



Masthead photo: Jane Foltz

Your Voice

MUN Pensioners' Association (MUNPA) Newsletter Vol. 15, No. 6, November 2017

Editor-in-Chief: Steve Wolinetz • Production Manager: Patrick Tyler

From the President

November 2017

Celebration of Remembrance

At this time of year, Memorial University pays tribute to those who risked their future and possibly their lives in World War I. This year, as President of MUNPA, and on behalf of our members, it was my privilege and honour to receive the invitation to lay the wreath on November 9, at 11 am, at ceremonies held at the DF Cook Recital Hall, School of Music. The focus for this momentous occasion was The Women Behind the Scenes - A Newfoundland Woman's Perspective on WWI.

Tribute Awards

Each year, members of the Pensioners' Association are requested to nominate a member or members whom they feel have made excellent contributions in their retirement. This year, three members were recommended and approved by the Board to each receive a Tribute Award. They are **Mr. W. Hewitt**, Grenfell College, for his extensive community involvement; from the St John's campus; **Dr. M. Haddara** (Engineering) for his continuing role as a public spokesperson and ambassador for the Canadian Muslim community, and **Dr. M. MacKenzie** (Linguistics) for her dedication and continued work with the Innu of Labrador and the St. John's Friendship Centre. These awards will be presented

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December 1, at a reception to be hosted by Dr. Gary Kachanoski, President of MUN. Our congratulations go out to each of these very deserving recipients.

Scholarship Recipient

We are also pleased to announce that the 2017/2018 recipient for the MUNPA Entrance Scholarship is **William Smith** of Logy Bay. Our congratulations go out to him as well. He is wished continued success in his academic and personal endeavours.



Fun! Friends!

Finger Foods! Prizes!

MUNPA Christmas Social!

The Fluvarium, Nagles Hill Place

Thursday December 7th, 4 - 6 p.m.

With Silent Auction in aid of Campus Food Bank

Pre-register by December 1st at munpaevents@mun.ca



Christmas Social

And so again, if you are in the St. John's area, a reminder to register for our annual Christmas Social, December 7 at The Fluvarium. This is the most popular event that we host throughout the year: delicious food, fantastic company, and the mood is very, very merry. See you there.

Jane M. Foltz
Jane@mun.ca

Upcoming Events

St. John's Programme Committee

For all of these events, pre-registration at munpaevents@mun.ca is required. Just name the event in your subject line.

- **NL Outdoors: a Photographic Slide Show**
Monday, November 20
by Gene Herzberg
- **MUN Trivia Fun**
Wednesday, November 29
hosted by Linda Kirby and Anne Sinnott
- **Christmas Social**
Thursday, December 7
The Fluvarium
Please pre-register by December 1.

Find an activity that interests you. Check out our Group pages at

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



Outing Club members on Long Pond walk, October 30. From left to right: Marguerite Jones, Karen Lippold, Bernie Conran, and Elena Hannah,

From the editor

It is hard to believe that it's mid-November and that this is the third YV that I've been rushing to get into print. Thanks to Patrick Tyler's help with formatting, we'll make it. If I am rushing, it's because there's been a lot on the go. (It's been a beautiful fall and a few days ago, barely cold or at all like November.) In addition, you, our members, have begun to make YV **your** voice rather than my own.

Included in this number are two pieces indicating things that MUN retirees have been doing that arrived unsolicited if not quite 'over the transom'. We've also included two reflections from the Memoir Group, our oldest and longest running focus and special interest group. Both evoke Halloween, not as it is today, but as it was in the 1950s in Ontario and Illinois: a night for mischief and fun rather than store-bought lawn decorations that rival Christmas displays. Thanks to both Jo Shawyer (Geography) and Sharon Buehler (Medicine) for sharing their pieces.

Partial success does not mean mission accomplished. Always willing to challenge others, the same characteristic that made her an excellent research director on projects like Coasts Under Stress, Rosemary Ommer (History) wrote her piece *Leaving Memorial* hoping that it would spur others to action. Please let others know what you have been doing and think about writing something for YV. I can't be the only one who worked on a school newspaper (I wrote columns for the *Cornell Daily Sun*) or enjoys letting his 'inner journalist' out. I would be delighted if more of you wrote or were willing to interview others about what they were doing. The corner of my brain that is YV's assignment desk has some projects in mind.

Steve Wolinetz,
yourvoice@mun.ca

Report on west coast pensioner activities

by Lois Bateman

Past Events

Purple Shield hosted an advance funeral-planning seminar for local MUN pensioners on Tuesday, November 7.

Approximately 15 people attended an hour-long presentation that was light-hearted but informative. It outlined the general process and advantages of pre-planning a funeral. Literature was provided and a local Purple Shield representative was introduced if people wished to make arrangements to meet with her to learn more about the process. Afterward there were refreshments; this provided an opportunity to chat with the two Purple Shield representatives.

Upcoming Events

Human Resources is organizing an information session about the benefits that MUN provides. It will focus on the travel insurance plan (SSQ Financial Group) and the health and dental plans (Medavie Blue Cross). The session will be held on Wednesday, November 29 in FA 224 (Fine Arts) from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Refreshments will be available. We will let you know about parking closer to the date.

- The SSQ Financial Group, the insurance company that handles the travel insurance, will be represented by Mylene Desjardins, Inside Sales & Client Service Representative | Atlantic provinces.

- Medavie Blue Cross, the insurance company for health and dental benefits, will be represented by Susan King, Account Manager, Corporate Client Service. Please contact Sharon Walsh swalshgrenfell.mun.ca if you plan to attend.

From the other west coast

Submitted by Keith and Heather Nicol



We moved to the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island in the fall of 2014 from Corner Brook, NL. We love the fact that we can ski at Mt. Washington (30 minutes) from town and go sea kayaking on the same day. The marine area is rich with wildlife from eagles to orcas to sea lions. Although we knew no one in the Comox Valley when we moved we have found it quite easy to meet people since this area is popular with retirees from across Canada. There seem to be clubs or groups for just about any interest.



Christmas in November, a social featuring a turkey dinner, was held Wednesday, November 15 at the Blow Me Down Cross Country Ski Club chalet. Thirty-four people enjoyed a lovely turkey dinner and door prizes and responded in kind by making a donation to the Grenfell campus food bank.

What's been happening in St. John's

It's been a busy time.

Shutterbug members have been snapping away; members of the Memoir Group are nudging a collection of their work, *Creating a University*, toward publication, and the always busy, craft group has been doing projects and producing goods at a rate that puts the rest of us to shame. If some of you, looking at the pictures we have published or those now on the MUNPA website <http://www.mun.ca/munpa/gallery/> (click on Craft Group), have wondered about overly full stockings, some of their product — dolls that members have been knitting — have found their way to isolated people in Northern Nigeria and the Ivory Coast. Always busy, members set their needles to work responding to a call from Hope:Effect, The Leprosy Mission. Kudos to the Craft Group for doing their bit and helping others

Health and Aging POLYPHARMACY

Other groups have been busy as well. At its October meeting, Health and Aging, heard from Dr. Debbie Kelly, Associate Professor in our School of Pharmacy and Director of its Medication Therapy Service Clinic <http://www.mun.ca/pharmacy/community/mtsclinic/> talked about polypharmacy and de-prescribing. Neither polypharmacy nor de-prescribing are words that roll

off our tongues, but what Dr. Debbie Kelly told members of Health and Aging should be of interest not only to seniors but also anyone who has to cope with or has tried to help someone take multiple medications. **Wikipedia defines polypharmacy as "the concurrent use of multiple medications"**. Defining polypharmacy as taking five or more medications on a regular basis, Debbie Kelly made the definition more tangible. Included in that count are not only prescription drugs but also over the counter medications or supplements. Polypharmacy is a risk because medications can interact and doctor's prescribing for one condition may not know what else has been prescribed or why it has been prescribed. That risk increases when another doctor, for one reason or another, takes over. People particularly at risk are those with chronic conditions and women, who still live longer than men. De-prescribing may be in order because of changing medical needs, the increased risk that comes with multiple medications — add more and the risks increase exponentially — or simply to improve the quality of patients nearing the end of their lives. The Medication Therapy Services Clinic — to which you can self-refer — looks at the whole gamut of medications, prescribed and over the counter and considers what can be dis-

continued. There is more to be said than space or expertise allows, but don't despair. When the Battery opens next fall, MUNPA will be asked to participate by organizing one or more events. One possibility we are considering is that we could webcast not only to the west coast but also to members elsewhere would be a talk by Dr. Kelly. It's something to think about.

A Talk at the Rooms ROYAL NL REGIMENT

The St. John's Programme Committee has also been busy organizing a visit to the Rooms and talk by its history curator on the designation of the Newfoundland Regiment as the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. That designation happened three times: in the 19th century in recognition of its role in the War of 1812 in Upper Canada, again in 1917 and after World War II.

Safe Driving Course WINTER PRIMER

Jim Brazil, from Safety NL, led a course on winter driving for seniors. He recounted not only the obvious — that winter tires should now be on — but also what to do in the event of a skid: don't steer into it as many of us have been taught (there isn't time) but rather look where you want the car to go. He also recounted how to position your hands to avoid skids (shuffle the

wheel through your hands positions at nine and three o'clock rather than steering hand over hand). Finally, he detailed what should go in an emergency kit. The latter included not only jumper cables (read your manual to use them correctly rather than frying your cars computers), but also a warm jacket and gloves, absorbent material such as diapers, as well as a first-aid kit, a charged up cell-phone and a shovel.

Putting on snow tires isn't the only thing that you should do. Think as well about changing oil and filters, topping up windshield wash, checking the deflection of your headlights and changing your windshield wipers (which can become brittle after years of use and help to freeze rather clear your view).

Also important:

- Allowing 4-5 seconds rather three between you and the car you are following so that you have more time to react. Remember: SNOW MEANS SLOW!
- Braking gently, ideally when you are going straight
- Wearing your seatbelt properly: around your hips and torso rather than around a bulky coat.

MUNPA Craft Group takes on International Project

During the winter months the Craft group meets most Thursday mornings. Some weeks there may be a group project but mostly those who attend are working on their own projects that often involve knitting. However, when there is a need, many of the ladies will take up the challenge to provide what is required, such as hats for local newborn babies.

When the Leprosy Mission Canada <https://effecthope.org/> requested "hope" dolls, several MUN Crafts Group women got busy knitting. The objective was to engage Canadians about the work done to restore hope to people in other parts of the world who are living with leprosy and other diseases of poverty and isolation. Each doll will remind them that someone in Canada is supporting them.

Using the recommended Jean Greenhowe pattern, people from British Columbia to Newfoundland and Labrador got busy knitting the dolls in the bright sky-blue colour



When Effect:Hope, The Leprosy Mission Canada (<https://effecthope.org/>) requested "hope" dolls, several MUN Crafts Group women got busy knitting.

of the Effect:Hope logo. MUNPA's Craft group produced many dolls. They were mailed to the office in Markham and put with other Hope Dolls. Many of these dolls were then taken to Northern Nigeria and the Ivory Coast. If anyone wants to continue knitting Hope Dolls,

the project is ongoing. You can find information on the Effect:Hope website: <https://effecthope.org/>

See Effect:Hope letter of thanks page 10



Carolyn Hawco proudly displays the quilt she crafted in participation with the MUNPA crafts group.

What some MUNPA members have been up to

Leaving Memorial **By Rosemary Ommer** (History)

I left Memorial (where I had been a full professor and a member of the History Department as well as the Research Director of ISER) for a year's sabbatical at the University of Victoria, B.C. in 1997, 20 years ago. While there, I discovered that the community stress that was so familiar to me from outport Newfoundland, was also seriously afflicting coastal communities on the west coast of Canada. I was surprised. I thought the west coast had many more resources than Newfoundland, and I wondered why two such very different coasts had such similar problems. I therefore put together an MCRI proposal for a large genuinely interdisciplinary research project that I called *Coasts Under Stress* (CUS), to be based at the University of Victoria and also at MUN. Funded in 2000 for five years by both SSHRC and NSERC (under its network grants structure), that research involved (as had Eco-research beforehand) natural and social scientists and health and education scholars.

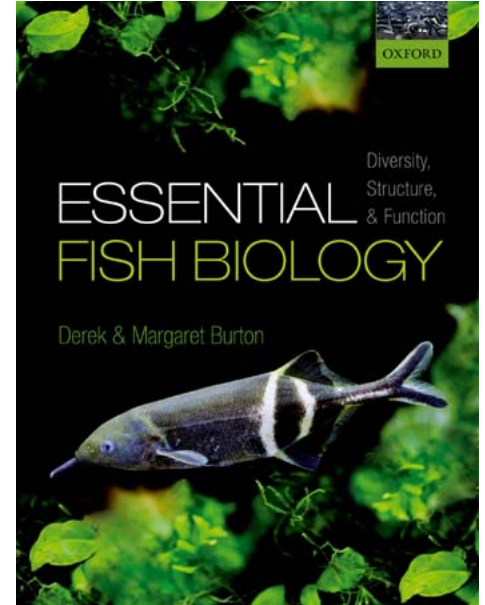
CUS was difficult to run, not least because of the distances involved. In 2000 I had also been offered the position of Research Director of the Calgary Institute for the Humanities, and I accepted that offer: I loved directing research institutes and the CIH had only had an acting director for some time. Unfortunately, running CUS and the early stages of the MCRI became too stressful, and my health started to suffer.

On medical advice, I gave up the Directorship and concentrated on running the research from UVic, which offered me a research position that facilitated doing that. It was a good decision, letting me continue to work with Memorial scholars and visit MUN regularly, and giving the research and scholars working with me the attention they deserved.

Eventually I became the Research Director of the Centre for Earth and Ocean Research at UVic. This was renamed the Institute for Coastal and Ocean Research, to reflect the inclusion of Social Sciences and Humanities. Then I retired, taking up contract work helping faculty and students write polished SSHRC proposals. I worked at this 'grants-crafting' at both MUN and UVic until two years ago, when I cut back. I now focus on major UVic grants, and serve on the advisory boards of large projects, where I can use my expertise to give back to the institutions and/or scholars with whom I have worked. One of these projects is the *On The Move* project at MUN, directed by Barb Neis. An earlier one, the CURRA, also directed by Neis, was also at MUN.

Thus, although I miss my friends and colleagues at Memorial, I rejoice in having very little snow to shovel in winter, which matters at my age. I also rejoice in still having a vibrant and useful connection with Memorial, of which I am both an alumna (my MA) and a pensioner.

The Burtons have written a book



Derek and Margaret Burton have written a book, *Essential Fish Biology*, on the diversity and functional biology of fish in their habitats. With over 25,000 species, fish represent the largest group of vertebrates. The book provides an introduction and overview of the ways in which fish adapt to the wide variety of conditions in which they occur. Included are numerous black and white illustrations and 16 colour plates. When we were teaching some of our effort was directed to transmitting information about fish and how they function. Although there are many "fish books" we found none that worked as an appropriate comprehensive text, and we have now written one (illustrated, and we hope, accessible) to help understanding of fish and their complexity. Most people know of fish in terms of a few species of food fish and aquarium "pets" and

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Halloween in Illinois

by Sharon Buehler

Photo: "Jack'o'Lantern" (Pumpkin carved by James Tyler)

I had only seven children at my door this year. I was disappointed because this year, unlike last, I spent some time getting ready. I have three pumpkins of varying sizes picked up in after-Halloween sales that have batteries to light them. I also have a lovely scary black cat with arched back and bared teeth which stands about six inches.

The pumpkins and the cat sit in the corner of the front entry way. A very old string of orange lights and a string of small white ghost lights are looped over the coat hooks above them. I leave my front door open so through the full glass storm door you see into a darkened area with orange glow. There are two sorts of windsock things that I fasten to the knobs on my front porch rail just to indicate I'm one of the houses on the street welcoming Halloweeners. I also, always, carve a pumpkin that sits inside on the front windowsill facing the front porch. This year's had a small carving error. I usually put in a few oddly spaced teeth but this year I accidentally amputated one so the toothy grin was pretty much a gap on one side. But the unexpected side benefit was that that larger gap meant more air and the candle inside glowed brightly.

I had bought a package of small candy bars and a box of little packages of goldfish crackers. And, as usual I have most leftover. I bought goldfish purposely because they aren't the worst of snacks to eat up but the bars which I used to take into work the day after Halloween are still sitting there - minus

about eight consumed while I waited until 8 o'clock and my usual turning-out-the-porch-light hour. When I went swimming the next day, I entered the dressing room behind a woman carrying a basket labeled Halloween Treats in felt letters and I thought, "brilliant"; she is bringing questionable goodies for those checking in for their swim and fitness workouts. My Halloween's growing up were eagerly anticipated occasions. We didn't have bought Halloween costumes — I don't remember even seeing them on sale at stores — so sheets, old clothes, cardboard, aluminum foil along with store bought masks had to do. We were allowed to go just to the houses on our block and I don't remember anyone who didn't open the door to us. Even the woman who then seemed ancient — she was probably 60 — and who lived alone and kept very much to herself. The houses with big families usually gave out great treats, in our day homemade cookies, little bags of popcorn or popcorn balls or candy corn and, if you were lucky, bought malted milk balls or Milk Duds. We always said "Trick or Treat" and, despite always getting something in our paper grocery bags we "tricked" some people (but only the ones we knew well) by soaping their basement windows or going up to a darkened window and running our notched wooden spools to make a spooky noise.

Besides planning some kind of costume in the weeks before October 31, we would beg a well-worn bar of soap and make our spools. They had to be wooden spools and you took a knife and nicked notches along the edges and then wound it with cord and put it on a stick so you could ratchet it along a window pane. If you had a truly wonderful costume,

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Halloween in Illinois

continued from previous page

you would join the Halloween parade downtown around the square; there were prizes. There were a few city street decorations and big displays of real and fabricated pumpkins in grocery and general stores but the only house decoration I remember was a carved pumpkin on the porch or front step. For a number of years the city sponsored a contest to paint the store windows around and just off the square. I got to be part of several windows; we would plan our design and take our poster paints and brushes and have the whole of a store window to paint. Some were very, very good.

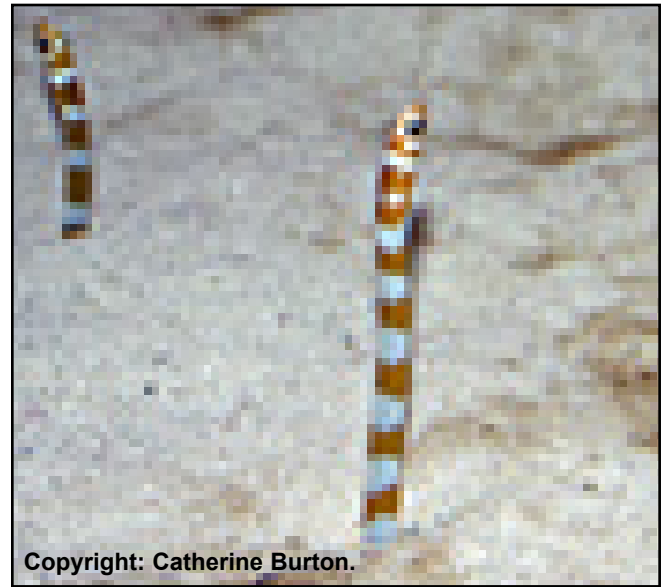
After the neighborhood round, when you got home, you were required to dump out the whole bag and after trading with your sister you were allowed to eat a few of the treats and the rest were stashed by the parents somewhere in the house doled out throughout the next week.

I'm fascinated by both the costumes and the outside decorations now. This year my annual trip to Illinois was just before Halloween and decorations were out everywhere. Giant scary figures in front yards and cobwebs decorating the porches and trees and coffins with zombies by the driveway. One of my favorites was on a side dirt road in southern Illinois. Orange lights draped across the front of the house and along the walk and the front yard filled with a variety of tombstones. Which reminds me of one year when I was in Toronto for Halloween. My daughter and daughter-in law lived on a block where, as far as I could see walking to the subway stop, every house was decorated. On Kelly's block, residents also dressed up and greeted the kids in costume. I still smile when I remember the neighbors across the street whose house had two large posts on the front porch. The father of the house was dressed as Phantom of the Opera and when the smallest Halloweeners came up the darkened walk he would leap out from the back of the post with a menacing howl. Many a group were stopped in their tracks and forced to retreat to mothers on the curb. Halloween is definitely a kid holiday but I look forward to it every year.

The Burtons have written a book

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are surprised to learn of the large number, over 25000, extant species. These species are adapted to live in a wide variety of habitats in the seas, rivers, lakes, caves and even temporarily on land. Some, like the elephant fish can navi-



Copyright: Catherine Burton.

gate by electrolocation; others like the **garden eels** (seen above) burrow for protection. With Newfoundland having so much fish involvement over the years there has been plentiful information of local origin to write about. We are pleased that retirement gave us the time to complete this work.

St. John's Campus Food Bank Xmas Hamper Drive

If you would like to donate a hamper, or cash in lieu of a hamper, details about what foods/amounts are requested can be found on our website. We gratefully accept full or partial hamper donations. We combine all items received to make up full hampers.

www.mun.ca/campusfoodbank/ChristmasHamperDonations.php



For more Halloween memories, see next page.

Memories of Halloween

by Jo Shawyer (Geography)

When I think back to the Halloween of my youth, I remind myself that it was pre-plastic, pre-Dollar Store costumes, pre-Walmart bags of 'shell-out' candy and pre-protective parents.

My most vivid memories of Halloween are from age eight to ten. Compared to the excitement with which I experienced Halloween at that age, Halloween ever since has failed to impress me.

There was an evening Halloween party at our three-room rural school: grades one to eight. And there were prizes for costumes. We liked to dress up as the exciting persons whom we knew from stories but we were constrained by the resources at hand. Towels and curtains provided Royal robes for Kings, Queens, princesses, and also created long dresses for rich old fashioned ladies. Sheets were reserved for ghosts. Brass curtain rings were skillfully attached to a pirate as earrings or fastened at his waist or on his shoes to create the swashbuckling effect. The patient collection of the gold wrappers from a tin of Quality Street toffees was pressed into service as gold leaf to create an authentic crown or to give a metallic sheen to a cardboard sword. A piece of coal served to blacken a face into a negro likeness. And lipsticks were volunteered as war paint to stripe the face of a brave Indian warrior.

But there was more to Halloween than the party at the school. Halloween in our community lasted most of a week. It was very much activated by a gang of teenage boys. For a younger child, like me, their activities would have been described, in my eyes, at that time, if the word had been popular, as awesome. The excitement built slowly. In the days leading up to Halloween, there was intense soaping of the windows

of cars, houses, shops and the school. The fun, for the onlooker, was to see who was targeted: a person whom the young people considered to be crabby for one reason or another, or a particular teacher who was disliked. Next there began a ritual succession of Nights. First there was Cabbage Night. The local youths raided nearby fields to collect cabbages to hack apart and strew all over the village street. The next night was Gate Night. In the morning, when I walked down our road and into the village to go to school, I would see large metal farm gates strung up on the telephone poles! And nobody seemed to know who had put them there. But there was more. The next day before Halloween was Bicycle Night. And in the morning when I hurried into the village with anticipation, I saw bicycles strung up on telephone poles. That was a sight to behold! But the grand finale of Nights was the eve of Halloween. One or two outhouses sourced from farms - were lifted from their moorings and transported to the front doorsteps of targeted houses in the village. These gang-driven pranks outraged the victims and amused everyone else, as I recall. There was no attempt to identify or punish the perpetrators of these tricks. A few days passed. The victims of the pranks reclaimed their gates and bicycles, removed the outhouses, and order was restored. Life returned to normal. Halloween was over.

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eve of Halloween.
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On Halloween night the younger children, like me, visited our neighbours by ourselves, not escorted by parents. We were seeking to collect candy: home-made toffee, fudge, popcorn balls, toffee apples and cookies. But there was more to the adventure than that. Our country road was unlit and thrillingly dark. We tripped on our costumes, we heard strange night noises, we played our flashlights to make grotesque patterns on the road, the fields, the trees, the sky, each other. We were alone, coping with the eerie magic of darkness.

That is my best memory of Halloween.

effect: hope

The Leprosy Mission Canada

I would like to thank you and the Craft Group at the Memorial University of Newfoundland Pensioners' Association for the 25 beautiful "Hope" dolls you sent. All of these dolls were so original and beautiful.

I am happy to tell you that your dolls were given to women, children and grandchildren who have suffered with Leprosy and other neglected tropical diseases. They were distributed in both Nigeria and the Ivory Coast and were a blessing to those that received them.

Can we count on your support in the future? If you have any questions, please contact me.

Blessings,
Cindy Quinn
Retail Partnership & Fundraising Specialist

In aid of the Campus Food Bank MUNPA Christmas Social Silent Auction



Auction items will include delicious, homemade Christmas cakes and puddings as well as a Christmas treat basket.



Do you know your MUN events? Remember past presidents? Can you tell us the first four buildings on the current campus?

If you know these things, or want to try making a good guess, come join us at The Lantern, November 29 at 2 p.m. for MUN Trivia Fun! See the MUNPA events website for details. Advance signup is underway!

MUNPA Website Update

We aren't done yet, but the MUNPA website (<http://www.mun.ca/munpa/>) is morphing from a static site that was functionally dead to an active site where you can find out what is on in your locale and what your fellow members have been doing. Our photo gallery is now up — see the Gallery tab — and the information under About Us. The one remaining tab that needs work (and lot's of it) is Benefits. This takes time because we need to get it right; i.e., not mislead anyone. In the meantime, please let us know what you think by e-mailing the Communications Committee (Steve Wolinetz, Audrey Power, and Rod Campbell) at yourvoice@mun.ca