



A newsletter for members of the York University Retirees Association

Spring 2012

No. 20

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Message from the YURA Co-Presidents

Since our last newsletter, there have been a number of events and developments. On January 26, there was a presentation on the subject of Parkinson's disease and on February 10 a presentation on the issue of Power of Attorney. We were happy to work with ARFL (Association of Retired Faculty

and Librarians) in bringing to campus speakers whose topics are of interest to YURA members. You will find accounts of these talks in this newsletter.

Members have also been looking forward to the annual spring theatre trip to Niagara-on-the-Lake for a

performance of George Bernard Shaw's *Misalliance*. Our thanks to Ulla Purdye for her work on organizing this excursion.

We also want to thank Anne-Marie Ambert for her work on the newsletter and the monthly *PTP* (Person-to-Person). As a place that allows for informal exchange between and among members, *PTP* provides information and food for thought on topical issues. The recent subjects of guardianship and travel insurance were very timely.

In the interest of cost-saving and beginning with this issue of the newsletter, most of you will from now on receive the newsletter electronically. A small number of hard copies will be mailed to those who have requested this format because of varying circumstances. We know that this change will be to the benefit of the budget and we hope that you will continue to enjoy the newsletter in its new electronic incarnation.

There are other matters to report on: For most YURA members, The YU Card for retirees is now in effect and may be picked up in Room 200 of the William Small Centre. Even though the list of retirees is almost complete, it might be a good idea to call ahead to the YU Card Centre 416-736-5674 to ensure that your name is included. If such is not the case, please let us know. This card can serve several functions as a (i) library card; (ii) Recreational facilities card; (iii) Campus debit card that, with funds deposited by the card holder, can be used to make photocopies on campus where the YU Card is accepted for such purposes (e.g. in libraries); (iv) Meal plan card if the holder wishes to deposit funds to that

effect. One faculty member has reported that the card can be used for entrance to European museums where faculty members are admitted free of charge.

The YU Card is also useful as an introduction to libraries and archives where some kind of official documentation is required before admission is granted to use materials. Evidently, the photo on the card makes the difference. Our thanks to Barry Miller of the Department of Faculty Relations for making this possible.

YURA has continued discussions with University Information Technology on the subject of retirees' use of the York email service. There will be a communication about this matter from UIT within the next few weeks. At that time UIT will provide details about the migration to a new domain that will take place sometime in August.

As well, YURA, ARFL, and the Office of the Provost are working on an agreement that will provide a framework for the relationship and contributions of retirees to the York community. YURA is also working on updating our website with the possibility of creating within the website a bulletin board where matters of interest to members could be posted. We will keep you informed about these matters.

The annual conference of the College and University Retirees' Association of Canada, hosted by the University of Victoria in collaboration with the UBC Association of Professors Emeriti and the SFU Retirees' Association, took place on April 18-20. YURA was well represented and we will report back to you in the next newsletter.

In this newsletter, there is information about how to donate to the bursaries that are supported by YURA. We have also already sent you the University Advancement's Winter 2012 Legacies Newsletter. If you would like to learn more about this initiative, please contact Advancement as indicated. In an earlier email attachment, we forwarded you the Spring 2012 issue of the newsletter of the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada.

This message comes with our best wishes for an enjoyable spring.

- **John Lennox & Janet Rowe**

Seminar on Power of Attorney

"A Power of Attorney is a legal document that gives someone else the power to act on your behalf. This person is called your 'attorney.' In Canada the word 'attorney' usually does not mean lawyer, as it does in the U.S.A." (Advocacy Centre for the Elderly, www.acelaw.ca)

A seminar on the subject of Power of Attorney, jointly sponsored by ARFL (Association of Retired Faculty and Librarians) and YURA, was held in Bethune College on the afternoon of February 10. The speaker was Graham Webb, an experienced lawyer with ACE (Advocacy Centre for the Elderly). 45 people attended.

Mr. Webb isolated three general areas that he was going to cover: decision-making; authority and duties of guardians; attorneys for property and personal care. The last of these

categories – "personal care" -- is related to the notion of mental capacity and Mr. Webb spent some time in describing the parameters of what constitutes a capable person. He outlined the options available for the selection and role of a Substitute Decision-Maker (that is, Power of Attorney) with respect to two areas: (i) property and (ii) personal care. He laid stress on the serious attention required for the selection of such individuals and, described from his own extensive professional experience, instances of the lamentable consequences when powers of attorney go wrong. He also explored the advantages of entrusting power of attorney to one individual for property and to another for personal care.

He explored the duties under the law of each type of attorney. These include such items as keeping accounts of all transactions involving property, making an inventory of assets, keeping accounts of expenses, keeping a log of medications, of physicians consulted, etc. If the PA is paid to act in such capacity, he/she must adhere to the standard of a professional in the field. He also stressed the fact that, unless otherwise specified, Power of Attorney goes into effect the moment that the document is signed and witnessed.

Mr Webb emphasized the importance of respect for and consultation with the individual who is the subject of power of attorney regardless of the mental capacity of that individual. At a minimum, whatever the individual's mental capacity, he/she should be informed of power of attorney matters that affect the individual's property or personal care. Mr. Webb also stressed the importance of the sharing of information by the Power of Attorney

with the individual's family. In cases where there are separate persons serving as powers of attorney for property and for personal care, those persons must exchange records so that each is apprised of the actions of the other.

Graham Webb highlighted the paramount importance of powers of attorney acting in the "best interests" of the individual. Those "best interests" encompass the values and beliefs of the individual, her/his current wishes or recent wishes, her/his quality of life. He also emphasized the fact that written wishes and oral wishes have equal weight, and that later "capable wishes" take precedence over earlier "capable wishes." With respect to the issue of a "living will," Mr Graham noted that, unlike a Power of Attorney, a living will is not a legal document. The living will is considered a direction to the Power of Attorney.

Mr. Graham's final point was to underscore the fundamental importance of having the right person to act as one's Power of Attorney. One should choose the person and the moment with utmost care and with full understanding of what is being signed. And keep in touch with the person to whom you have entrusted your power of attorney.

The following websites are invaluable for being more fully informed about Power of Attorney.

<http://www.cleo.on.ca/english/pub/onpub/PDF/health/continuing.pdf>

<http://www.cleo.on.ca/english/pub/onpub/PDF/health/power.pdf>

YURA would like to thank Al Stauffer of ARFL for the opportunity to collaborate in the offering of this important and timely seminar.

-John Lennox

Seminar On Understanding Parkinson's Disease

On January 26, I attended an hour-long session on Parkinson's disease organized by the Retirement Planning Centre. The presenter was Robert TerSteege, an information and Referral Associate of the Parkinson Society of Central and Northern Ontario.

The seminar dealt with an explanation of Parkinson's disease, ways of coping with the disease, support provided to people with Parkinson's and educational seminars conducted to help people understand in managing the disease.

Statistics show that there are about 100,000 Canadians suffering with Parkinson's and 20% are diagnosed between ages 30-50; 2-3% of the population over age 60 have the disease. This age group is predicted to rise dramatically over the next 30 years.

Parkinson's is a chronic, progressive, degenerative neurological disease, it is neither fatal nor contagious, and one has no way of stopping or slowing it down. It is not a life threatening disease but a life altering disease. The symptoms that occur vary greatly from person to person. The most common motor signs are tremors or shaking, slowness of movement, balance problems, muscle rigidity or stiffness. Other symptoms may include soft speech, changes in

thinking ability, sleep disturbances, stooped posture and depression.

Movement in the body is controlled by dopamine, a chemical that carries signals between the nerves in the brain, and when the dopamine-producing cells die, Parkinson's symptoms appear. It was interesting to note that by the time the first symptoms appear, 80% of the cells have already gone. There is no cure and treatment is focused on individual symptom management. One of the problems in diagnosing Parkinson's is that changes in the brain cannot be seen, and there is no test to show how much dopamine is depleted in the brain, which makes it difficult to diagnose if the physical symptoms are not present. The physical symptoms can be treated quite easily with medication which helps to alleviate the tremors. The non motor symptoms, weakness, fatigue, restlessness, nervousness, sleep disturbances, restless leg syndrome, are considered much more difficult to diagnose. Timing of medication with Parkinson's is everything to help in reducing symptoms for people with the disease. Details were provided of medication which help in Parkinson's as the symptoms evolve and the possible side effects which may occur. He noted, however, that not everyone gets every symptom or severity when taking medication for Parkinson's.

A family doctor might be the first to notice signs of the disease, and the patient would usually be referred to a neurologist. But in order to confirm a diagnosis, one should be seeing a Movement Disorder Specialist, who would check into the individual's medical history. As well, a careful physical examination and certain tests

would be done in order to rule out other conditions which resemble Parkinson's.

More information on Parkinson's is provided by calling the Parkinson's Society of Canada toll free 1-800-565-3000; e-mail general.info@parkinson.ca or www.parkinson.ca.

-Mildred Theobalds

Bursaries, Awards and Donations

YURA endows two bursaries for undergraduate students: the **William W. Small Award** and the **YURA Mature Student Bursary**. The William W. Small Award provides one award each year and the endowment fund has reached more than \$50,000. The YURA Mature Student Bursary, with an endowment now totaling more than \$35,000, provides two awards annually, based on the income of the fund. Our goal is to increase the Mature Student Bursary to equal the William W. Small Award and to that effect, the proceeds from our fall "Showcase" are donated to the Mature Student Award. If members wish to contribute to YURA's goal, they can do so individually at any time.

The payment forms provided for YURA by the Development Office usually indicate that the contribution is for some specific cause, but members are, of course, entirely free to specify some other cause, in which case they can state their choice elsewhere on the form.

Donations to the William W. Small Award and the YURA Mature Student Bursary and to other endowment funds or special projects may be made at any

time through York University, Division of Advancement, West Office Building, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Toronto, ON M3J 1P3. Their telephone number is 416-650-8020.

Additional information on giving and on programs within the Division of Advancement can be found at the following address:

<http://www.yorku.ca/advancement/development.html>

-John Lennox and Janet Rowe

Welcome to New YURA Members

YURA is pleased to extend a hearty welcome to our most recent new members:

Hava Aharoni, Paul Antze, Robert Bain, Peter Costabir, Maureen Boyce, Monique Hochong Chan, Roger King-Choy Chan, Jamie Ferguson, Leslie Greenberg, Lynda Hurley, Paula Ironi, Dorinda Jackson, Marika Kemeny, Bonnie Kettel, Jennifer Lavigne, Anita Lee, Jean Levy, Albert Lotito, Lawrence Lyons, Ed Lee-Ruff, Kathleen Macdonald, Philippa Marchetti, Adele Minoli, Raymond Mougeon, Claire Newton, Donald Pelletier, Rebecca Peterson, Elsie Ramkhelawan, Harriet Rosenberg, Ross Rudolph, Roseelaine Shemtov, Linda Smith, Gerald Swanson, and Anita Valencia.

-Janet Rowe

In Memoriam

We have recently lost the following members of our community:

Athena Bartley, January 29, 2012
Anne Maureen Mega, January 1, 2012
Nicole Shore, October 25, 2011
Frances Turner, December 11, 2011
C Donald MacNiven, December 31, 2011

We thank Terisa Ducharme, Associate Director, Pension & Benefits, for her help in providing this information to us.

York Card

Since we sent word to YURA members that the YU Card is now available for retirees, we have been asked about the uses of the card. For its holders, the YU Card has the following functions on campus. It can serve as a:

- ✓ Library card
- ✓ Recreational facilities card
- ✓ Campus debit card that, with funds deposited by the card holder, also can be used to make photocopies on campus where the YU Card is accepted for such purposes (e.g. in libraries)
- ✓ Meal plan card if the holder wishes to deposit funds to that effect.

In addition, one retired faculty member has reported that the card can be used for entrance to those European museums where faculty members are admitted free of charge. The YU Card also can be used

as an introduction to libraries and archives where some kind of official documentation is required before permission is granted to use materials. Evidently, the photo on the card makes the difference.

The YU Card may be obtained by visiting room 200 of the William Small Centre, 155 Campus Walk during normal business hours.

For full information on the YU Card, go to: yorku.ca/yucard

-YURA

YURA's Person-to-Person

The online "PTP" is sent to the YURA listserv and, by May 2012, had posted 13 issues.

It began a year ago on a trial basis. It is a mini-bulletin that allows YURA members to obtain and offer useful and practical information from and to other members on a wide variety of topics that can be of interest or of help.

With the March 2012 issue, we tried the second phase of our "experiment," which is to send the PTP as an attachment rather than within the text of an e-mail. This system allows us to use photos and cartoons and other pleasant features. So far, this works.

Please continue to send feedback, questions, and information that can be of interest to YURA members—this is the only way the PTP will survive!

-Anne-Marie Ambert

Humour Department

Father O'Malley answers the phone.
'Hello, is this Father O'Malley?'

'It is!'

'This is the Internal Revenue Service .
Can you help us?'

'I can!'

'Do you know a Ted Houlihan?'

'I do!'

'Is he a member of your congregation?'

'He is!'

'Did he donate \$10,000 to the church?'

'He will.'

A little boy gets separated from his mother in a health club, runs all around, and finds himself in the ladies' locker room. Upon seeing him, naked women run for cover, others wrap themselves in their towels, and several are shrieking. Surprised at this commotion, the little boy says, "What's the matter? Haven't you ever seen a little boy before?"

YURA Executive

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

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

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