



Your Voice

MUN Pensioners' Association (MUNPA) Newsletter • Vol. 16, No. 4, Sept. 2018
Editor: Steve Wolinetz • Design and Formatting: Mark Graesser

President's Message

Jane Foltz

September, already! Do hope that you had a great summer and enjoyed our fantastic weather. The past three months were relatively quiet for MUNPA. This changed on August 29th when our office moved from its Mt. Scio Road location, which served us well for the past ten years, to Room 2003E, Signal Hill Campus, formerly known as The Battery, where we were warmly welcomed by Jennifer Adams and her group. So greatly appreciated. In addition, we are grateful to the Senior Administration at MUN for including us as one of the tenants in this most impressive facility with its many other occupants.

A thank you as well must go out to those members of MUNPA who assisted Gwyn Barrowman in preparing for this move - Cynthia Whelan, Jim Wyse and Brian Power. A very special thank you definitely goes out to Audrey Power, who coordinated and organized various aspects of this move and saw that everything was on schedule, packed and ready for the movers. Audrey was then at Signal Hill to meet the movers and to begin the unpacking. With this move, some downsizing took place.

Our new office has less furniture, is cosy but functional.

The Conference Centre at the Signal Hill Campus, with its floor to ceiling wall of windows overlooking the Harbour, is magnificent. As for the view - well, it got even better. MUNPA Parking at the Signal Hill Campus is at the rate of \$1.50 per hour. At its September meeting, the Board decided to cover members' parking costs through December, and if possible, June. We neither want this cost to disadvantage any of our members nor to deter them from attending the events that we plan to hold there. We will let you know about how this will work as soon as we can.

Our Programming Committee is busy preparing for our new fall events which they will soon announce. You are encouraged to check our website for complete details. Hope to see you at some of these events.

Will be back again next month.

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View from the Conference Centre

From the editor

This is a new beginning for **Your Voice**. YV now includes *Know Your Benefits*, by Glen Roberts, Manager of Pensions and Benefits at Human Resources, *Pension Matters*, by Jim Wyse (Business Administration), and *Memories*, written, we hope, by you. *Memories* will include short essays like Tony Chadwick's (French and Spanish) memoir about haircuts in this issue and whatever else strikes your fancy. You can also let us know what you are doing. We welcome short contributions, up to 400 words, from members wherever they are.

None of this would be possible without additional help. Bernadette Power (Faculty of Education) will help gather copy and edit the newsletter, and Mark Graesser (Political Science) has taken over formatting and production. A hearty thank you to Patrick Tyler for the considerable work did producing last year's **Your Voice**, and putting up with last minute corrections and revisions.

Getting **Your Voice** out on a regular basis requires copy. If you want to make sure that YV is your voice rather than ours, send in letters, comments, short reflections, stories, and photos to our email, yourvoice@mun.ca. Better yet, if you can draw, we would love to include a cartoon now and then.

Steven Wolinetz, Political Science

Upcoming events in St. John's

MUNPA is participating in the

Open House at the Signal Hill Campus

(formerly the Battery Hotel)

Saturday, September 29th

*Drop by between 2-5pm and see us there.
We are one of several units mounting displays.*

Open to the General Public

No MUNPA registration is required for this event

Downsizing Your Home

Tips and Tools for Organizing and Decluttering

April Miller, Professional Organizer

Wednesday, October 3, 2-4 pm

At The Lantern

MUNPA's Opening Event at Signal Hill Campus

Tuesday, October 23rd., 2-5pm

See page 3 for details

Visit to Admiralty House

Armistice 100 Talk and Tour Free

Thursday, Nov. 15, 1:45-3:30 pm

Save the date!

Christmas Social

Thursday, December 6, 4-6 pm

At the Fluvarium

For all of our events, pre-registration at munpaevents@mun.ca required. Just name the event in your subject line. Full details about events are at www.mun.ca/munpa/activities/st_johns

MUNPA Contact Information

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munpaevents@mun.ca
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MUNPA Opening Event at Signal Hill Campus

(Formerly the Battery Hotel)

Tuesday, October 23, 2–5:00 pm

Lecture • Social • Displays

There will be a presentation by the School of Pharmacy followed by a social. This is a chance for MUNPA members to see our new location, including the facilities available to us in the building.

Medications: Why Less is More

Dr. Debbie Kelly

Director, Medication Therapy Services Clinic
School of Pharmacy



Modern medicine has helped us better manage disease and has increased longevity. However, as we get older, we tend to “accumulate” medications, many of which may be taken longer than they were intended or beyond which there is evidence of benefit. This presentation will explain why, when it comes to long-term medication use, often less is more! Learn how to become informed about your medications and the questions to ask to ensure your medications are working the best way they can for you.

The School of Pharmacy’s Medication Therapy Services Clinic (MTS Clinic) offers in-depth medication assessments for the public at no charge. Our goal is to work with you and your physician to ensure you get the most benefit from your medications, which includes simplifying complex medication regimens and ensuring you are receiving safe, effective and affordable medications.

The presentation will be followed by a reception and displays about MUNPA activities.

Further details available at www.mun.ca/munpa/BatteryGrandOpening.php.

We are working on parking, the link to the Grenfell Campus, and how to join the web-conference. We will let you know about details via e-mail and the MUNPA website.

PLEASE PRE-REGISTER TO ATTEND THIS EVENT IN ST. JOHN’S BY EMAILING
munpaevents@mun.ca.

St. John's Focus and Special Interest Groups

The following is a list of our MUNPA groups with their Fall start dates. New members are welcome. Each group runs its own contact list, so it is highly recommended that new members email the group contact person to confirm their first attendance. For detailed information about each of our groups, including contact names and locations, see our website:

http://www.mun.ca/munpa/activities/st_johns .

If you have an idea for a group that's not listed here, contact us at munpaevents@mun.ca and we would be happy to chat about it.

NEW!!

Proposed Game Group

Looking for a Chess buddy? Like playing cribbage, other card games? How about Scrabble or other board games? Something else strike your fancy? Want to learn? Expert already? We are looking to start up a group for people who enjoy socializing over a fun game. Significant others welcome. Location to be determined based on interest. Suggested locations include the Signal Hill Campus or a games café. If there is enough interest we will start in October. So contact us to let the games begin. Contact Audrey Power at audrey@mun.ca or Brian Power at power@mun.ca

Proposed Music Group

Experienced musician or just getting started? If you are interested in getting together to jam and play some tunes then reply to Craig Skinner at pamusic.nl@gmail.com. Session details for this new group to be determined based on the interests of the responders with a target start date of mid-October.

Craft Group

Next meeting, Thursday, September 27th

- Meets weekly, Thursdays, 10:00am.
- Members bring individual projects to most meetings, but on occasion group projects are undertaken. Members share their expertise in various areas so there are opportunities to learn new skills at any time.

Bowling Group

Next meeting, Tuesday, October 16th

Meets monthly, third Tuesday, noon.

- A non-competitive game at Holiday Lanes.
- Monthly signup is required to ensure enough lanes are booked.

Health and Aging Group

Next meeting Wednesday, October 17th

- Meets monthly, third Wednesday, 10:30am
- This is a discussion group, that on occasion draws on external resource persons for presentations. Past topics include dealing with doctors, memory, vision and hearing loss.

Memoir Group

Next meeting Monday, October 1st

- Meets monthly, first Monday, noon, unless delayed by a Monday holiday
- The Group draws together MUNPA members to share their memories through readings, from their childhood up to last week. Members share their non-critical observations, often through memories that the reading has triggered.

Outing Club

Next walk. Monday, October 1st

- Meets biweekly, Mondays, 2:00pm
- The group plans walks, short hikes, and when weather allows, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

Shutterbug Club

Next meeting Friday, September 28th

Regular schedule starts then.

- Meets biweekly, normally Fridays at 2:00pm.
- MUNPA's photography group, open to any skill level. Occasional outings are planned to avail of photo opportunities.

Woodcarving Group

Next meeting Thursday, October 4th

- Meets biweekly, Thursdays, 1:00pm.
- A group for any skill level. Participants learn the skills of relief, figure, and driftwood carving. Starting tools are provided on loan.

The Emergency Travel Health Plan By Glen Roberts

Retirees and their principal beneficiaries are eligible to avail of the University's health plan provided by Medavie Blue Cross and the complementary emergency travel health plan provided by a separate insurance company, SSQ. Eligibility is conditional upon maintaining provincial health care coverage in Canada (e.g., MCP).

The travel health plan is an emergency medical plan intended for out of province travel only, and will cover 100 percent of eligible expenses that result from an unexpected accident or illness which occurs outside your province of residence. Coverage is provided for a maximum of 180 days per trip and is subject to a very important exclusion for "pre-existing" medical conditions.

Pre-Ex Clause

The policy does not cover loss (fatal or non-fatal) or expenses caused by or resulting from:

"Any condition for which the Insured Person received medical advice, consultation or treatment within six (6) months prior to the commencement of a Trip, with the exception of a Chronic Condition which is under treatment and Stabilized by the regular use of prescribed medication."

- "Chronic Condition" means a disease or disorder which has existed for a minimum of six (6) months.
- "Stabilized" means there has not been a change in the medical condition requiring medical or psychiatric intervention for a minimum of six (6) months.
- Adjustments in doses of Warfarin or Coumadin are not considered to be medical intervention for the purpose of this definition, as long as the attending physician can confirm that the Insured Person's condition was stabilized before the date of departure.

Whether the pre-existing medical exclusion applies to your particular situation or not will be a matter for the insurance company to determine once a claim arises and supporting medical information is supplied. Neither the University nor the insurer, SSQ, can confirm to you that the exclusion applies prior to your travel.

For more information on the travel health plan, please refer to the SSQ brochure, located here: www.mun.ca/hr/retirees/notices.php

Glen Roberts is Manager of Benefits, Pensions and Compensation, Human Resources

Habitat for Humanity's ReStore looking for volunteers

We are currently recruiting for General Help Personnel for our ReStore. We are looking for reliable people who are willing to commit to volunteering at least 40 hours a year of their time. We currently need volunteers for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday for morning (9am-1pm) and or afternoon (1pm-5pm) shifts. The ReStore hours are 9-5.

For a more detailed job description contact Lori LeDrew, Manager Family Services & Volunteer Programs at lledrew@habitatnl.ca or at 753-5743 ext. 3 for more information.

We look forward to hearing from you.

What's Up with Pensions By Jim Wyse

The big 'what's-up' is the change in the pension plan governance model from Sole Sponsorship to Joint Sponsorship. Since the plan's inception many decades ago, the Provincial Government has assumed sole responsibility for covering the pension plan's financial deficiencies. In fulfilling its sole sponsorship role, government normally approved the University budgetary provisions required to address unfunded pension liabilities.

Recent changes in government's financial circumstances combined with unfunded pension liabilities now totaling hundreds of millions of dollars (in the MUN Pension Plan alone) resulted in government's unwillingness to fund the University's pension-directed budgetary components.

These circumstances motivated the move from the Sole Sponsorship approach for funding pensions to a governance model in which the responsibility for pension liabilities is jointly shared with employees and their employer. Joint Sponsorship is by far the major 'what's-up-with-pensions' and its formulation and

institutionalization are the subject of much activity.

Throughout the past two years, a special subcommittee of the Board of Regents Pensions Advisory Committee (PAC) has been hard at work developing proposals for the structure and processes for the Joint Sponsorship governance plan. The subcommittee's work is being supported by individuals from beyond the University with pension-related financial, administrative, and legal expertise. Joint Sponsorship governance models are generally tailored to the circumstances of the employer (public versus private, etc.) and the structure of its employee groupings (unionized versus non-bargaining, etc) and thus come in many flavours. A MUN-flavoured formulation is expected to be in operation early in 2019.

The next column on pensions will address the performance and financial viability of the MUN Pension Plan.

Jim Wyse, Faculty of Business Administration, has been a member of the Pension Advisory Committee for a number of years.

Branscombes Pond Walk



MUNPA doesn't schedule events in the summer, but Howard Clase (Chemistry) organized an 'unofficial' tour around Branscombes Pond. Located in Mt. Pearl between Topsail and Blackmarsh Rd. just beyond the St. John's border, Branscombe's Pond is a hidden gem with over 120 species of plants, from ferns to conifers.

Guiding a dozen of us around the pond, Howard pointed out many of them, explaining along the way that the pond and the plants around it were changing as the pond silted in. An added plus – and Howard's reason for organizing the walk when he did – was that the water lilies were in bloom.

For those of you looking for an accessible walk, Branscombes Pond has lots of well-maintained boardwalk, making it easy for someone using a walker or wheelchair. You can reach the pond via the residential streets around it.

Academics Without Borders By Edgar Williams

Academics Without Borders' (AWB) mission is to support capacity development in tertiary education in developing countries, so these countries can educate their own experts and professionals necessary for their development.

AWB carries out its mission by supporting projects in institutions of higher education in developing countries, by working with talented and committed people there, who are initiating and sustaining institutional growth and change. It does this by sending academic volunteers to support these local initiatives. Volunteers work on projects that foster the skills and expertise needed for health care, education, agriculture, infrastructure, business, and more. It works in all disciplines and areas of instruction. AWB is a bilingual Canadian NGO based in Montreal, with volunteers working around the world.

Volunteers

AWB volunteers are working and retired professionals and academics, including faculty, staff, and administrators from Canada and other medium and high-income countries. Interested volunteers should visit the volunteers and projects sections on the AWB website: www.awb-usf.org.

Goals of AWB

- To support developing countries in improving and expanding higher education.
- To ensure that the skilled people needed by these countries are educated/trained in their home countries.
- To have our placements and projects driven by the needs of local institutions—the scope and nature of our projects evolves in collaboration with host institutions and countries.
- To work within the resources available to the country, so that the work we undertake can be sustained by, and will continue to benefit, the local community even after our involvement is completed.

Partners

AWB achieves its goals with our own projects as well as in partnership with other NGOs and with academic institutions in the developed world. Memorial University signed a memorandum of understanding with AWB to promote its mandate within the university and with its retiree community.

AWB projects have taken it around the world and it has been active in Benin, Chile, East Africa, Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Liberia, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, and Rwanda. AWB volunteers are involved with both short and long-term endeavours that foster the skills and expertise needed for areas such as health care, education, infrastructure and business—the building blocks of a successful nation.

The project “Developing Statistical Pedagogy Among K to 12 Mathematics Teachers” is a joint five-year project between AWB and the University of San Carlos (USC) in Cebu, the Philippines. The first phase of the project, which began in April 2015, focused on building capacity. In this phase, AWB volunteer Dr. Lionel Pereira-Mendoza, a former faculty member at Memorial University, trained 12 members of the USC tertiary math faculty, who had been chosen to constitute the pool of workshop facilitators/teacher-trainers for the project.

In the second phase, conducted during April-May 2016 and April-May 2017 (summer vacation periods in the Philippines), those 12 trained math professors conducted in-service training for more than 100 local teachers. The third phase, which is expected to last about 18 months, involves developing an online support system for math teachers who have participated in the workshops. The goal is to build a professional learning community for these teachers through a website on which they can receive support in the form of resources, as well as peer feedback and interactions.

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Haircuts

By Tony Chadwick

I don't know what prompted this memory; perhaps it will be revealed as I write.

The first haircut I can remember dates from when I was about four or five. I had blond hair then, very curly, so haircuts were not a common occurrence. Normally, either my mother, or my friend Mervyn's grandmother, would accompany us to the closest barber, whose name I cannot now remember. It was a strange premises for a barber's, having been a shop of various kinds, strange in that it had a very large display window, not usual for a place where men only would enter for haircutting and shaving. And this barber had nothing to display!

On this memorable occasion, neither adult was available to supervise, so Mervyn and I were sent with sixpence each for a "short back and sides, with



a bit off the top". Now Mervyn had straight hair, rather long at the front, but that was a feature that I envied. When his hair got in his eyes, he would, with an elegant flick of his head, toss it back, a manoeuvre that I could only dream about, since my curls kept my hair away from face, and when I attempted the head flick in front of the mirror the effect was comical rather

than dashing. Mervyn, in a surprise admission, declared that he was envious of my curls. And so it was that, when the curmudgeonly barber asked what we young gentlemen would like today, I replied that I wanted hair like Mervyn's, and he requested hair like mine. The result? We both had our heads completely shaved, apart from a small forelock, no doubt left

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Academics Without Borders, continued

Dr. Pereira-Mendoza remarked that: "As a volunteer the most rewarding part is to see the level of commitment and enthusiasm of all those involved. Particularly from the school teachers who see the possibility of applying what they have learned to help their students from K - 12.

Projects are based in universities, colleges, and professional and technical schools. ASB works in all disciplines and areas of instruction. In some cases, AWB has established on-going relationships with institutions in these countries, and so may have a series of continuing projects in different departments of the institution.

AWB cannot fulfill its mission without your help. Sustainable development needs higher education

and the experts and skills of an educated population. With your donation, Academics Without Borders can help developing countries improve their systems of higher education.

Canadian Donors

Canadian donors can donate through CanadaHelps and receive a tax receipt directly from them. It is possible to set up monthly giving with CanadaHelps. or by sending a cheque made out to AWB-USF, c/o Greg Moran, Executive Director, 5221 rue Cartier, Montreal, QC H2H 1X6.

Ed Williams, Dept. of Mathematics and Statistics, has been the MUN and MUNPA liaison with Academics Without Borders.

"Haircuts" continued

in place so that we could show deference to our elders by tugging it.

My mother was horrified when she saw the ravages that had been wrought upon my head, and immediately went to remonstrate with the perpetrator, who was not in the slightest inclined to apologise. So, for the next two weeks, Mervyn and I had to wear headscarves, for fear of catching cold.

Haircut #2 was at another barber's in Fenton, my home town. His shop was in a rather dingy side-street, in the front room of what had been a terraced house. The window was rather small and had a curtain behind the narrow display area to safeguard the privacy of those seeking the barber's services. There was only one item on display, one word in the stylised font that needed no other explanation: Durex. I had no idea what the product was, but surmised it was something for adults, so I didn't ask. This time (I was now about eight years old) it was my father who accompanied me on what became a fortnightly ritual. Looking back, I now realise that this barber (again the name escapes me) was probably gay. His mannerisms as he approached each customer's head, the delicate way in which he combed and cut, combed and cut would be called camp. But he kept up a bantering conversation with each man or boy, so that the whole experience was pleasurable. And if we had to wait, there was a tattered collection of old football magazines to keep me occupied.

Haircut #3. My father had worked for about ten years for the "Corporation", the term that was

used to refer to the City Council of Stoke-on-Trent. During that time, in the 1930s, my father had made friends with a number of workers, one of whom, "Jack", had had an industrial accident that made it impossible to continue with the heavy labour he had been performing. To supplement his disability pension Jack had learned to be a barber, an enterprise that he ran out of the front room of his house. My father heard of this and decided that we should transfer our business to him, even though his barbering skills left much to be desired. Jack didn't have a barber's chair, so he used a captain's chair from the kitchen, and for children my size, he placed a plank of wood across the arms, so that he did not have to bend down.

We never had to make an appointment, or wait since Jack had never built up a large clientele. In fact I think his only customers were former workmates and a few neighbours. Jack and my father (whose name was also Jack) would carry on a conversation about anything and everything, often for long after my haircut was finished. It was on such occasions that I marvelled at how talkative my father could be, since at home he hardly said a word.

I could go on. Getting a razor cut in France; having expensive styling done here in St. John's. Now I cut my own hair, my wife having provided me with a very serviceable kit, costing \$24 a number of years ago. But I miss the social aspect of going to the barber's, since unisex salons don't provide the male camaraderie of my youth.

Tony Chadwick taught in the Department of French and Spanish.



Branscombes Pond

Photo/Steve Wolinetz

Photo Gallery

Recent photos by members of the MUNPA Shutterbug Group



/Gerry Humphrey



/Liz Stanford

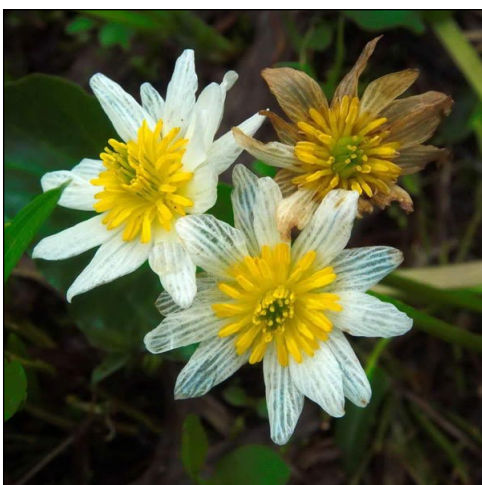


/Mike Wilshire



Herzberg 2018

/Gene Herzberg



/Mark Graesser



/Grant Gardner