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# THE COMMUNICATOR

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY'S EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

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Vol. 17 No. 3

July/August 2003

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Summer scene: Memorial University students spruce up the university grounds on the St. John's campus. Sheena Best, Rosey Watton, Jennifer Ezekiel and Ashley Pretty keep the university grounds looking trim and neat. They are part of a summer job placement program, assisting the grounds keeping team at the Department of Facilities Management.

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## New source for news, events

There is now one-stop shopping for news and events at Memorial University. The Division of University Relations has launched a new Web site for news and events. The site, dubbed MUN Today, will complement the Gazette in providing news and information on happenings at Memorial's locations.

Launched on Wednesday, July 30, the site replaces Newslines, the e-mail bulletin service, as the source for information about current events and news at the university. "Newslines will be reserved for important messages for the campus community," says Ivan Muzychka, manager of communications at University Relations.

"Newslines has been quite a success and has, over the last several years, helped us send a variety of messages directly to employees," he said. "It's an excellent service for urgent notices like snow closures and other matters of interest to employees. Newslines will continue to be used for those kinds of things, but because it's really only a simple e-mail message, it has its limitations. We want to provide a more efficient, more comprehensive service to the campus."

*MUN Today* provides the entire campus community and the outside community with a central location, a central repository of information on what is happening at Memorial University.

"People will be able to scan the Web site for upcoming events," he said. "We hope to have news on there every day and our aim is to have a content-rich dynamic site."

Anyone on the campus can post an event to the site.

"These postings will be monitored, of course, before they are put on the site, but we hope that everything happening at MUN, whether it's a music concert, a play or a lecture or seminar, will show up on this new information channel," he said. We expect *MUN Today* to evolve – we'll see what works and what doesn't, but we are confident the basic principle, a central news and events location, is sound."

"There is a fundamental difference here between so called push and pull technologies, but we hope to balance the two for maximum benefit to our audiences. Newslines messages will be shorter and will be less frequent but the Web site will be there to keep people informed."

The new site can be found at [today.mun.ca](http://today.mun.ca).

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## Campus Life

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## WAMUN

The Women's Association of Memorial University of Newfoundland (WAMUN) is holding its seventh annual plant sale on Wednesday, Sept. 17, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 1 p.m., in the atrium of the Arts and Administration building, located on the Memorial University campus. As all proceeds of the plant sale will be given to the WAMUN Scholarship Fund, donated plants would be welcomed. These can be dropped off at the Arts atrium on Tuesday, Sept. 16 between 7-9 p.m. For more information, please call 753-0749 or email [mtuck@mun.ca](mailto:mtuck@mun.ca).

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## **New program to help employees deal with conflict**

**By Catherine Fleming  
Student Correspondent**

Conflict in the workplace can be a serious source of stress, and usually causes disruption in employee performance. Such situations arise all too often, and all too often employees feel that little can be done about it. Usually an employee who is under undue stress as a result of a workplace conflict will not confront the source of the problem for fear that the situation will only worsen. A new program being developed by Human Resources will help employees deal with such difficult situations.

Many types of conflict situations that arise in the workplace have no dispute settlement processes. The Respectful Workplace Program will fill this gap by providing an avenue for recognizing and dealing with sources of workplace stress, which ultimately affects employee health, productivity and attendance.

"There has certainly been recognition of the need for a less formal dispute resolution mechanism, and that has been dealt with in the past through this office," said Claude Horlick, associate director of Human Resources and alternate dispute resolution co-ordinator. "When someone makes a complaint, we offer mediation or counselling services, but there has been no program as such in the past to assist parties with workplace conflict."

### **Roll out in late 2003**

The Respectful Workplace Program, slated to roll out by the end of 2003, is designed to provide an alternative, voluntary process of dispute resolution. The program will facilitate the resolution of workplace issues and conflict situations on an informal, mutual-interest basis. It will deal with complaints and will also educate the community about the need for respect for diversity.

A joint committee of representatives from staff bargaining units has had two meetings and will continue to meet over the next several months to refine the parameters of the program, including education/training and informal dispute resolution. Once the program is developed it will be disseminated to the university community for consultation and input prior to formal adoption.

### **Will prevent conflicts**

"Employees need to know that if they have a situation in the workplace that is festering and not being dealt with, then there is a place to come to talk about it and have it dealt with," Mr. Horlick told the Communicator. "The program will try to prevent conflicts through education and training programs, and it will offer mediation sessions where conflicting parties can sit down and talk in the presence of a facilitator, and hopefully come to an agreement as to how to deal with their conflict or problems in the future."

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### Board of Regents ratifies contract for faculty , librarians

The Board of Regents has ratified the tentative agreement reached between the university and the Memorial University of Newfoundland Faculty Association (MUNFA). The union represents the institution's 750 faculty, librarians and co-operative education co-ordinators. MUNFA members voted to ratify the contract on July 15. The agreement, which is consistent with other settlements in the public sector, includes general salary increases of five per cent per year over its three-year term. The agreement is effective Sept. 1, 2002. Both parties expressed pleasure with the deal.

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## Campus Life

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## Multi-purpose court completed at Grenfell College



Heather Perry, Orientation co-ordinator

**R**ecreational pursuits at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College just got another boost. An outdoor recreational, multipurpose court (basketball, volleyball, etc.) has been constructed behind the gym. The 25m x 15m lot will have benches installed, and a walkway will be put in from the chalet access road. An acoustic "wall" of trees will be planted alongside the court to cut down on noise. A small surplus from the apartment complex was earmarked for the court. Use of the court (schedules, etc.) is governed by Student Affairs. If you have any questions or suggestions, you should contact Janice Galliot, wellness educator, at ext. 6470 or e-mail [jgalliot@swgc.mun.ca](mailto:jgalliot@swgc.mun.ca).

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## Campus Life

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## Thank you to friends and former co-workers...

Please accept my sincere thanks and gratitude for all the kindness you showed to me during my time at Memorial. In particular, thank you for sharing and contributing in different ways to any or all of the functions held for me during my last week of work. The gifts you presented to me, collectively and individually, are truly appreciated. Again, to each and every one, my sincerest thanks.

*Catherine McGrath*

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**Appointments**

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<b>Appointments-Regular Term</b>	<b>Contractual Appointments (one year or more)</b>
<b>Other Appointments</b>	<b>Promotions and Transfers</b>
<b>Tenures</b>	<b>Retirements</b>
<b>Promotions</b>	<b>Corrections</b>
<b>Retirements</b>	

The following career changes have received approval since the last issue of *The Communicator*. They are provided by Human Resources and are current at the time of publication.

**ACADEMIC Appointments — Tenure-Track**

Dr. Fabien Bassett, Human Kinetics and Recreation, assistant professor, Aug. 15

Dr. Jamie Skidmore, Arts, assistant professor of English, Aug. 1

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**Appointments – Regular Term**

Ellen Oliver, Social Work, assistant professor, Sept. 1

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**Other appointments**

Dr. James Bradley, Arts, head, Dept. of Philosophy, Sept. 1

Dr. Gerald Farrell, Medicine, pre-clerkship co-ordinator, undergraduate medical studies, June 1

Ellen Oliver, Social Work, associate director, undergraduate programs, June 1

Dr. Chris Youé, Arts, head, Dept. of History, July 1

Dr. Steven Wolinetz, Arts, head, Dept. of Political Science, Sept. 1

**Tenure**

Dr. Chau Nguyen, Medicine, Discipline of Medicine, assistant professor, Sept. 1

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**Promotions**

Dr. Darrell Boone, Medicine, Discipline of Surgery, associate professor, Sept. 1

Dr. Robert Gendron, Medicine, Division of Basic Medical Sciences, associate professor, Sept. 1

Dr. Patrick O'Shea, Medicine, Discipline of Family Medicine, clinical assistant professor, Sept. 1

Dr. Arthur Rideout, Medicine, Discipline of Surgery, clinical assistant professor, Sept. 1

Dr. James Whalen, Medicine, Discipline of Surgery, clinical assistant professor, Sept. 1

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### **Retirements**

Dr. John H. Burry, Mathematics and Statistics, Aug. 31

Clayton W. Halfyard, Mathematics and Statistics, Aug. 31

Eileen Melvin-Hawkin, Mathematics and Statistics, Aug. 31

Dr. Nathan Rich, Physics and Physical Oceanography, Aug. 31

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### **ADMINISTRATIVE Appointments**

Pauline Kane, Queen Elizabeth II Library, library assistant I, April 30

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### **Contractual to Permanent Appointments**

Cathy Madol, Education, senior clerk, May 26

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### **Contractual Appointments (one year or more)**

Rebecca Mulcahy, Medicine, research assistant I, April 28

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### **Promotions and Transfers**

Heather Evans, Queen Elizabeth II Library, sessional library assistant III,  
May 12

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### **Retirements**

Calvin Adey, Student Affairs and Services, student affairs officer, April 25

Wayne Thistle, vice-president (administration & finance), and legal counsel, June 2

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### **Corrections**

Marilyn Jacobs, Nursing, assistant professor, July 1 to Aug. 31, 2006

Dr. Paul Snelgrove, Ocean Sciences Centre, promoted to associate professor and appointed to a Canada Research Chair (Tier II), Oct. 1, 2002

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## **New national group for college and university retirees launched**

**A** very good first step – that’s how Tarun Ghose describes the inaugural conference of the College and University Retirees’ Association of Canada (CURAC). It’s the first group to represent university retirees across the country.

“There is still a lot to do on the national level,” says Dr. Ghose, one of the organizers of the CURAC conference and professor emeritus of Pathology at Dalhousie University, “but we were pleased with how the conference went.”

Sixty-five delegates attended the two-day event in Halifax on May 26- 27. Twenty-two universities from British Columbia to Newfoundland were represented. Delegates tackled the task of launching CURAC as the new national association for post-secondary retiree associations in Canada.

CURAC aims to facilitate communication among college and university retirees in all parts of Canada. It will assist university retirees in forming associations where none previously existed.

CURAC also collects and distributes information about retirement policies, pensions and benefits; promotes the exchange of ideas; fosters and supports research on public policy issues of concern to retirees; and assists local university retiree associations to improve the medical and other benefits available to their members.

Besides tackling organizational issues, delegates at the conference listened to speakers present on topics from health care for seniors to the aging of Canadian society.

President Tom Traves of Dalhousie spoke on the major challenges facing higher education in the next decade, including rising enrolment and faculty recruitment.

Demand for full-time enrolment is expected to jump by 20 to 30 per cent during the next 10 years, Dr. Traves said. This means that about 200,000 more students will be attending Canada’s universities. At the same time, large numbers of faculty will be retiring.

Dr. Traves said there will be a need for 30,000 to 40,000 new faculty by 2011. Graduate schools in Canada are not producing enough PhDs to meet this need. Additionally, there are likely to be problems recruiting professors from other countries to fill the gap, because the United States, Europe and many emerging countries are facing similar enrolment increases.

During a question and answer session after Dr. Traves’ presentation, one delegate suggested that the “teaching gap” might be closed by retired faculty who want to return to teaching.

Dr. Traves said this might be a future possibility – only if the policy of mandatory retirement at 65 was changed, along with many faculty collective agreements governing eligibility and limits for teaching.

For more information go to [www.curac.ca/2003\\_halifax.htm](http://www.curac.ca/2003_halifax.htm) or e-mail CURAC communications, in care of Ken Rea of the University of Toronto at [reak@chass.utoronto.ca](mailto:reak@chass.utoronto.ca).

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## From the President

## Summer is a busy time at our university

**W**hen our 17,000 students finish their courses in the spring, many think that our university shuts down for the summer months. Nothing could be further from the truth. For many units, the summer months are amongst the busiest of the year.



Dr. Axel Meisen

The Office of Student Recruitment and the Registrar's Office are extremely busy preparing for the arrival of new students in the fall. This year, applications are running well ahead of last year's and the challenge is now to accommodate both the new and returning students. The Office of Student Affairs and Services has responsibility for orientation, a critical period for new students and their families. First impressions and a good start help with the transition from high-school, especially when students come from small communities. For this reason, the Office of Student Affairs and Services is preparing new events and orientation materials.

Summer is also the time for major physical repairs. We have obtained funding to undertake major repairs on the St. John's campus and the protracted repair of the Sir Wilfred Grenfell College is finally coming to an end. Facilities Management is busier than ever and has asked for your understanding if the repairs cause inconvenience.

While we offer increasing numbers of summer courses, for our professors and graduate students the summer months usually mean greater emphasis on research and other creative activities. Many of them write papers while others head into the field (some of them quite literally) to pursue research projects. Just a few weeks ago, the Globe and Mail carried an excellent story on Dr. Ian Jones of our Biology department. He is a seabird specialist studying problems faced by the auklet population in Alaska. Our archeologists are busy throughout the province and Dr. Tom Gordon, the director of our School of Music, is heading to Nain, Labrador, for several weeks to document century-old Moravian music scores.

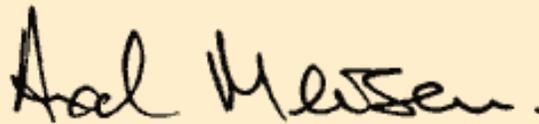
For many professors, staff and students, the summer is also the time to go to conferences and participate in special events. For example, our mathematicians are holding special workshops and members of the Faculty of Education and the School of Music are mounting the Tuckamore Festival. The latter follows shortly after Festival 500, a music extravaganza involving over 2,000 choristers from Canada and as far away as Angola and Estonia.

For me, this summer is also turning out to be filled with interesting challenges. We were able to secure our first, fully-endowed chair (the Husky Chair in Oil and Gas Research) and other major awards from donors and granting agencies are in the works. The Inco Innovation Centre is in the advanced planning stage and the architectural concepts for the new Exhibition Centre on the Sir Wilfred Grenfell College Campus are taking shape. After concerted and constructive negotiations, we concluded a new collective agreement with MUNFA in July.

These are just a few examples of our summer activities. The next time you or your friends see a quiet campus in the summer, you can be sure that there is a lot more happening than meets the eye.

I wish you and your family a productive summer. I also encourage you to take a well-deserved rest with your families.

Axel Meisen

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Axel Meisen." The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

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## Human Resources

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## Human Resources

# THE COMMUNICATOR

## Staff changes at Human Resources

**E**ffective July 14, Glen Roberts assumed the position of manager of Pensions and Benefits (acting). Glen has been in the department as a pensions and benefits analyst for seven years. This position was formerly held by Glenda Willis, who has accepted a position as executive director with the City of Winnipeg. Glenda was with the university for over 19 years.

Effective Sept. 2, Michelle Cleary will be leaving her position as benefits officer to assume new responsibilities of assistant registrar in the Registrar's Office. Michelle has been with Memorial for 13 years.

Effective Oct. 31, Monty Green, special projects manager, will be retiring after almost 30 years of service to Memorial. Monty has held a number of positions in the department. He has been involved extensively with collective bargaining sessions and academic immigration processing.

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## Quotes to adorn library pillars



Carolyn Reddy

**C**arolyn Reddy, a visual arts student at Grenfell College, takes a breather from painting a quote on a cement pillar in the QE II Library. Carolyn has been accenting the pillars with artwork this summer, in an effort to make the cinderblock library more visually appealing. The library is preparing for the new Information Commons and art display, slated to open in December. To make room for the renovations, the reference section on the main floor has been compressed, leaving the cement pillars exposed. The quotes were submitted by faculty and staff. "Some quotes are fun, others serious, and more are platitudes, but all are related to libraries, books and computers," said Karen Lippold, head of information services.

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## Human Resources

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## Extended coverage available for dependents

**M**emorial's Health and Dental Plans provide for an extension of coverage beyond age 21 for dependent children of plan members. Coverage may be extended from age 21 to age 25, on a year-by-year basis, for dependent children who are in full-time attendance at an accredited school, college or university, unmarried and dependent on the member for financial care and support.

To ensure that coverage is maintained beyond the age of 21, members should submit a Dependent Registration Card to the Department of Human Resources at the time the child reaches age 21 and in August of each subsequent year. Dependent Registration Cards may be picked up at the Benefits and Pensions Office, room 4025 of the Arts and Administration Building, or by calling a benefits officer at 737-7406. The card is also available at [www.mun.ca/humanres/v4/BCnotice.shtml](http://www.mun.ca/humanres/v4/BCnotice.shtml).

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## Human Resources

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## Change in integration schedule for pension plan

**A**t its May 27 meeting, the Board of Regents approved a change to the integration schedule of the Memorial University Pension Plan with benefits received from the Canada Pension Plan (CPP). The integration formula under the pension plan will now be applied to pension benefits at a retiree's 65th birthday, whether or not the retiree chooses to receive CPP benefits at an earlier date. Prior to this change, pensions were reduced upon reaching 65 or the date retirees notified the university that they were in receipt of early CPP benefits, whichever came earlier. With this change, the reduction will now be effective only at a retiree's age 65.

The board approved that this change also be applicable to all retirees currently below the age of 65. Those people will be contacted by Human Resources and offered the opportunity to have the early integration reversed; CPP integration will then occur at their 65th birthday.

For further information on CPP integration and the Memorial University Pension Plan, please contact a benefits officer at 737-7406 or by e-mail at [pensions@mun.ca](mailto:pensions@mun.ca).

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## Profile

# THE COMMUNICATOR

## John Burry



Dr. John Burry

### **By Jessie Farewell Student correspondent**

This August Memorial's Department of Mathematics and Statistics will lose one of its most dedicated and longest-serving faculty members, Dr. John Burry, who has been with the university for 42 years.

Dr. Burry was born in Bonavista Bay in 1938, and received his bachelor of education from Memorial University in 1958. He began his career as vice-principal in Harbour Grace, serving with its faculty for two years. After he earned his master's degree from Dalhousie University, he was persuaded in 1961 by Dr. Mose Morgan and Dr. Jack Blunden to be a guest lecturer at Memorial. This impressed in him the desire to eventually work with Memorial University, so after completing his PhD at Dalhousie's Queen's

College, he joined Memorial's math department as a professor.  
Saw many changes

Dr. Burry has seen many changes during his time at Memorial, and has survived through the university's best years, and the not-so-best years; he has seen it double in size, and he has lasted through six presidents. Experience is certainly not something this man is lacking, and he gained this experience as a professor and as department head for nine years, 1976 to 1985. Although he looks on his time as department head fondly, Dr. Burry noted that his heart was always in the classroom and it's truly where he feels at home.

Some of the changes Dr. Burry experienced came during his tenure as department head, when new guidelines were introduced and the union was developed, and he also saw initiation of the graduate program, and administered the first PhDs. He also managed to develop the headship system, incorporate the math club, and the applied math system.

On a more challenging note, Dr. Burry reflects on the reduction of faculty in his department, down to 30 from 50 since the late 1960s. Fewer professors has meant larger classes which, in turn, has made it difficult to focus on individual students and their needs.

A program called Junior Division, which he and several other faculty members began in the late 1960s, strove toward just the opposite. It was developed as a comprehensive first-year math program to better adjust first-year math students in the transition from high school to university level math. He said it gave students from all backgrounds an equal opportunity to succeed, and also brought in three professors who have since become department heads, and many other invaluable people who started in the program as high school teachers and continue to be with the university today.

Two of the most significant memories in Dr. Burry's career are marked by music. The first occurred during the opening ceremonies of the new Thomson Student Centre, which closed with a beautiful performance by a Jamaican steel drum band, a moment that has stayed with him all these years. The second came during a convocation ceremony, when the honorary graduate, Dame Vera Lynn, sang instead of giving a more traditional convocation address.

### **Passion for music**

Dr. Burry confesses to having quite a passion for music and he has served on several committees with the School of Music. In fact, he was part of the group that got the school moving toward where it is today. He is also quite a musician himself, and has been playing the accordion since childhood. Memorial staff recently got a taste of his accordion-playing talent several times, in performances held for convocation committees and for friends.

Dr. Burry's volunteer commitments also extend to convocation, something he has been doing since he began at the university. He is now deputy marshall of convocation. He enjoys spending his free time playing squash, golfing and competitive swimming. He plans to retire with his wife, Myrtle, on Vancouver Island, where their two children are working and living.

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## Retirements

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## Retirements

# THE COMMUNICATOR

### Glenys Woodland



Glenys Woodland retired from Memorial after nearly 36 years of service. Friends and colleagues from the university community gathered in the Junior Common Room to bid her farewell. Glenys came to the university in 1967 as a clerk-steno in the Department of Biology and in 1969 she moved to the Geology Department (now the Department of Earth Sciences), where she spent the next 13 years. In 1982 she moved to the Office of the Vice-President (Academic) as executive assistant. She retired from that office having served with five vice-presidents (Dr. E.R.W. Neale, Dr. David Strong, Dr. Albert Cox, Dr. Jaap Tuinman, and Dr. Evan Simpson) as well as acting vice-president (Dr. J. Strawbridge) for a brief period. Dr. Simpson presented Glenys with a photograph of her home community on Random Island and Dr. Strawbridge read messages from each of the former VPs, as well as greetings from several former geology graduate students. Her husband, Frazer, and her daughter Wendy (from Corner Brook) were on hand for the occasion, and messages were received from her daughter Andrea in Ottawa and son Craig in London, Ontario.

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## Retirements

# THE COMMUNICATOR

### Ed Downton



Ed Downton retired June 27 after nearly 34 years of service. Friends and colleagues gathered at the Challenger Room in the Ocean Sciences Centre (OSC) to bid him farewell. Ed came to Technical Services in 1969, and he ended his career in 2003 as marine services supervisor, craftsman IV. He retired having served with eight directors. Dr. Joe Brown (L), interim director of the OSC, presented Ed with three framed photographs showing the evolution of the facility; one shows the Marine Sciences Research Lab as it appeared in 1969, a second depicts the Ocean Sciences Centre in 1988, and the last of the three shows the OSC as it looks today. He was also given a gift from the Canadian Union of Public Employees, a retirement certificate from the Department of Human Resources, and gift certificates from friends. Ed's wife, Patricia, was also on hand for the occasion, as well as other retirees and former Tech Services director John Royle.

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## The Last Word

# THE COMMUNICATOR

### *A message from the director of Human Resources*

#### **Future directions for your group benefits**



Gerard McDonald

over the last 10 years; however, recent renewal increases have been escalating even more quickly, and our total plan cost is expected to double again within the next five years. The impact on the university and its employees and retirees is potentially quite significant.

Several factors account for this dramatic upward trend. On the drug side, for example, there are new breakthrough medications, alternative and extended uses for existing drugs, direct-to-consumer marketing, the shift to preventative treatments, and the absence of an incentive to reduce costs for private plans; these are expected to contribute to a continuing escalation in drug therapy costs of 15-20 per cent each year. This is particularly significant when one considers that prescription drugs typically account for 70 per cent of each health claim dollar. Other factors such as the aging workforce, reductions in government plan coverage, and less healthy lifestyles will also contribute to higher levels of benefit plan use.

In the meantime, this trend of continually increasing costs is not unique to Memorial University. Many employers in the province and across the country have been experiencing the same issue. Benefit cost increases in the range of 15 per cent each year are presenting an obvious challenge to the ability of employers and their employees to improve or even maintain existing benefit

One of the more important elements of the university's overall benefits program is the group insurance plan for employees and retirees. The core benefits program provides coverage to employees and their families in:

- supplementary health (includes drugs, hospital, and extended health benefits)
- basic life insurance
- basic accidental death and dismemberment insurance
- worldwide travel insurance
- dental
- long-term disability

One of the most significant issues we are facing is the rapid escalation in the cost of providing these group benefits. The total cost has doubled

levels. This will probably be an even greater challenge for employers in the public sector.

The scale and sustained nature of these cost increases has been a subject of concern for the university administration and the Board of Regents. In October 2002 the board appointed the Ad Hoc Benefits Committee to help identify, in consultation with plan stakeholders, any measures that may be necessary to ensure the sustainability of our group benefits program. The committee met with the Employee Benefits Committee in March to discuss these concerns, and formal submissions were later received from MUNFA, CUPE and MUNPA on the ideas and concerns highlighted in the committee's draft report.

In March of this year the Board of Regents approved a renewal of all elements of the group benefits program on the basis proposed by our benefits plan providers, with the exception of the supplementary health and dental components. A renewal of those two plans with effect from April 1, 2003, with no change in existing benefit levels, was later approved by the board at its meeting on July 25.

Confirmation of government funding for the university's additional health plan costs in 2003-04 played an important role in enabling a renewal of the group benefits program at existing levels. This will ensure a continuation of our group benefits program without any change in benefit levels for this fiscal year. However, it will also give the Ad Hoc Benefits Committee additional time to examine the many issues and options related to the challenge of containing benefit program costs on the one hand, while at the same time ensuring a fair and responsive program of benefit coverage for our employees, retirees and their families.

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