



Photo/Gene Herzberg

Your Voice

MUN Pensioners' Association (MUNPA) Newsletter • Vol. 18, No. 1, Feb. 2020
Co-editors: Bernadette Power, Ann Ryan • Design and layout: Mark Graesser

Leslie Cake: A Man with a Cause

The MUNPA Tribute Awards recognize the importance of the ongoing contributions of Memorial's retirees to the University or the Community. The Award is offered annually and a maximum of three recipients may be honored each year. The Award recognizes significant post-retirement service and/or achievement by retired faculty or staff. At a luncheon reception held on December 12, 2019 and hosted by MUN President Dr. Gary Kachanoski the award was presented to Dr. Leslie Cake. MUNPA president Dr. Steven Wolinetz read the citation honouring the recipient. In Dr. Cake's response, he thanked the Awards Committee and the Association for the award, and highlighted the contributions of his many colleagues in the creation of the Aging Research Centre.

Since he retired as a Professor of Psychology at the Sir Wilfred Grenfell Campus in 2009, Dr. Leslie Cake has worked tirelessly to realize the establishment of the Aging Research Centre at Memorial University. To quote Dr. Sharon Buehler, "it is difficult to overestimate the hours contributed by Les to this nine year effort".

Until its establishment in 2019, Newfoundland and Labrador was the only province in Canada without such an entity, a surprising and embarrassing situation given that we have the fastest aging population of any province/territory in Canada.

Three previous attempts to establish such a Centre had failed. When Dr. Cake's vision was presented to NLCAHR's Research Affinity Group on Aging in 2009, it was enthusiastically received. He has worked to educate the "powers that be", met with representatives of Eastern and Western Health, spoken to and been reported by the media, visited all such bodies in other provinces to educate himself on best practices in the field, collaborated in



photo/Rick Belenkinsopp

Dr. Leslie Cake

research projects with University colleagues, published papers and presented at conferences. Of particular note is the report "Building an Evidence-Based Framework for an NL Centre on Aging", published in 2011 and serving as a background paper for discussion with university and government officials.

Continued on next page

Inside this issue

- From the editors 2**
- Presidents message 3**
- MUNPA activity groups 4**
- Yuletide activities 5**
- How (not) to buy a major appliance 6**
- Upcoming events 7**
- Psychedelic in the Gatineau . . 8**

From the Editors

In mid-January, the eastern part of our province was hit with a record-breaking snow storm, and most areas of the province are experiencing harsh winter conditions.

These are serious situations and they also provide us with an opportunity to remind ourselves how fortunate we are to live in a place where so much kindness is shown by our neighbours and friends. We have seen many instances when a sense of community has been enhanced by a collective response focused on ensuring the safety and well-being of all.

To those of you who live in warmer climates during our winter months or year around, we hope all is well, and that you too are enjoying good friends and neighbours.

Please stay in touch and let us know what's on your mind. Tell us what is important to you so we can seek out information and stories that you will find helpful. Help us be your good neighbours and friends!

In this issue we feature amusing stories by Roberta Buchanan and Joan Scott. We would love to receive more stories, poems, photos, provocative questions, or you name it, to enliven these pages. Just contact the editors or use the email address below.

MUNPA Contact Information

Office	Room 2003E, Signal Hill Campus
Office Assistant	Jackie Collins
Main e-mail	munpa@mun.ca
Phone	(709) 864-6979
Website	www.mun.ca/munpa
Your Voice	yourvoice@mun.ca
St. John's Programme Committee	munpaevents@mun.ca
Grenfell MUNPA Committee	Mary Sparkes
	msparkes@grenfell.mun.ca
	Lois Bateman
	lbateman@grenfell.mun.ca

Leslie Cake, continued

The Aging Research Centre was opened at Sir Wilfred Grenfell Campus in December 2018, and was introduced as the newest such centre in October of this year at the National Conference of the Canadian Association on Gerontology. Dr. Cake currently sits on the Centre's Management Board.

Dr. Leslie Cake, aptly described by Dr. Jim Greenlee as a "citizen-scholar", was nominated for the MUNPA Tribute Award in recognition of his dedicated work in bringing the Aging Research Centre to life.



Toasted by the two presidents

President's Message

First, let me offer my sincere congratulations to Dr. Leslie Cake, winner of the 2019 MUNPA Tribute Award, for his ongoing efforts to establish the Aging Research Centre-Newfoundland and Labrador. This is a remarkable achievement. Despite its aging population, Newfoundland and Labrador was the only province without a centre doing research on aging. Thanks to Les, that is no longer the case. Based in Corner Brook, the Aging Research Centre serves the entire province. Just starting out, we expect to hear great things from it. ARC-NL will hold its first public conference, "ARC-NL2020: Building the ARC" on May 7-8th."

Thank you, Les, for your efforts. This is something for all of us. Thanks, as well, to President Kachanoski not only for hosting the Tribute Award's Reception in December, but also the strong support that you have given to MUNPA during your presidency.

Tribute Award nominations are not due until the end of June, but it is not too soon to think of deserving colleagues whom you might want to nominate. Like the grant applications with which some of us have wrestled, making a nomination is easier if you allow yourself the time that the task requires. Nor is it too soon to think about joining us on MUNPA's Board of Directors. Our Annual General Meeting is coming up on Thursday, June 4th.

35th Anniversary in October

Established in 1985, MUNPA celebrates its 35th year on Thursday, October 8th. We are organizing festivities in St. John's and Corner Brook. One of Canada's leading gerontologists, Dr. Kenneth Rockwood, professor of Medicine at Dalhousie University is coming in to speak. Tentatively titled "Population Aging: Silver Tsunami Or Golden Opportunity?", his talk will be webcast to colleagues from the Grenfell Campus or wherever they may be. A graduate of Memorial University in Political Science and Medicine, Ken Rockwood is one of our own. Save the date now. This is a talk that you won't want to miss.

In the interim, the Board has been busy with several matters: In addition to keeping an eye on pensions and benefits, we've been responding to members' queries.

Software discounts for retirees

One concern that comes up repeatedly is that pensioners can no longer purchase software through the university. This reflects changes in software licensing, policy changes and the restructuring of the Computer Purchasing Centre. Only offices and departments and grant holders with FOAPALs (account numbers) can make purchases through the university.

Whether this contravenes our memorandum of understanding with the university is open to debate. We are supposed to have the same privileges as current employees. In that they cannot purchase hardware or software for personal use, it can be argued that we have suffered the same loss of privilege. Perhaps, but it is a problem that many of us -- including those doing unfunded research -- confront when renewing software licenses. We are in discussions with university officials about that and also exploring alternate routes through which discounts might be secured.

Board resignations

To our regret, our Board has been operating with a reduced complement: Early in the year, both Jean Snook, newly elected, and Jim Wyse, resigned for personal reasons. Although we miss the expertise and critical eye that they would have brought to matters facing us, we've carried on, with Chris Dennis replacing Jim on pensions, and Sheila Singleton as our privacy officer. At the same time, our Board has benefited from an informal arrangement that has seen Lois Bateman, no longer a Board Member, working with Mary Sparkes, and joining us for meetings. Both are from our Grenfell Campus. This has provided for a smooth transition and continuity that would otherwise be lacking.

Steven Wolinetz

Activities

MUNPA Groups with Winter Start Dates

The following is a list of St. John's MUNPA groups with their Winter 2020 start dates. For detailed information about each of our groups, including contact names and meeting locations, see our [website](#). New members are welcome, including spouses/partners of MUNPA members.

Each group runs its own names' list, so it is highly recommended that new members email a group contact person to confirm their first attendance. Groups are listed on our web page: 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.

Bowling Group

Starts Tuesday, January 21

- Meets monthly, third Tuesday, noon
- A non-competitive game at Holiday Lanes. Monthly signup is required to ensure enough lanes are booked.

Craft Group

Starts Thursday, January 9

- 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.

Games Group

Starts Wednesday, January 22

- Meets monthly, fourth Wednesday, 1:30pm
- A group for people who enjoy socializing over a fun board or card game

Health and Aging Group

Starts Wednesday, January 15

- Meets monthly, third Wednesday, 10:00am
- This is a discussion group, that on occasion draws on external resource persons for presentations. This winter's planned topics include music and aging; vegetarian diets; meditation.

Memoir Group

Starts Monday, January 13

- 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. Bring your own lunch; tea and coffee are provided.

Music Group

Starts Wednesday, January 15

- Meets weekly, Wednesdays, 1:00pm
- A group for new and experienced musicians. Members get together to jam and play some tunes.

Outing Club

Starts Tuesday, January 14

- Meets biweekly, Tuesdays, 2:00pm
- The group plans walks and short hikes. When weather allows, we switch to snow-shoeing and cross-country skiing.

Shutterbug Club

Starts Friday, January 17

- 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.

Save the Date

**MUNPA'S AGM WILL TAKE PLACE ON
THURSDAY, JUNE 4TH AT THE
FLUVARIIUM**

Grenfell's MUNPA Christmas Dinner



Joanne Gallagher-Duffy, Evie Newton, Michael Newton, Jim Duffy

The Grenfell MUNPA Christmas dinner, was held on Thursday, November 21 at the Blow Me Down Cross Country Ski Club in Corner Brook. It was a fun evening with lots of socializing, and a great Christmas dinner! Approximately 55 retirees and spouses attended.

St. John's Christmas Social

The St. John's Christmas Social took place on December 5th. Due to the increasing number of participants, close to 200 this year, we moved from our long-time site at the Fluvarium to Bally Haly. The new location provided a welcoming atmosphere for our event, giving retirees and their guests the opportunity to enjoy good food and cheer and meet up with old friends. Five happy people were winners of the prize draws - Kathy McKay, Steve Wolinetz, Craig Skinner, Sharon Buehler, and Pearl Herbert.

The Social wasn't all about meeting and greeting friends. Programme Committee members, plus one past member, contributed Christmas cakes and hockey tickets for the annual silent auction in aid of the Campus Food Bank, raising \$260. In addition, MUNPA members at the Social contributed individual amounts totalling \$924, as well as a number of non-perishable food items. The food bank thanks everyone who helped, either by bidding on items or contributing directly.

Making Christmas Centerpieces at Murray's Garden Centre

About 15 MUNPA members and guests attended the centerpiece making event on December 12th at Murray's Garden Centre. Their staff patiently took us step by step through the process of adding greenery and decorations to make a lovely item to adorn our tables over the holiday period. It was an enjoyable afternoon of hilarity and creativity as we worked on our individual projects.



Murray's Garden Centre provided a bright, verdant, space and festive materials to inspire participants.

photo/Nick Summers



Maria Murray completes the final touches of her masterpiece.

photo/Nick Summers

How (not) to buy a major appliance

By Roberta Buchanan

My washing machine and dryer were so old that they had been bought years ago in Sears when it was still in existence. One day I slammed the dryer door and the closing mechanism ceased to function. No problem! I taped it shut with duct tape every time I needed to use it. It was a bit of a nuisance and didn't look very elegant, and sometimes the tape came loose in the middle of drying, but it worked pretty well. I really had to get a new dryer. This went on for some months until I heard that my friend Michael was to visit from Ottawa. Michael's apartment is immaculate and I know he would never put up with a shoddy-looking duct taped dryer. I was galvanized into action. I must replace the dryer before he arrives.

I went to Island Furniture and looked at their combo washer/dryers. What a space-saver rather than having two bulky appliances side by side! I chose one and the salesman printed out its information including dimensions and price. But how to get rid of the old ones? The salesman said that his drivers refused to do this. He did not know who would do it. Oh for Sears! Sears used to give me a number to call of a man who would collect old appliances. I could hardly get the new combo delivered with the old ones still there.

I retreated baffled. Joan had ordered several appliances from Island Furniture so I told her my dilemma. "Did you offer them money?" she asked. No I hadn't. She seemed to think I was pretty dumb.

Meanwhile, Michael arrived. He was going directly to Prague when he left, and wanted to do his laundry. He didn't seem fazed by the duct tape on the dryer. Being an organised, take-charge kind of person, he immediately organised a shopping expedition for the combo. We first went to Home Depot where a very efficient woman showed me their combo, printed out its specs, price, delivery charge, removal

of old appliances charge (\$20.00), and two weeks to deliver. But two weeks! I wanted it immediately!

Off to Best Buy. Again - efficiency. A print out of all the information, including \$40.00 to remove old appliances. Two weeks delivery.

Off to Leon's. There was the combo, and since they had one in their warehouse in Gander, they could let me have one by Friday. No they did not remove the old appliances but he could give me the phone number of a man who did, Ron's Disposal. Great! It was Tuesday. Ron needed a new part for his truck, but it should arrive that day. On Wednesday the truck had been fixed, but no sign of the van. Ron had to move some garbage somewhere round the bay. On Thursday after several phone calls Ron arrived at 5 o'clock. The truck was a huge old high affair with a metal floor but no sides. Ron with his helper carried the large heavy machines and lifted them up on to the truck. How did they do it? They were very strong.

What a contrast to Leon's elegant white van on Friday, which had painted on its side a lovely living room fully furnished. Two young men descended from the back with the

combo on a platform lift; and transferred it to a two-wheeled cart. Once up the front steps it was put on some thick padded blankets and dragged down the hall - no scratches - to the back room. These were experienced furniture movers with the latest technology. They asked me how much I paid to get the old appliances removed, and were shocked when I told them. Eighty dollars! They would have done it for twenty. The salesman had told me that they might set up the combo for \$20.00. Then I could do my accumulated laundry! Oh joy! However, the plug was different and wouldn't

Continued on next page



More Activities

Upcoming Events - St. John's Programme Committee

Tour of Railway Coastal Museum

Thursday, January 30
2:00 to 3:30 pm

The Museum includes both railway and coastal boat exhibits and we will receive a guided tour of both.

First Aid mini course

Tuesday, March 3rd
1:30-4:30pm, 17 Major's Path

Presented by First Aid Vitals NL, Red Cross' Training partner. NOTE: This is the same session we have offered the last two years. Due to the positive response from attendees, we are offering it again for those who haven't gone yet. Topics include using an AED, and recognizing the signs of heart attacks and strokes.

For all of our events, email pre-registration at munpaevents@mun.ca is required. See our [web page](#) for the latest information and further information on each event.



photo/Maureen Brenton

The blissful interlude after the storm, before the shovelling. (January 18, 2020)

Major Appliance, continued

fit the outlet. And the dryer duct was not according to manufacturer's specifications, it had to be rigid metal and mine was plastic and not rigid. A fire hazard.

Now I had to get a plumber and an electrician. A heating and air conditioning expert arrived to connect the dryer duct. The electrician took several days to come. At last I was hooked up and started the washing-machine. No water! And a loud racket from the machine. The plumber found nothing wrong with the water pressure. He looked at the manufacturer's instructions, and then tipped the combo on its side. The styrofoam packing at the bottom designed to keep the drum in place had not been removed, and was preventing the machine from working. He took it out, and voilà! All it took was a lot of money. And time.

For combo washer-dryer: \$1,299 + tax = \$1,493.00

Ron's Disposal, remove old washer and dryer: \$80.00

Leon's delivery men: install new combo (couldn't): \$20.00 (voluntary)

Install new rigid metal dryer duct: \$286.06

Electrician: new plug outlet: \$275.87

Plumber: new hose faucets, fixed water problem washing machine: \$206.15

Total: \$2,343.08

Psychedelic in the Gatineau

by Joan Scott

Reading a review of *Mescaline: A Global History of the First Psychedelic*, recently written by Mike Jay, I recalled my 1958 experience with the substance some 60 years ago. Then, a quartet of chemists, young fellows of the then National Research Council of Canada with their wives, teachers in several cases, one of whom was me, shared the rental cost of a rundown cottage across the road from Kingsmere, a small lake in the Gatineau region for the summer. How run down was it? There was an unoccupied mouse nest in a dresser, and to use the toilet one, or more often two, had to take a walk out into the woods.

Three couples were from the UK and one from Australia. We cooked. We got to know some of the wildflowers, swam during the lovely hot days, fished from a rowing boat, and practiced playing recorders in our separate cars, getting together for mini concerts later on. We also had some vinyl and a way of playing it. I recall both some Tom Lehrer and “The Well Tempered Clavier.” The Australian chemist shared his copy of the *Doors of Perception* by Aldous Huxley with those of us who were interested. He had synthesized and taken some mescaline previously, with his wife, and was eager to do it again with us.

A few weeks into the summer, two of the UK couples were there when the Australians brought six test tubes of a white powder up to the cottage for the weekend, one for each of us. I have forgotten the amount in each dose. After supper on Friday or Saturday, we swallowed the contents of our tubes. As I recall nothing happened for a while and then I began to see richness everywhere. At first, I saw only what was there, but in great detail, e.g. the grain of wood planks on the floor and one wall. Later I saw what was not there. I experimented with trying to choose the hallucinations and was amused to find that a wall of complex design appeared on command. I remember a wall of old sailing ships like Spanish galleons rocking in the waves, back and forth, and always fitting in neatly with each other, as a result of deliberate choice.

Meanwhile, what was happening with the others? I have no memory of hallucinations experienced

by the two English men, one of whom was openly disapproving. Perhaps they never took their mescaline. The other English woman began to be upset by what she saw. From her distorted face it was clear that she saw disturbing images.

At around this time I, (as North Americans say so graphically) threw up. Perhaps I was anxious about the situation and did not want to lose further control of myself. I remember no further pleasurable sensations. Also, at this time or later, the guy from Australia began to feel guilty, reproaching himself for what was happening.

Our friend who was upset got worse and worse, and it was decided that we should take her the few miles to the hospital. Two cars set out, the disturbed woman between two sober types, preventing her from getting out, and another, driving. On the way we somehow contacted a police car and rode the last few miles behind a siren.

The hospital was very quiet. I recall wearing a deep pink two-piece swim suit, which was more and more inappropriate as the evening wore on.

The doctors interviewed each of us – separately. Uncertain as to the legality of what we had done made me claim that as far as I know all she had taken was aspirin.

Later it was clear that the beans had been spilt, and also that the medical staff needed to do some laborious research from big tomes, to discover much less about mescaline than Aldous Huxley had already taught the rest of us.

During this time, the effects had been wearing off, and as the next day was beginning, we were all sent home. The longest lasting effect was the guilt suffered by the chemist who made it. He took to his bed and needed a great deal of reassurance for some days – during which he told more of his life story to those of us who sat with him than we wanted to know.

Summer at our cottage had hardly begun, and it was never the same.