

# 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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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we approach Fall, I hope all members have had a successful and productive summer. We are now preparing for our Fall Meeting of the Association which is scheduled to be held at 10:00 a.m. on October 25, 2001 at the SGW Faculty Club (Room H-767) on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of the Hall Building. We look forward to a good turnout. Details of the meeting agenda and speaker accompany this newsletter. I would like to welcome Suzanne Belson to the Executive. She will handle some of the Secretarial duties such as preparation of minutes of meetings and notices, mailings, etc. Her willingness to serve is sincerely appreciated. As you are aware, it takes a number of people to make the Association run smoothly, so if you would like to help us by volunteering some of your time, please let me know by calling the CUPA office at (514) 848-8755 or by e-mail at [cuparuc@alcor.concordia.ca](mailto:cuparuc@alcor.concordia.ca)

The University's Benefits Committee made its recommendations to the Board of Governors concerning the out-of-province coverage under the health insurance plan and the demutualization issue for retirees under the life insurance plan. Both of these issues have been satisfactorily resolved in the opinion of the Executive. With respect to the health insurance coverage for those travelling out of the province, effective January 1st 2002, the coverage **per trip** has been increased from 60 to 180 days, while the reinstatement period after the 180 days have been used will remain at 30 days. Therefore those "Snowbirds" planning to leave their home province after November 2, 2001 will be covered for 60 days until December 31 and will then have 120 days of coverage left in their 'bank' as of January 1, 2002. This agreement with Clarica virtually reinstates the coverage we had under the previous Met Life plan.

Prescription drug claims for members over the age of 65 who are covered by the RAMQ plan have encountered processing problems for Clarica and their agency (BCE Emergis) who handle the claims processing through the use of the card. This question and the fact that those members required to use the RAMQ plan have to pay premiums to RAMQ and for Clarica coverage is being

## MOT DU PRÉSIDENT

Avec l'approche de l'automne, j'espère que tous les membres ont eu un été producteur. En ce moment nous préparons l'assemblée d'automne de l'ARUC, laquelle doit avoir lieu le 25 octobre 2001 à 10h00 dans la salle H-767 du Pavillon Hall (SGW Faculty Club). Nous nous attendons à une assistance nombreuse. Vous trouverez ci-joint les détails de l'ordre du jour et de l'orateur invité. Je souhaite la bienvenue à Suzanne Belson comme nouvelle membre du Conseil, où elle se chargera de certaines fonctions de la Secrétaire-Trésorière, telles que la rédaction des procès-verbaux, les envois par la poste, etc. Nous lui savons gré d'avoir bien voulu accepter ces responsabilités. Il faut plusieurs mains pour que l'Association fonctionne. Toute personne ayant quelques heures à nous offrir est invité à s'adresser au bureau de l'ARUC au (514) 848-8755 ou par courriel à [cuparuc@alcor.concordia.ca](mailto:cuparuc@alcor.concordia.ca).

Le Comité des Avantages sociaux de l'Université a adressé au Conseil des Gouverneurs ses recommandations sur la protection hors-province et la démutualisation du régime d'assurance-vie en ce qui concerne les personnes à la retraite. De l'avis de votre Conseil, les solutions apportées à ces deux questions sont satisfaisantes. En ce qui concerne la protection hors-province, celle-ci est passé de 60 à 180 jours **par voyage**, à partir du 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 2002, alors que la période de réintégration suivant la période de 180 jours demeure fixé à 30 jours. Les vacanciers du Sud («snowbirds») ayant l'intention de quitter leur province de résidence après le 2 novembre 2001 disposeront de 60 jours jusqu'au 31 décembre, puis de 120 jours à partir du 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 2002. Clarica, en acceptant ce changement a rétabli, à toutes fins pratiques, la protection offerte jadis par le régime de la Metlife.

En ce qui concerne les médicaments, les personnes âgées de 65 ans et plus, et qui participent au régime de la RAMQ ont connu des problèmes à l'égard de Clarica et de leur agence BCE Emergis, auxquelles on a confié le traitement des demandes provenant de l'utilisation de la carte. Cette question, ainsi que la situation selon laquelle les participants au régime de la RAMQ doivent payer des primes à celle-ci aussi bien qu'à Clarica, font l'objet d'une

reviewed by the sub-committee at the present time. It is our intention to try to improve these benefits. However, as is the case with all health insurance plans, costs continue to increase, with potential impact upon the premium rates for all participants. We are hopeful that these items will be finalized before the New Year.

As for the demutualization issue, this was sent to another sub-committee of the Benefits Committee and took several months of formidable discussion before being resolved. The principle agreed to by all interested parties (active faculty, active staff, retirees and the Administration) was that any benefit received by the members (employees and retirees) should be in a form that was as tax effective as possible. With the approval of the Executive, I believe that we have negotiated an arrangement that will benefit all retirees now and in the future and reduce some of the tax we are required to pay for the premiums paid by the University for life insurance. I expect to make a full and detailed report at the Fall meeting.

The CUPA Scholarship Fund, which my predecessor Geoff Adams initiated, has now been created, primarily as a result of the demutualization situation discussed above. The conditions and terms of reference of the scholarships are being worked out with the Financial Aid and Awards Office and further details should be available at the Fall meeting.

On the matter of the class action suit a number of preliminary steps and interviews were held over the summer months by the various interested parties, but the actual submission of the Motion for a Class Action is still pending. It is expected that this will happen within the next few weeks. We were encouraged by the response to our request for contributions to the Legal Fund. Your support is sincerely appreciated. As you are aware, legal advice and representation does not come cheaply and we are doing our best to keep the costs to a minimum, but if you haven't made a contribution to the fund (we suggested a levy of \$20.00) you may still do so by sending a cheque made payable to "Concordia University in trust". Mail to: CUPA/ Non-actives Legal Fund, c/o Audrey Williams, Secretary-Treasurer, Room L-VE 328-4, Loyola Campus, Concordia University, 7141 Sherbrooke St. W., Montreal, QC, H4B 1R6.

Finally, we have been approached by the University to participate in this year's Centraide (United Way) Campaign. Subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, letters and pledge cards will be sent to all retirees so that they may support this endeavour if they so wish.

Hope to see you at the Fall meeting.

étude de la part du sous-comité à l'heure actuelle. Nous nous efforçons de faire améliorer ces avantages. En même temps, comme c'est le cas pour tout régime d'assurance-santé, les coûts ne cessent d'augmenter, ce qui pourrait mener à une augmentation des primes pour tous les participants. Nous espérons voir une résolution de ces problèmes avant la fin de l'année en cours.

Quant à la démutualisation, ce problème a été résolu au bout de plusieurs mois de négociations difficiles dans un autre sous-comité du Comité des Avantages sociaux. Tous les intéressés (professeurs et administrateurs actifs, retraités et Administration) avaient accepté le principe cherchant à éviter autant que possible que n'importe quel avantage soit sujet à l'impôt sur le revenu. Appuyé par le Conseil, je suis persuadé que nous avons négocié un accord qui profitera à tous les retraités actuels et à venir, et qui réduira, au moins en partie, l'impôt que nous sommes tenus de payer sur les primes payées par l'Université pour l'assurance-vie. Je compte en présenter un rapport détaillé lors de la prochaine assemblée.

Le projet de créer le *CUPA Scholarship Fund*, initié par mon prédécesseur, Geoff Adams, a pu être mis en vigueur, surtout comme suite du règlement de la question de la démutualisation. Les conditions de l'octroi de telles bourses sont en voie d'être établies en collaboration avec le Service d'Aide financière et de plus amples renseignements devraient être disponibles lors de la prochaine assemblée.

Au sujet du recours collectif, quelques initiatives préliminaires et des entrevues ont eu lieu pendant l'été à la demande des intéressés, mais la proposition en vue du lancement d'un recours collectif demeure toujours en instance. On s'attend à ce que celle-ci soit initiée au courant des prochaines semaines. Nous sommes très encouragés par la réponse à notre sollicitation de fonds. Vos contributions sont fort appréciées. Vous n'êtes pas sans savoir que les services juridiques coûtent cher, et nous faisons de notre mieux pour que ces coûts soient réduits au minimum. Si vous n'avez pas encore contribué (nous vous avons proposé une contribution de 20\$), il n'est pas trop tard. Envoyez votre chèque fait à l'ordre de «Concordia University in trust» à: CUPA/Non-actives Legal Fund, c/o Audrey Williams, L-VE-328-4, Campus Loyola, Université Concordia, 7141 ouest, rue Sherbrooke, Montréal, QC, H4B 1R6.

Finalement, l'Université nous a invités à participer à la campagne de Centraide. Sujet à l'approbation du Conseil, une lettre et une carte de souscription seront envoyées à toutes les personnes à la retraite, afin qu'elles puissent appuyer cette initiative, selon leur gré.

Dans l'attente de vous voir lors de l'assemblée,

**John Hall**

## LEARNING IN RETIREMENT

by Sheila McDonough

*(At the May meeting of CUPA, Sheila told your editor about her experience with the McGill Institute for Learning in Retirement. While institutional pride made us hesitate to vaunt the merits of other institutions, we felt that there was nothing wrong in drawing the attention of our members to worth-while activities, wherever they are held, so we asked Sheila to write up her experience for us. Who knows? It may inspire Concordia to launch something similar, although it already has its Senior Non-credit Programme – please see p.9 – Ed.)*

In 1989, the McGill Centre for Continuing Education placed an ad. in the newspaper, inviting anyone interested in learning activities designed for retired persons to come to a meeting. This was done because participants in an earlier course at the Centre had indicated interest in such a project. Those who responded, and came to the meeting, became the nucleus of a group of persons who organized what has become the McGill Institute for Learning in Retirement.. These organizers looked into models of such learning activities, and decided to follow in certain respects models for peer learning that were being used at Harvard, UNB and UBC. After some debate, the Senate of McGill agreed to accept the proposal for the new institute. The University has cooperated in making space available. As it presently exists, MILR has an office and several class-rooms on the first floor of 688 Sherbrooke St. W. Most of the administration is done by volunteers, with the exception of one paid administrator. Persons who become members for a semester pay \$75, and are entitled to take part in any two seminars, and attend special lectures. They also get a McGill library card.

Those who conduct the seminars are called moderators, and they pay the same fee. No more than twenty persons are allowed to enroll in any one seminar. Anyone can offer himself or herself as a moderator. The moderator designs a topic for the seminar. The topic is submitted to a curriculum committee that may or may not approve it. Once approved, the seminar is advertized as part of a one-semester programme. In fall, winter and spring, seminars are given during the first four days of the week, and on Friday special lectures are offered. No exams or compulsory essays are expected of participants. The moderator is expected to elicit voluntary

presentations from participants.

Some moderators offer seminars in their own previous areas of specialization, while others venture into new areas. Since the model is peer-learning, the idea is that people share their insights in a relatively unstructured way. The participants are self-selected in that they are retired persons who want to learn new things, to talk with others and to use their minds. They are present because they want to take part in the peer-learning process. Some members of the Institute have taken part in projects sponsored by Health Canada, in which they have tried to devise ways of evaluating the efficacy of the MILR. The results have been positive.

The consensus is that participating actively in peer-learning of this kind is stimulating and useful for the retired person. My own view is that since we tend to remember the past more as get older, we have a remarkable opportunity to try to sort out all that we have experienced, and to synthesize our experiences. Even the question as to why we remember what we do is significant in itself. A radical thought might be that the welfare of our species requires the old to remember and to transmit insight based on experience.

My own experience with the MILR has been positive. I have enjoyed the contact with other persons who have lived through much of the twentieth century, who are interested in talking about what has happened, what we have learned and what we might still learn. The participants are representative of Montreal in that they come from every imaginable part of the world. They also come from many different professional and family backgrounds. There is a francophone presence. I was in one group dealing with writing autobiography. Many of the participants wanted to learn how to write for their grandchildren. All of us in the group learned a lot about each other in the process of this journey of recovering our memories of the past.

One of the insights I have gained from my own discipline of Religious Studies is that grandparents often play a significant rôle in society, and probably have done so from the Stone Age onwards. They are a kind of priorities source, in the sense that they have had the time and the experience to sort out what has been significant and useful in their own lives, and to transmit whatever they think to be of value to their grandchildren. I was personally fortunate to have known well all four of my

own grandparents, and it is this that has given me a sense of how cultures move over time by an on-going process of re-interpreting, rediscovering re-evaluating, and so forth, all that comes to us from the past.

The answer as to why I became involved in helping develop Women's Studies at Concordia is that my maternal grandmother, a teacher of English literature, was, in Calgary in the 1920s, a member of a group of women interested in English literature. Nelly McClung was in the same group, and her biography says that it was a very lively bunch of women. A grandmother whose mind is steeped in Jane Austen and George Eliot tends to produce granddaughters who think for themselves. I also tried to help getting inter-disciplinary Peace Studies going in the University. This has been less successful, but I still hope it will happen. My mother was fourteen in 1914, living in Calgary. She explained to me how exciting it had felt to watch her friend, Jack McClung (Nelly's son) going by in a parade, twirling his baton, as the young soldiers marched off. He came back an alcoholic, as did many of her

friends. I understood that what my generation had better do is find out why such disasters as World War I happen, and what can be done to see that it never happens again. I still think that this should be our highest priority. So I am in favour of helping grandparents clarify what it is that they have learned, and how to transmit this wisdom. Yes, my mother's granddaughter is a peacenik.

In the summer, MILR offers a programme called Wonderful Wednesdays, in which there is a two-hour programme every Wednesday all summer. The topics are extremely diverse: the Vienna Philharmonic, Robert Frost, the biologic causes of violence, Montreal architecture, Arthur Koestler, murder in Montreal, the Cambrian explosion, Jazz, the physiology and pathology of sleep, and the ballet Cinderella. This is just a sample of the diversity of offerings. Calendars for the fall, winter and summer programmes can be picked up at the MILR office (514-398-8234; fax 398-2757; E-mail [milr@conted.lan.mcgill.ca](mailto:milr@conted.lan.mcgill.ca); website [www.mcgill.ca/conted/milr/milrdir.htm](http://www.mcgill.ca/conted/milr/milrdir.htm)).

## THE INCOMPLEAT GARDENER

by Stirling Dorrance

*(Retired to Antigonish, NS, Stirling leads a busy life, with involvement in local voluntary organizations. He also contributes regularly to a local newspaper, and the following is one such contribution – Ed.)*

I have always maintained that I am one of that special breed of amateur gardener that approaches the annual labour of love with one over-weening rule: if you can't eat it, you don't grow it. Among other considerations, this simple principle eliminates the aesthetic judgments that must accompany the design, planning and cultivation of a flower garden of annuals and perennials, mixed and matched, not to speak of the need to master a whole vocabulary of latinized botanical nomenclature that avoids confusing one plant with another within the vast range of floral phenomena (what are "bishop's gaiters" called where you live?).

And yet, for eminently practical reasons, one must not be entirely immovable. John Donne expressed it one way: "No man is an island". This is particularly so with a man married for something like a half-century to the same person, who may indulge her own, if odd, preferences. After all, even the Deity Himself, having created in His infinite wisdom a male of the human species – Adam – and given His ability to grasp simultaneously

past, present and future, must have speedily decided to balance things out, and along came Eve. Thus does the need to compromise touch us all.

It is in such a roundabout way that we come to the *potager*, the near-perfect garden compromise, offering to ensure continued long-term domestic *détente*, if not complete harmony. I had never actually heard of *potager* until I read a gardening article in the newspaper during our first retirement year, partly spent wandering around Europe. A *potager*, it was explained, is an English modification of ancient French "formalized productive gardening", versions of which are grown each year at Fortress Louisbourg. So what did I do to establish a *potager* that reflected a combination of edible veggies while at the same time conveying the colourful blooming splendour of an English cottage garden? I'd never heard of most of the exotic plants called for in the U.K. *potager*. Besides, merely because a colourful bud was reputedly eatable, this did not mean that a typical British-immigrant-boiled-potatoes-overcooked-beef-and-vegetables palate would accept it. Suppose, for instance, that we are in Berkshire, England, and we arrange our 12'x16' plot to include *orach hortensis rubra* (bull's blood root), florence fennel and similar arcana. Back here in Antigonishire, we simply substitute rhubarb chard, flow-

ering chives, multi-coloured lettuce, ornamental cabbage and kale, golden peppers and cherry tomatoes, red runner beans and orange nasturtiums (capers).

Nine years further down the road of life, what do we find coming along in this year's *potager*? As in all things, despite the best will in the world, matters pursue their own course and life is not exactly as intended or planned. Did you ever play that game to keep the kids occupied as the family car drove along country roads, passing farm after farm, where the trick was to guess who was really in

charge – the husband or the wife? Thus it is today with my *potager*, that garden designed to meet the tastes and desires of each of us equally – beauty and edibility – the goal of civilized compromise. But look closely. There is none of it that can be eaten; there is all of it, perennially, to be exulted upon as a garden plot, a magnificent and summer-long variable in its verdure and flower arrangement. A pretty clear indication, I'd say, of who, despite pretensions to the contrary, really runs our place.

## RETIRED OBSERVATIONS FROM VICTORIA, BC

by Cedric Marsh

*(As part of our continuing effort to keep in touch with those of our members who have gone off to distant parts, we asked Cedric, formerly a member of the Centre for Building Studies, to tell us about his post-retirement experience. We note that his comments on Western living, while generally positive, are rather more balanced, if less lyrical, than some of those from previous contributors – Ed.)*

It is not that Western fields are greener, but that they are less often white. The initial escape to a beer-commercial life on Lake Muskoka in Ontario was ended by a recall to the duties of *academe*, willingly accepted because of the insufferable swarms of mosquitoes. Difficulties of driving in the Montreal winter were solved by the gift of a Jeep from my daughter, but the history-making ice-storm ended that comfort, and a world that is not too hot nor too cold, with flowers in February and no bugs, was very appealing. On the other hand, it is never hot enough or cold enough.

I used to claim that it was politics that drove me out, but BC sets another standard. In Quebec, at least we knew why they did what they did, but here no-one seems to know, not *why* they did it, but *what* they did.

The easy laid-back life is reflected in the driving habits of the aged, and one looks back to the fun of Quebec traffic. Life is easily filled with walking groups enjoying the many miles of woodland trails, with tennis and golf wherever you turn, innumerable marinas for the boaters and the usual collection of service clubs (I belonged to Westmount Rotary, so found a club here). I enjoy an occasional game of squash, but there is no MAAA. However, the Union Club provides a pleasant social life. What is missing is a gliding club (Richard Guy

in the Centre for Building Studies had introduced me to this sport). Gliding is not practical here because, if you land out, you're in the sea, so I have taken the introduction to power flying.

My home is near the University of Victoria, and I have access to an office and the Library, but they have no Civil Engineering and as, in today's world, most of the facilities we need are on our own desk, there is little need for the University's services. On the other hand, the symphony concerts are appreciated.

The world of engineering has not faded totally. I am secretary of the local branch of the Engineering Institute of Canada, attend conferences and have presented papers in Auckland, NZ, Munich, Fort Lauderdale and Washington, DC, as well as here in Victoria. I still chair committees and act on the Standing Committee for Structural Design for the National Building Code of Canada. The real irony is that I have designed a house to be built over a salmon stream – quite a challenging structure – but I have to hire a local structural engineer because I am not yet registered in BC!

The Concordia Webster Library building sports cross braces that incorporate Pall Friction Dampers, developed in Concordia's Centre for Building Studies to control building motion during earthquakes. Dr. Pall now markets them across North America, and there was quite a sense of pride to see them being installed in one of the world's largest factory buildings at the Boeing plant near Seattle. I give talks on the subject occasionally, as there are also buildings in BC that enjoy the security this system provides.

There is no shortage of activity and interest here, but the circle of friends acquired and enjoyed over nearly half a century is difficult to replace – and Montreal is a city.

## SUMMARY OF THE 2001 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The President and Chair, John Hall, welcomed members, with a particular welcome to non-members, who had been invited to attend. Some sixty persons were present.

The Minutes of the meeting of Oct. 31, 2000 were approved. It was noted that the essence of these minutes had been communicated to members through the newsletter.

Professor Graeme Decarie, a member of the History Department and a well-known radio commentator gave a presentation on the immediate and long-term future of Canada, Quebec and Montreal. He was introduced by Geoff Adams, who stressed the speaker's rôle as an active and committed representative of the English-language community, who used his history background to express his commitment. Professor Decarie, who rarely hesitates to speak his mind, prefaced his remarks by pointing out that his connections with the University went back to his days as a student in the old Sir George Williams Evening High School, followed by undergraduate studies in the College. He expressed the view that much current analysis is back-room chatter and that we must strive to rid ourselves of naïveté in our judgments. We are, for example, encouraged to divide the world into "good guys" and "bad guys", and we may be unaware that many of the terrible acts committed in the world are done by "ordinary" people and not by monsters. He painted a bleak picture of the future of Quebec.

In his view, there is not much difference between Liberals and Péquistes, if only because neither party has a true philosophy, and they are forced to fall back on the language issue. In general, democracy and government are being subverted by corporate interests. Traditional religion is being replaced by a new religion based on corporate culture, which is as intolerant of dissent as traditional religions have been in the past and, in many cases, still are. Politicians, he suggested, are seeking to destroy the health system because their backers – for example, multinational drug manufacturers – are only interested in making money.

In the context of this corporate takeover, Quebec and national politics are becoming increasingly irrelevant. As for the future of Montreal, the "megacity" project is supported by the present Quebec government in order to gain control and unload an increasing

## RÉSUMÉ DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE ANNUELLE DE 2001

Le Président, John Hall, souhaite la bienvenue aux membres, ainsi qu'aux non-membres, auxquels on avait adressé une invitation. L'assistance se chiffrait à une soixantaine.

Le procès-verbal de l'assemblée du 31 octobre 2000 fut approuvé. L'essentiel du contenu avait déjà été communiqué aux membres par l'entremise du bulletin de nouvelles.

Le professeur Graeme Decarie, membre du département d'histoire et politicologue à la radio, fit une allocution sur l'avenir du Canada, du Québec et de Montréal, à court ainsi qu'à long termes. Il fut présenté par Geoff Adams, qui souligna le rôle de l'invité en tant que représentant actif et pleinement engagé de la communauté de langue anglaise, et dont la formation en histoire inspire cet engagement. Le professeur Decarie, bien connu pour son franc-parler, commença par rappeler que ses rapports avec l'Université remontaient à l'époque de ses études à la Sir George Williams Evening High School, suivies par ses études de premier cycle au Collège. Il se dit d'avis qu'une bonne partie de l'analyse courante n'est que des discussions de taverne, et que nous devons nous débarrasser de la naïveté dans nos jugements. On nous encourage, par exemple, à diviser le monde en deux – les «bons» et les «mauvais» – sans que nous nous rendions compte du fait que bon nombre des actions épouvantables commises un peu partout le sont par des gens «ordinaires», et non pas par des monstres. Il brossa un tableau plutôt sombre de l'avenir du Québec.

Selon lui, il n'y a pas beaucoup de différence entre Libéraux et Péquistes, ne serait-ce qu'en raison, dans chaque cas, de l'absence d'une véritable philosophie, de sorte qu'ils sont tous les deux obligés d'avoir recours à la question linguistique. En général, la démocratie et le gouvernement sont victimes des intérêts du monde de l'entreprise. Les religions traditionnelles se voient remplacées par une nouvelle religion qui trouve ses assises dans la culture de l'entreprise, laquelle n'est pas plus prête à tolérer la dissidence que ne l'étaient les religions traditionnelles dans le passé – ou même à l'heure actuelle. Les hommes politiques, suggéra-t-il, cherchent à détruire le système de santé publique, parce que leurs commanditaires – par exemple, les grandes entreprises pharmaceutiques – ne pensent qu'à faire de l'argent.

Dans ce contexte de mainmise de la part de l'entreprise, la politique, aux niveaux fédéral et provincial, devient de moins en moins pertinente. Quant à l'avenir de Montréal, le gouvernement du Québec appuie le projet de «mégacité» afin de se doter du pouvoir et de se décharger d'un nombre croissant de responsabilités financières sur les municipalités. La fonction du Comité de Transition est donc de faire en sorte

amount of financial responsibility on municipalities. The job of the Transition Committee is therefore to ensure that the Government plan is fully implemented. Pressed to leave his listeners with some hope, however faint, he pointed out that history does not always follow a straight line, illustrating this comment by his own past experience of the decreasing length of women's skirts, which had at one point seemed to be reaching vanishing point, only to plunge the following year below the knee. Jack Bordan thanked Professor Decarie for, amongst other things, communicating so much gloom in such an entertaining fashion.

Geoff Adams, speaking for the Nominating Committee, composed of Joyce Barclay, Larry Boyle and himself, proposed that Suzanne Belson be appointed member-at-large, with a specific mandate to take over part of the Secretary-Treasurer's portfolio. The proposal was approved. This would require an amendment to the relevant part of the Constitution, and such an amendment would be brought forward at the October meeting. Roland Beaudoin had asked to be replaced as CUPA representative on the Alliance of Quebec Seniors. Geoff had agreed to replace him temporarily until a replacement was found, and he asked for a volunteer.

Bob Pallen reported that interest in activities had continued to decline – for example, only one person had contacted him about the proposed Big Band event in May. Only the Day at the Races and the Annual Luncheon seemed to be viable activities – perhaps because eating is involved? – and these would be repeated in the coming year, the Luncheon having been scheduled for December 6 in the Hall Building Faculty Club.

For the Pensions and Benefits Committees, the President drew attention to the letter recently sent out by Howard Fink and himself to all non-active members of the Pension Plan on the matter of the potential class-action suit. He stressed the importance of CUPA input and the need for financial support to cover legal fees. Our point of view differed from that of the University and from that of CUFA, although both the latter appreciated our participation. If the class-action suit were won, the University would have to pay some \$120m. into the fund, but in that case the Government would have to de-register the plan. We were also fighting the possibility of an out-of-court settlement between the unions and the University. In recent cases of out-of-court settlements, fund surpluses had gone to pay legal fees, so that the likelihood of pension indexing would be reduced. Another possible initiative was the CUFA interest in splitting

que le projet gouvernemental soit mis en oeuvre dans sa totalité. Comme l'auditoire insistait pour qu'il lui laisse entrevoir au moins une lueur d'espoir, il avoua que l'histoire n'évolue pas nécessairement en ligne droite, et il cita à titre d'exemple l'évolution de la longueur des jupes, laquelle semblait à un moment se rapprocher du degré zéro, avant de tomber, l'année suivante, au dessous du genou. Jack Bordan remercia le professeur Decarie d'avoir su, entre autres, exprimer tant de sombres perspectives d'une façon si amusante.

Geoff Adams, au nom du Comité des candidatures, composé de Joyce Barclay, de Larry Boyle et lui-même, proposa que Suzanne Belson soit nommée membre général, avec le mandat d'assumer une partie des tâches de la secrétaire-trésorière, dont le mandat devait être scindé en deux. Cette proposition fut adoptée. Une telle division des responsabilités exigerait que la section pertinente des Statuts et Règlements soit amendée, après consultation lors de l'assemblée du mois d'octobre. Roland Beaudoin avait demandé d'être remplacé comme représentant de l'ARUC auprès de la Coalition des Aînées et Aînés du Québec. Geoff avait accepté de le remplacer temporairement, en attendant la nomination d'un successeur, et il fit appel aux volontaires éventuels.

Bob Pallen rapporta que la baisse d'intérêt pour les activités s'accroissait – par exemple, une seule personne l'avait contacté au sujet de la soirée «Big Band» proposée pour le mois de mai. Seuls la «Journée aux Courses» et le Dîner annuel continuaient à attirer des participants – peut-être parce qu'on y mangeait? – et ces deux événements étaient prévus pour la saison qui s'en vient, la date du Dîner étant fixée au 6 décembre dans le Faculty Club du pavillon Hall.

En ce qui concerne le Comité de Retraite et le Comité des Avantages sociaux, le Président fit état de la lettre envoyée récemment par Howard Fink et lui-même à tous les participants non-actifs au Régime de Retraite au sujet du recours collectif éventuel. Il souligna l'importance de la participation de l'ARUC, ainsi que le besoin d'un appui financier pour faire face aux frais judiciaires. Notre point de vue diffère de celui de l'Université et de celui de l'APUC, même si toutes les deux voient notre participation d'un très bon oeil. Si les demandeurs gagnaient le recours collectif, l'Université pourrait être appelée à contribuer quelque 120 millions au fonds de retraite, mais dans ce cas-là, le Gouvernement serait obligé d'annuler sa reconnaissance du régime de retraite. Nous avons également essayé d'empêcher que l'affaire soit réglée à l'amiable entre les syndicats et l'Université, puisque dans des cas récents de tels règlements, les surplus de la caisse de retraite avaient servi à payer les frais judiciaires, rendant ainsi l'indexation des pensions plus difficile. Parmi d'autres possibilités on craint que l'APUC ne cherche à

the fund in two, depending on whether the pensioner is identified with faculty or administration, and that would cause much difficulty for non-actives. It would appear that the main aim of the CSN was to ensure union control over the investment pattern. Recent meetings of the Pensions Committee had been cancelled, and the next one was scheduled for June.

Regarding Benefits, on the matter of out-of-Province coverage, his sub-committee's proposal for improvements had been submitted and it was hoped to have these in force before the departure of the next flight of snow-birds. For drugs, non-actives were now getting much the same benefits as actives. Increased premiums could be anticipated for next year – everybody's premiums were going up. Members were recommended to check to make sure that CLARICA had not added a second deductible. There was still some uncertainty about the use of the Assurecard. It was agreed that the newsletter should contain a list of numbers to call for insurance and pension matters. Forms for Insurance claims could be obtained from the Human Resources Web-site.

On the matter of demutualization of life insurance, the various interested parties were still negotiating. The main objective was to avoid payment of income tax on any settlement.

The Secretary-Treasurer referred to a statement of income and expenditures for the period June 1, 2000 to March 31, 2001. A substantial amount of expenditures were still to come in. Special events had pretty well paid for themselves. After three warning notices, those who had not paid their dues were to be dropped as of May 31. This had resulted in the membership total remaining at about 400. She thanked Lorraine Boyce and Pat Kierans for their help, as well as Bérengère Gaudet for translations. It was hoped to circulate membership lists in the Fall.

It was agreed that the annual membership fee should remain at \$15.

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Oct. 25, 2001 on the down-town campus.

scinder le fonds de retraite en deux – personnel enseignant et personnel administratif. Cela poserait des problèmes d'identification pour les non-actifs. On pourrait en conclure que l'objectif principal de la CSN était d'assurer que le choix des placements soit sous le contrôle du syndicat. Les réunions prévues récemment du Comité de Retraite avaient été annulées, et la prochaine était prévue pour le mois de juin.

Quant aux avantages sociaux, au sujet de la protection hors-Québec, les améliorations proposées par le sous-comité avaient été soumises, et il était à espérer qu'elles seraient en vigueur avant le départ de la prochaine envolée des vacanciers du Sud («snow-birds»). Au chapitre des médicaments, les non-actifs en retiraient à peu près les mêmes avantages que les actifs. Il faudrait prévoir une hausse des primes l'an prochain, ce phénomène étant très répandu. Il conseillait aux membres de s'assurer que Clarica n'avait pas exigé une franchise supplémentaire. Quelques incertitudes demeuraient au sujet de l'utilisation de la carte Assure. On décida que le bulletin de nouvelles contiendrait une liste de numéros de téléphone pour s'informer au sujet de l'assurance et des pensions. La formule de réclamation est disponible en accédant au site-Web du Service des Ressources humaines.

Au sujet de la démutualisation de l'assurance-vie, les négociations se poursuivaient. Le grand objectif était d'éviter que tout règlement soit sujet à l'impôt sur le revenu.

La Secrétaire-trésorière présenta un état des revenus et des dépenses pour la période allant du 1er juin 2000 au 31 mars 2001. Un nombre important de dépenses n'y figuraient pas encore. Les activités s'étaient plus ou moins autofinancées. Suivant l'envoi de trois avertissements aux membres ne s'étant pas acquittés de leur cotisation, leurs noms seraient rayés de la liste à partir du 31 mai. En conséquence, le nombre total des membres demeure d'environ 400. Elle remercia Lorraine Boyce et Pat Kierans qui l'avaient tant aidée, ainsi que Bérengère Gaudet qui avait fait des traductions. On espérait distribuer la liste des membres en automne.

Il fut décidé que le montant de la cotisation annuelle resterait fixé à 15\$.

La prochaine assemblée aura lieu le 25 octobre 2001 au campus centreville. *(Merci à Bérengère Gaudet, qui a bien voulu «nettoyer» mon texte français – NDLR)*

## TO GET INFORMATION / POUR SE RENSEIGNER

**Pensions:** Ernest Haigh – 514-848-3674 or/ou haighe@alcor.concordia.ca

Madalena Vidal – 514-848-3685 or/ou mvidal@alcor.concordia.ca

**Benefits/Avantages sociaux:** Nicole Desrochers – 514-848-3661 or/ou nicoletd@alcor.concordia.ca

Nicole Freeman – 514-848-3678 or/ou nicole@alcor.concordia.ca

Email users should include their telephone number/on conseille aux utilisateurs du courriel d'y inclure leur numéro de téléphone.

**CLARICA:** 514-849-6003 or/ou 1-800-463-3572.

## NEWS OF OUR MEMBERS / NOUVELLES DE NOS MEMBRES

**W**e welcome the following, who have become members since the publication of the last issue / *Bienvenue aux personnes suivantes, qui sont devenues membres depuis la parution du dernier numéro: Tom Adley, Roger Angel, Paul Babarik, Pat Berger, Jon Breslaw, Leonard Campeau, Americo Carneiro, M.P. Duplessis, Nelson Eddy, Dorel Feldman, Wesley Fitch, Robert Gaudet, Serge Gracovetsky, André Herman, Janice Holland, Patrick Landsley, Graham Martin, Bob Nagy, Gerald O'Neill, Désirée Park, Robert Patterson, Réal Porier, Larry Thiel, Mair Verthuy, Joe Zweig.*

Congratulations to **Alec Sproule** on his recent marriage.

We regret to announce the deaths of / *Nous regrettons d'annoncer le décès de: Carl Goldman,*

**Arthur Lermer, Michael Shel-**

**don,**

One of our late members, **Alfie Pinsky**, founding dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts, has been commemorated by the creation of the "Pinsky Tapes", a collection of video-tapes of the lectures given by Alfie in the 1991-1992 academic year in his course *Analysis of Great Works of Art*. The tapes were produced by Caroline Hart of the Faculty, with Michael Keefe of the Audio-Visual Department, and edited by Caroline Hart and Leopold Plotek. Some of us took advantage of the opportunity to see excerpts from these remarkable tapes last May at a presentation which was part of the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the creation of the Faculty of Fine Arts.

### SENIOR NON-CREDIT PROGRAMME

**F**or almost twenty years, Concordia has offered a non-credit programme for seniors, which enables those aged 55+ to participate in regular undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Arts and Science, without the pressure of writing exams or research papers. They can register for a maximum of three courses per term, day or evening. Fee for each 3-month course is currently under \$30. Call 848-3893.

### PROGRAMME NON-CRÉDITÉ DESTINÉ AUX AÎNÉ(E)S

**D**epuis bientôt vingt ans, Concordia offre aux aîné(e)s un programme non-crédité, qui permet à ceux et à celles âgé(e)s de 55+ ans de participer à des cours réguliers de premier cycle dans la Faculté des Arts et des Sciences, sans l'obligation de passer un examen ni de remettre des projets de recherche. Ils peuvent s'inscrire à un maximum de trois cours par trimestre, jour ou soir. Les frais de chaque cours de trois mois se chiffrent actuellement à moins de 30\$. S'adresser au 848-3893.

## A SENIOR'S LEARNING ABOUT HEALTH

by Kurt Jonassohn

**I**t seems strange to learn in old age about matters that one thought one knew all along. Like most of us, I grew up in a world where the absence of pain signified well-being and the presence of pain demanded immediate attention from available adults. In other words, while pain demanded action, its absence led us to leave well enough alone.

In the world of my early years, preventive medicine had not yet surfaced to change our attitude to personal health. Certainly, an absence of pain did not cause any concern. Socialized medicine had not yet arrived to remove the economic consequences of illness. There-

fore, pain most often was treated with traditional home remedies, or ignored until it got serious.

It has been only since I got old that I have realized how wrong all this was. It is true that pain is a signal to alert us to something amiss. But the absence of pain is not always a sign of good health, and there are two reasons for this. The first one is that pain sensors are not evenly distributed in our bodies. While they are plentiful in some parts of our body like the mouth or the brain, they seem to be just about non-existent in others like the lungs or the kidneys.

The second and most important reason why an