

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, April 24, 2003

There was a gratifying number of attendees (~ 80) at our recent AGM – enthusiastic members who were undaunted by SARS or indeed any other potential problems. This enthusiasm was rewarded by some positive news.

President Peter Russell, after introducing our new Administrative Assistant Analee Stein, referred to improvements in pensions.

Also, our representation on the 60-strong UTFa council has now been doubled to 4 voting retired members (from 2) thanks to the efforts of George Millbrandt and Ed Barbeau. There will also now be 2 retirees on the salaries, benefits and pensions committee and retirees will continue to have full voting rights. UTFa fees however will increase in July 2004 to \$50.00 per year.

Attendees were encouraged to travel to Halifax for the founding meeting of CURAC (formerly CAERA) on May 26th, 2003 (for further information on the Canadian Association of Emeriti and Retired Academics, please refer to the article by Ken Rea in the RALUT REPORTER issue of September, 2002). Ten \$100 travel vouchers are being offered by RALUT to its members for travel assistance on a first-come, first-served basis.

The in-coming President, Ralph Garber, thanked Peter Russell for his achievements and praised him for his energy, wisdom, political acumen and also the acquisition of RALUT's new office space.

The Treasurer's report presented by Ann Schabas, with a positive balance of nearly \$19,000.00, was unanimously approved; as was the pension committee report provided by Harvey Kerpneck. Reference was made in this context to a letter of explanation sent in March by Human Resources regarding pension improvements: Anyone who had not received or did not understand this letter should contact Harvey Kerpneck at the RALUT office.

John Hastings reported on the active year experienced by the Benefits Committee: For example, the work of the sub-committee on Medical and Dental Benefits in connection with the preparation of the current booklet on the Green Shield Health Plan for U of T Pensioners. Important unmet needs continue to be identified (such as home and long-term care) and guidance is provided for the RALUT executive on how these may be addressed. We were again reminded that we should contact Prof. Angela Hildyard, V.P. Human Resources, regarding any problems we might have with Green Shield; also informing RALUT of such situations. The report was unanimously approved and Doug Creelman was welcomed as incoming Chair.

The Membership Committee report was presented by Germaine Warkentin. There are currently 679 full members; some live in the U.S. or even outside North America. However, there is still a compelling need to continue recruiting in order to reach our goal of 1200-1400 members. Everyone present was invited to become a RALUT recruiter in their respective departments and wherever appropriate elsewhere.

Vacancies on the Executive Committee were proposed and elected for two-year terms as follows: Meyer Brownstone; Douglas Creelman; Scott Eddie; Joan Hind-Smith; Harvey Kerpneck; Ann Schabas. Officers will be Ralph Garber (President); George Millbrandt (Vice- President); Joan Hind-Smith (Secretary); Ann Schabas (Treasurer). This year Peter Russell will serve as Past President.

Following the business part of the meeting, RALUT's new President, Ralph Garber, opened a discussion on the subject "Level Playing Field or Slippery Slope" by discussing opportunities and difficulties in achieving the former. Thanks to Peter Russell (working in conjunction with other retirees' associations), further erosion of the "level playing field" was prevented by success in convincing the Province to scrub Bill 198- which would have permitted the Province to do whatever they wanted

with any pension surpluses.

Another issue is, finding a better term than “actives” to describe those who have not yet retired.

The Benefits Committee has discovered that a wide and undesirable discrepancy exists in retirees’ benefits between departments due to lack of a specific university policy.