das Auto".

If you can't get enough of this topic, there is more. Believe it or not, there are more articles like for example: "den, dem and des". Those would be for the nominative, accusative, dative and genitive case for masculine, feminine and plural words. In the neuter form, the articles would be "das, dem or des".

At this point, I'm just gonna let it sink in and if you are not quite sure of what just happened here, don't feel bad, you are in good company!

None other than Mark Twain, in his book 'A Tramp Abroad', where he describes his travels in Europe and his desire to study the German language, remarked: "Surely there is not another language that is so slipshod and systemless, and so slippery and elusive to the grasp".

As for me, I never get the articles wrong. Ever!

**B**RING ANYONE TO MIND....?

*"There are some who start their retirement long before they stop working."*

**Robert Half**

## *My Extreme Sport* *by Roger Kenner*

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When I tell people that my favourite “sport” activity is taking my bicycle out into the countryside, to travel from town to town, they sometimes react as if I were telling them about the *Tour de France*. I’m flattered, in the interests of full disclosure, that is far from the case.

The truth is, I ride very slowly, with only the minimum of pressure on my pedals. I often average only 8 to 10km an hour. It’s not an endurance race; it’s a way to quietly enjoy the open countryside, along quiet roads, and at a speed where one can take in all the sounds and sights and smells that form the experience. When I see a cow, I’m going to be looking at that cow for the next few minutes. It’s doesn’t just whiz by in flash. I can stop according to my whim, and on a dime. I can get off and walk my bike along footpaths. I can take as many pictures as I want. This is part of what draws me.

Ten kilometers an hour may not seem very fast, but after six hours, I’ve gone 60km! When I’m on a trip, I average between 60 and 100km a day. I try to get an early start each morning, so that I can leisurely enjoy the day and still arrive at my destination. I often camp in campgrounds (though of late I’ve grown to like frequent motels and B&Bs more often), but I don’t cook out. Once my tent is set up, I head into town to find a nice restaurant.

Some people react by exclaiming that I must be in great shape. Well, I wish that were so. I am in adequate shape, but hardly ready win any races. It’s not an aerobic sport. I almost never break into a sweat or breath heavily. I take hills about as slow as one can go and still keep the bicycle upright.

The key is endurance, being able to continue at a quiet pace hour after hour. I don’t press hard on the pedals. I’m not worried about how many revolutions I’m making per minute. I go at a nice, easy pace, keeping constant pressure on my feet and not worrying about constant speed.

I’ve made some trips that I’m proud of. In the scheme of things, they are not that spectacular, but they satisfy me.

My first major inter-city trip was from Montreal to New York City. My wife humoured me, I do not think she really expected me to finish. I rode and camped for the first three days, along the Vermont side of Lake Champlain (where it’s flat.) At the end of the third day, she met me at Whitehall, at the bottom of the lake and we started staying in motels. She would send me off in the morning and we would meet at suppertime. She was content knowing that she was never more than an hour away from me by car. (and we both had cell phones.) When I got to Albany at the end of the fourth day, I think she became to realize I just might make it. I got to Battery Park at the foot of Manhattan at the end of seventh day.

I’ve since taken other, longer rides. To name a few trips, I’ve gone from Montreal to Niagara Falls, over 12 days; from Montreal to St. John, NB, also over 12 days; and around Lac St. Jean and home, over 10 days. My wife calls it my “extreme sport.”

Each seasons starts pretty much out of shape. I start with rides of a couple of hours length, such as to the Lachine lighthouse or down along the river by LaSalle and Verdun. A milestone is my first ride out to Ste. Anne de Bellevue and back. By early June I try to do an “all day” ride, such as up to Oka, across to Hudson on the ferry, and then home. (For ten hours or so.)

Then I am ready to begin my season. Lately, now that my wife has started a business, it is hard to get those 12-day rides in, but I do my best to take advantage of any opportunity. When she goes to a conference, I drive her and ride around while she attends. Last year I rode from southwest of Boston up to Kennebunkport, Me. (where we met at the end of her conference.) I’ve started taking two-day “mini-rides”: Out to some local town, beyond my normal one-day round-trip range, overnight at a motel, and back the next day. The last such ride was to St. Jean.

You can find accounts of some of my bicycle trips on my website at [rogerkenner.ca/Bike](http://rogerkenner.ca/Bike)