

# YURA NEWSLETTER

A newsletter for members of the York University Retirees Association No. 15 Feb 2010

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## Message from the YURA President

It is with a heavy heart that I prepare this submission for the Newsletter, my first without the collaboration of my partner, Nancy Accinelli. As you know, Nancy had a massive aneurysm on Wednesday October 28. We had attended Harry Arthurs' address in Vanier the previous afternoon then spoken on the phone a couple of times Wednesday morning. I, along with the family and the rest of the York community, had great difficulty accepting the reality of this tragic event. Nancy's contributions to York in general and to YURA specifically were legion. We are told that none of us is indispensable but Nancy was an obvious exception to this rule. Albert Tucker, YURA Past President, made an address at the memorial tribute to Nancy at York on January 15 and prepared the eulogy that appears in this issue. As a permanent memorial to Nancy, YURA sponsored a Chair in the Accolade Theatre that will bear Nancy's name.

October was a busy month for officers and members of the Association. On the 1<sup>st</sup> the gourmet club met for a delicious

dinner at Maki Sushi, thanks to Rosemarie Neilson who organizes these outings. Nancy and I attended the luncheon for new retirees hosted by President Shoukri on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Over 40 of us were bused to Stratford on October 22 to see a wonderful presentation of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*. On the 24<sup>th</sup> Nancy and I attended the inaugural meeting of the York Circle and heard excellent lectures from York faculty and administrators. The YURA Annual General Meeting was held as scheduled October 30. Without Nancy it was a solemn and sad occasion.

Showcase, held on December 3, was a great success thanks to the donations of baked goods and attic treasures, and the attractive displays of our vendors. After the hiatus last year, it was gratifying to reintroduce this project. Again, a cadre of volunteers helped with the preparations for the event and staffed the tables. Without their efforts, the event would not be possible.

### **Message (cont'd)**

At the YURA Executive meeting in December, Marilyn Cartmill was elected to the Executive as an ex-officio member. At the same meeting, Janet Rowe was nominated for the position of Co-President. It was moved that her appointment be made effective immediately with confirmation to follow at the AGM in October 2010. The motion was passed unanimously.

Janet is a familiar figure to members of the Association as she has represented YURA on the Pension Board of Trustees for several years and now sits on the Retirement Planning Centre Board as well. As an active member of the CURAC Local Committee, Janet (along with Paula Freeman) has been instrumental in handling issues related to conference registration and accommodation.

Planning for the CURAC conference (a joint enterprise between YURA and ARFL) on May 18 to 20 is well in hand. Approximately 80 to 90 delegates are expected from college and university retiree associations from across Canada and we are hoping for a good turnout of York retirees. More details of the conference appear elsewhere in this issue.

As always, the Association is deeply indebted to Catherine Federico and How Chee Un of the Retirement Planning Centre for their continuing support. And we are fortunate to be able to call upon a dedicated corps of volunteers without whose efforts YURA would be demonstrably impoverished. Thank you all very much.

**-Sandra Pyke**

### **Remembering Nancy Accinelli**

The sudden passing of Nancy on November 1, 2009, was a severe and tragic blow to all those who knew her and worked with her. She had only retired in 2005.

So attached was she to the life she had lived at York that within a few months she was not just a member of the YURA Executive but also its co-president. Nancy made her position in YURA a continuation of her previous career as a vital and innovative administrator. She reorganized the YURA office, recruiting willing volunteers, attracting their loyal interest, clarifying tasks, and improving communication with members. Because of her many contacts and friendships across the university, she was able to strengthen the mission that has always been important for YURA – maintaining an easy reference for retirees back to the institution in which they had spent their working lives.

One of the tasks she took on with alacrity was management of the twice-yearly theatre trips to Niagara-on-the-Lake and Stratford. Once again, her forte was a combination of initiative and communication. She formalized the contacts with tour companies, bus lines and theatres that had been developed by Pearl Kroll. Nancy then made it her responsibility, along with her husband, Bob to see that plans were followed. There was never any doubt about who was in charge though her command was always understated.

Once on a trip to Stratford, our bus became stuck behind a truck that seemed to be crawling along the narrow highway. Nancy realized that we were going to be late. She phoned the Festival theatre and made arrangements for late admission, so that we were admitted 15 minutes into the first act, rather than waiting for the intermission. She knew what to do and she did it.

Just as she once moved easily within the college system between faculty and administration, so in YURA she functioned with congenial grace among former professors, secretaries and budget officers. When Professor Sandra Pyke succeeded me as co-president in 2007, it was clear at the outset that she accepted and welcomed the idea of working with Nancy as an equal partner. A precedent began two years earlier, of YURA having two co-presidents – one from faculty and one from staff - was on the way to becoming established, in large part because of the stamp that Nancy had placed on the office.

Even in retirement, she continued to contribute to the social and cultural life of people at York University, and she did so in a highly intelligent and discriminating way. Everyone who worked with Nancy came to realize that, while she could make critical assessments about people that seemed sharp, at the core of her judgments was a fundamental sense of charity and social equality.

**-Albert Tucker**

## **Conference & Annual General Meeting**

**York University**  
May 18, 19 and 20, 2010

- Technology Enhanced Learning Centre (TEL) Building
- Seneca College Building (at York)
- Parking lot number 88

Please refer to

<http://www.yorku.ca/web/futurestudents/map/>

### **Program Highlights – Pensions, Benefits and Beyond**

- Ageism- Definition, scope, manifestations
- Pensions- the post-secondary picture and the larger picture  
Harry Arthurs and Hrvoje Lakota
- What more does a retiree need in benefits and insurance?
- How retiree associations can and do influence decisions that affect their members
- Keeping active and involved - research, teaching, supervision, advising, mentoring, outreach.
- How [Seneca@York](mailto:Seneca@York) was developed and built
- Best benefit practices from across Canada

A detailed announcement with registration forms and a full program will be published on the CURAC/ARUCC website in March 2010.

## **In Memoriam**

### **Au revoir, chère amie**

I first met Pearl Kroll in September 1999 after answering a call from Karen Grey at the Retirement Planning Centre to assist Pearl in the YURA Office one to two days a week. First we made preparations for the AGM and then we concentrated on the Showcase and Sale. Pearl and I seemed to gel; we were committed to whatever had to be done and worked well together. Over the years, we developed a friendship, despite occasional ups-and-downs.

Pearl was the consummate Program Coordinator and Liaison Officer. A 'persuasive operator', she even convinced me I could teach a French class. I was what she called her 'flyer designer'. We spent hours mulling over the exact word or phrase to most effectively lure interest and participation in the programs or events being offered. When I started at the YURA office, there were about 300 members. Within a couple of years, membership had increased to almost 500; Pearl and I felt we had done much to bring this about. By the time we left the YURA office in 2006, membership had leveled off to over 400 but unfortunately Pearl was now unwell.

She was unfailingly devoted to her family; all the years I worked with her, she strived to maintain good relationships with her children. I saw her last in November 2007. Pearl and I stayed in touch calling each other from time to time and meeting on occasion, especially at YURA events. After missing her at the AGM, I called her home. Finally when I called on her birthday in December, her son, Stephen

explained why she was unable to return my calls.

As one of our mutual friends said (and I most definitely agree): – "I remember Pearl dressed in big sweaters with leggings and blond hair, a regular whirlwind of activity, who just wouldn't quit!" Shalom Pearl and God bless!

### **-Frances Bukovec**

#### **Leonard Draper**

After a career as a pilot in the Canadian forces, Leonard (Len) Draper came to York in the 1960s to manage the Inter-University Transit System and serve as the Libraries' Business Officer. I worked with him in the Office of the Director of Libraries from 1978 until his retirement in 1987. A former military officer seems an unlikely colleague for the bunch of women librarians there at that time but we worked together easily and enjoyably. I learned much from him, often during lunch (where he ate yoghurt and a banana every day). Undoubtedly, the most useful was that "you can slide farther on b.s. than gravel."

### **-Ellen Hoffmann**

#### **Tenth Annual Showcase & Sale**

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 a group of enthusiastic York retirees gathered near the East Bear Pit, Central Square to show off their many talents. Sixteen exhibitors offered a variety of items for sale. There were hand-knit hats and scarves for children and adults as well as handmade dolls, pieces of jewellery, original works of art, and photography. Canadian antique and country Furniture. A number of stuffed teddy bears and other critters also made an appearance.

### Showcase cont'd

In addition to this wonderful display of talent, there was the very popular and decadent "bake table" with cakes, cookies, pies and squares to please every palate. New for this year was the "attic treasures" table which displayed a wide variety of gently used donations. Shoppers could browse through china, fancy glassware, pictures, puzzles and other knick-knacks.

A big thank you goes out to all those members who baked or donated attic treasure items to the sale; because of you, YURA raised over \$1,200. We are also grateful to all the people who worked tirelessly to make the Tenth Annual Showcase and Sale the success it was. Whether you arranged the tables, chairs and banner, created the advertising, obtained and sorted donations from our members beforehand or organized the exhibitors and volunteered on the various tables including the YURA information table the day of the sale. A job well done!

**-Marilyn Cartmill**

### News

YURA now has a webmaster: Michele Young. To contact her about the YURA website, please email [myoung@yorku.ca](mailto:myoung@yorku.ca)

### YURA Executive

#### Officers:

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### YURA Office Hours

Monday 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Wednesday 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

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The *YURA Newsletter* is published by the York University Retirees Association. Iryna Ostapchuk, editor.

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