

ARFL Newsletter

Association of Retired Faculty and Librarians of York University

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

The ARFL Newsletter, including all past issues, is now available on the ARFL website, www.yuarfl.org. Only paid up members will continue to receive hard copy versions of the Newsletter in the mail. Paid up members may have their copies e-mailed to them by sending a request to yuarfl@web.net. This will speed up delivery and reduce our costs. Everyone is invited to read the Newsletter on our website.

1. Message from the President

The *shadow pension* continues to dominate the attention of your Executive. If ARFL has your e-mail address, you will have received Al Stauffer's overview of the current situation, showing you how to write to FSCO, expressing your concern about the York Administration's attempt to re-interpret the language of the Pension Plan and the need for a FSCO decision.

Please write to FSCO! The Commission appears to take letters from individual members seriously. (See also Article #4)

FSCO's address is: Financial Services of Ontario, Pension Plan Branch, 5160 Yonge Street, P.O. Box 85, Toronto, ON M2N 6L9.

The Collective Agreement Negotiations produced improvements in retirees' supervision of graduate students, an increase in dental benefits and an increase in health benefits cap (details below). Now we must work to strengthen our case for the next round of negotiations, just over two years away.

This is the time of the year when those who have chosen to retire are making their plans, signing papers for the Administration, etc. Please urge those colleagues to join ARFL, whose principal mandate is, after all, to look after the best interests of York retirees. Point out to them that the termination of mandatory retirement, while welcome, makes retirement even more complicated.

2. Annual General Meeting, October 26, 2006

Not surprisingly, the "shadow pension" was once again the item that claimed most attention at the well-attended Annual General Meeting of ARFL. What was new at this meeting is that many members have felt the implementation of this mechanism in 2006 pension payments that fall about 1.5% short of their entitlements. Also new was the announcement that ARFL has now

obtained access to documents in the case being made by YUFA to FSCO(Financial Services Commission of Ontario) and the administration’s response. However, we do not know when FSCO will make a decision.

A member recalled an assurance from an administration representative around 1993 that there was no shadow pension. However, it is stated in the administration’s submission to FSCO that members of the plan had been consulted and informed of changes including the shadow pension mechanism in 1984-85.

Others recalled that there are precedents for informing plan members individually about an adverse amendment to the pension plan. For example, members were contacted in 1986 on the issue of whether they approved the investment committee of the Pension Fund disposing its shares in companies actively involved with apartheid practices of the South African government.

There was no shortage of suggestions about other actions that might be taken, including court action, media coverage and seeking the support of other organizations, such as seniors groups, with an interest in the protection of pension plans.

It was agreed that we should change the name of the organization from ARF (Association of Retired Faculty) to ARFL (Association of Retired Faculty and Librarians). However, since this is a constitutional change requiring two weeks notice to members, it will again be on the agenda of the next General Meeting.

Other items of business included a brief report, distributed by the Treasurer, showing the Association to be in healthy financial state. There is some concern that the membership is not as large as it might be, partly because, for privacy reasons, a list of retired faculty and

librarians is not available to ARFL. Members offered various suggestions for overcoming this difficulty.

Most of the officers and several members of the Executive are continuing in 2006-2007. Two new members-at-large, Gene Denzel and Roger Heeler, were elected. The full list of committee members is given on the last page of this Newsletter. There was enthusiastic support for a motion of thanks to retiring Executive Committee members. These are former Presidents, Morton Abramson and Peter Harries-Jones, as well as long-serving members, Sylvie Arend, Ted Bieler and Nicole Keating.

Martin Muldoon



3. Major Award for Lee Lorch

“Mathematics and human rights – the connection is not immediately obvious”. Andy Barrie was no doubt echoing the views of many of his listeners when he interviewed ARFL member Lee Lorch on CBC Radio’s Metro Morning on January 9.

Lee responded that there were many connections, one being the practices of the mathematical associations themselves. The occasion was an interview on Lee's receiving the Mathematical Association of America's (MAA) 2007 Yueh-Gin Gung and Charles Y. Hu Award for Distinguished Service to Mathematics during the Joint Mathematics Meetings in New Orleans. According to the citation the award was for "his life-long contributions to mathematics, his continued dedication to inclusiveness, equity, and human rights for mathematicians, and especially his profound influence on the lives of minority and women mathematicians who have benefited from his efforts".

This award is one of a series recently given to Lee to recognize his various accomplishments. He was given the Campaign for Public Education's award (henceforth to be known as the Lee Lorch Public Education award) a few months ago, presented by Mayor Miller. On the occasion of his 90th birthday in 2005, a very well attended special event was held in his honour at which numerous speakers testified to Lee's contributions in various causes - peace, rights for women and minorities, the fight against racism and support of Cuba.

A feature of American mathematical life is the co-existence of two very large organizations: the American Mathematical Society (AMS; founded 1888) and the Mathematical Association of America (founded 1916), the first being devoted mainly to mathematical research, the second to teaching at the college level. With their overlapping memberships, it makes sense that their main annual meetings are held jointly. Some of the past shortcomings of these organizations are reflected in the emergence of other groups such as the Association for Women in Mathematics (we were reminded in New Orleans that Lee made the suggestion to use the preposition "for" rather

than "of") and the National Association of Mathematicians, one of whose main objectives is the promotion of the mathematical development of under-represented American minorities. Nowadays these organizations and others also have a presence at the Joint Meetings and there are sessions in which many or all of them are involved. One of the most important of these is the Joint Prize Session. This year the Session had more than 30 prize-winners and was very well attended, Lee's citation and remarks being greeted with the only standing ovation.

That the award came from the MAA was especially significant because it had been Lee and his colleagues who raised a fuss in 1951 when the Southeastern section of the Association held a meeting in Nashville including a banquet at a location which refused to admit black members of the Association. At the time, even the national president of the Association felt unable to object publicly to this practice.

The 2007 Joint Meetings featured an AMS panel discussion *Katrina and its Aftermath: Institutional Survival in New Orleans since the Storm*. Panelists reported that, like everything else in the city, their institutions were affected, most had to close for a semester, and suffered from reduced enrollments and budgets and consequent job losses. They expressed thanks to the many organizations and institutions which had helped in the recovery. But it seemed that nobody on the panel took a wider view of the situation and the audience seemed at a loss to know how to help. This led to a vigorous intervention from Lee Lorch on questions such as why traditionally black institutions such as Dillard University were not represented on the panel and why the AMS web site "News Postings from

Katrina-affected Universities” included news only from the relatively elite Tulane University. (It could be added that this news was mostly of a promotional “business-as-usual” nature.) Taking a larger perspective, Lee discussed the earlier diversion of funds from flood control and the disappointing delay in recovery 16 months on from the disaster. He made the point, which struck a chord with many in the audience, that the city has to recover in order for the institutions to recover.

It is hard to do justice to Lee’s long and distinguished career in mathematics and the struggle for social justice in a short article. He has touched the lives of many people for the better and continues at 91 to promote the causes of peace and equity. We look forward to penning another tribute to Lee on the occasion of his 100th!

Stan Jeffers and Martin Muldoon



4. Pension Matters

The documents regarding the *shadow pension* that both YUFA and the Administration have submitted to FSCO have been posted on our website (www.yuarfl.org). FSCO still has not made a decision. Thus, ARFL members who have not written to FSCO are urged to do so to resolve this issue as quickly as possible. The FSCO address (see also Article 1, above) and other relevant information is also on our website. Please send a copy to ARFL as well.

The Pension Fund returns for 2006 are looking good, in the neighbourhood of 13.9%. This means that the four year rolling average return in excess 6% will be about 6.1%. That’s the good news! The bad news is that members who retired in 2002 will only get an increase of about 3.8% after the *shadow pension* has been taken

into account. This is on top of the 1.5% that such members failed to receive last year. It must be emphasized that these foregone increases of over 3.7% will affect members’s pensions for the rest of their and their spouses’ lives, if the *shadow pension* remains active in the policies of the Administration. That is, if the application of the *shadow pension* stands, many members’ pensions will be 3.7% less than they would be if there were no *shadow pension*. **That is why it is so important to write to FSCO. For more recent retirees (i.e. later than 2002), this situation could reappear in the future. Thus, it is in all our interests to give our side of the story to FSCO.**

Al Stauffer



5. The 2006-2009 Collective Agreement and Retirees

The **2006-2009 Collective Agreement** was ratified by 87% of 407 YUFA members who voted. Prior to the onset of negotiations, the ARFL executive sent YUFA its position on a number of issues pertaining to retirees, which resulted in improvements for us. These improvements are summarized below.

1. As part of the Memorandum of Understanding the parties agreed to “as expeditiously as practicable after ratification by the parties to improve retirees’ health benefits.”

“(a) The benefits applicable to retirees will be modified to increase the existing annual maximum for dental benefits for retirees from \$1,000 to \$1,250 and to increase the existing lifetime maximum from \$50,000 to

\$75,000.”

2. Article 14 was expanded to provide for compensation for graduate supervision:

“14.02(e) Faculty who have retired, who have an appointment in a Graduate Program, and who are eligible for principal supervision of masters theses and/or doctoral dissertations according to OCGS and FGS regulations and, if applicable, the Graduate Program regulations, may be reimbursed for such principal supervision at the rate of 1/6th the value of a Course Directorship at the prevailing CUPE 3903 Unit 2 rate for each principal supervision (e.g. 6 principal supervisions would equal the value of one Course Directorship).

Retired Faculty who are teaching up to 5 courses at the enriched rate of \$16,238 as per Article 14.02(d) may be reimbursed for such principal supervision at 1/6th of the enriched rate of \$16,238 - such principal supervisions will be applied against the teaching of up to 5 courses at the enriched rate (e.g. the faculty member could have 6 principal supervisions and teach 1 course in year 1, 6 principal supervisions and teach 1 course in year 2, and teach 1 course in year 3 and thereby exhaust the 5 courses at the enriched rate).”

What does this mean for retirees?

Dental benefits have increased by \$250 per year and the lifetime maximum for health benefits has been increased by \$25,000, but the out-of province benefits remain at \$10,000.

No sum has been identified to fund post-retirement benefits and retirees are still waiting for an updated benefits booklet.

Although the principle of payment for work performed by eligible retirees in the form of graduate supervision has been recognized, it is

limited to principal supervisions and does not reflect the full range of graduate supervision services for which eligible pre-retirees are compensated.

The ARFL Executive is pleased that progress has been made in the new contract. At the same time we are frustrated by the need to counter age-based discrimination, such as differences in institutionalized health benefits and wages, and the need to continue to lobby for equity for retirees and for those continuing with post-retirement teaching and research. In doing so it is important to take into account the very real differences between male and female retirees.

Joy Cohnstaedt



6. The 2006 Cohort

The Ontario government passed a law on December 12th, 2005 to remove mandatory retirement based on age, but in its wisdom made the implementation date December 12th, 2006. The York University Administration reacted to this legislation by obliging colleagues whose designated retirement date was June 30, 2007, i.e., a date falling between the passage of the law and its implementation, to retire. This decision was apparently reached without prior consultation. Needless to say, this has caused a major uproar among those affected by this policy.

It is understood that the Administration's actions did not contravene the law. The issue is ultimately not necessarily a legal one, since the Administration could equally have adopted a policy that the 2006 cohort did not need to retire, also without contravening the law. There are universities within the Ontario system who

have taken this option. Rather, it is a question of fairness, of treating members of the 2006 cohort equitably, of not taking what appears to be a mean-spirited position. It is difficult to believe that great savings will accrue to the Administration from ridding itself of a small number of senior faculty members and librarians. On the other hand, the Administration will have lost a significant measure of goodwill towards York University among the retired York community.

Stan Jeffers reports that at the YUFA informational meeting held on February 2nd, 2007 the following resolution was passed unanimously:

“Whereas at least some members of the 2006 cohort of forced retirees recommend non-ratification, in case the membership as a whole does ratify the negotiated agreement, be it resolved that: this meeting urges the YUFA Executive to support, both morally and with resources, any reasonable efforts to challenge the forced retirements outside the collective bargaining process, whether within or outside the normal grievance process.”

The Editor



Note on Issue Numbering:

Please note that this issue bears numbering that corrects a previous error.

The Editor

The ARFL Newsletter is published by the Association of Retired Faculty and Librarians of York University (ARFL). ARFL is an independent organization of retired faculty and librarians of York University and of pre-retirees who pay dues. Members of ARFL are Associate Members of YUFA and YUFA has recognized ARFL as the “representative organization for retired members” of YUFA. ARFL is a member of the College and University Retirees Association of Canada. (CURAC)

At the Annual General Meeting of October, 2006 the following slate of officers was returned, including those subsequently nominated to the Executive to extend its base and representation, as the meeting agreed:

EXECUTIVE

President

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Mort Abramson

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Stan Jeffers

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The editor of the newsletter welcomes comments, letters or items of interest, but reserves the right to edit any submissions. Please send submissions to chesters@yorku.ca or ARFL, c/o YUFA, 261 HNES, York University, 4700 Keele St., Toronto, ON M3J 1P3.

<p>ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FACULTY AND LIBRARIANS OF YORK UNIVERSITY</p>
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<p>DUES FOR 2006/07 ARE NOW RECEIVABLE <u>SECOND NOTICE</u></p>
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Please mail to : Association of retired Faculty and Librarians, c/o YUFA
 261 Health, Nursing and Environmental Studies
 York University
 4700 Keele Street
 Toronto, ON M3J 1P3

- I wish to join ARFL, to receive its mailings and support its activities
- I wish to renew my membership in ARFL
- I am willing to undertake occasional work in ARFL
- I am not yet a retiree, but I want to become an Associate Member of ARFL
(To verify your status, send an e-mail to uarfl@web.net)

Enclosed is my cheque for the period 1 July, 2006 to 30 June, 2007

- \$25 Regular membership
- \$10 Associate membership (available to pre-retirees)
- I would like to contribute \$_____ To support ARFL in its continuing work on behalf of York's retired Faculty and Librarians

NAME(please print) _____

HOME ADDRESS

Street _____

City/Town _____ **Province/State** _____

Postal Code _____ **Country** _____

Home Phone _____ ***E-mail** _____

*** This is very vital to maintain communication with ARFL members.**

ASSOCIATION DES PROFESSEURS ET BIBLIOTHÉCAIRES RETRAITÉS DE L'UNIVERSITÉ YORK (APBR)

COTISATION 2006-2007 DEUXIÈME APPEL
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Veuillez envoyer votre cotisation à : Association of Retired Faculty and Librarians
a/s YUFA
261 Health, Nursing and Environmental Studies
Université York
4700, rue Keele
Toronto, ON M3J 1P3

- Je désire devenir membre, recevoir ses bulletins et soutenir ses activités
- Je désire renouveler mon adhésion a l'APBR
- Je suis prêt(e) à participer à l'occasion aux travaux de l'APBR
- Je ne suis pas encore à la retraite, mais je veux devenir membre associé de l'APBR

Pour vérifier le statut de votre adhésion, veuillez envoyer un courriel à yuarfl@web.net

Veuillez trouver c-joint mon chèque pour la période du 1er juillet 2006 au 30 juin 2007, au nom de l'APBR.

- 25\$ membre titulaire
- 10\$ membre associé

Plus _____ \$ de contribution supplémentaire pour aider l'APBR à poursuivre ses travaux au nom des professeurs et bibliothécaires retraités de l'Université York.

NOM(en majuscules) _____

ADRESSE À LA MAISON

Rue _____

Ville _____ Province _____

Code Postale _____ Pays _____

Téléphone(maison) _____ *Courriel _____

***Très important pour maintenir les liens avec les membres de l'APBR!**