

ADRP NEWSLETTER

Volume 8, Number 1, April 2009

Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Thursday, 23 April 2009

**Lord Dalhousie Room
Henry Hicks Building
Dalhousie University**

**Meet and Greet at 1:30pm
AGM 2 to 3:30pm**

**Day parking tickets for ASRP members are available from the
Security Office, McCain Building**

**Agenda, Minutes and Committee Reports are published in this Newsletter.
Please bring them with you to the meeting.**

**Please Note: There are some important announcements and updates
following the Committee Reports that we would like to bring to
your attention.**

ADRP Newsletter

Editorial: Ken Rozee krozee@eastlink.ca
Blanche Potter-Creighton.....tcreighton@eastlink.ca

Welcome to the April 09 edition of the ADRP newsletter and, as you can see, with two new editors at your service.

We are writing this editorial mid-week through the UNESCO International Adult Learning Week, 2-8 March 09. Its goal is to promote lifelong learning in all aspects for the benefits that it confers on participants and society as a whole. Adult learning besides increasing knowledge pools has social, health and mental acuity benefits that are now being widely recognized. These benefit both the adult learner and the community.

ADRP two years ago undertook the creation of the Seniors College of Nova Scotia (SCANS) with the mandate to develop courses of academic interest for seniors over 50. These were to be provided at a reasonable cost and without exams or certification. It has proven to be a resounding success with over 200 members to date and 30 plus courses given from Medical topics to Political Philosophy and Ancient History, Opera and Art Appreciation. We encourage ADRP members who have not taken advantage of this opportunity to do so, and to access the SCANS web site link at adrp@dal.ca Give it a try!!

Members are also encouraged to read the reports of the Laidlaw Committee on the financially important issues of Pension Idexation and also the Committee on Over-charging retirees for Blue Cross benefits. These contentious situations have become chronic irritants preventing an amicable relationship with our university Administration.

We would also welcome contributions of our membership and others to the Announcements and Updates section of the Newsletter. The more the merrier! Just drop us an email at either of the addresses above.

Editorial Policy: The ADRP intends to publish the Newsletter every three months. It is hoped the newsletter will serve the following purposes:

To provide pertinent information;

To provide a forum for the free exchange of views on issues relevant to our membership;

To serve as a documentary record of matters relating to the ADRP.

The Editorial Board, under the ultimate direction of the ADRP Board, takes responsibility for the contents of the newsletter. Signed contributions will take the form of short articles and letters to the editor; these will normally represent the opinions of the author, and need not represent the views of the ADRP. Anonymous material will not be considered for publication. The Editorial Board retains the right to edit or reject contributed material and to elicit similar and opposing views surrounding any issue raised.

The Editorial Board: Ken Rozee, Blanche Potter Creighton

Ex-officio: Philip Welch, Randy Barkhouse

How to contact us: At our e-mail addresses at the top of this page or

By phone: (902) 494-7174 By e-mail: adrp@dal.ca

By post: ADRP Office, Rm. 2831, Life Sciences Centre, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS B3H 4J1

DRAFT AGENDA

ADRP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

2:00-3:30pm on THURSDAY, April 23, 2009

Lord Dalhousie Room, Henry Hicks Administration Building

1. Call to Order and Adoption of the Agenda. (J. Philip Welch)
2. Recognition of deceased members. (J. Philip Welch)
3. Approval of the Minutes of the General Meeting of 12 December 2007. (J. Philip Welch)
4. Matters arising:
5. President's Report. (J. Philip Welch)
6. Treasurer's Report and proposed budget for 2009-2010. (Dick Sutherland)
7. Auditor's Report. (Norman Horrocks)
8. Committee Reports (discussion of these reports is greatly encouraged):
 - a. Benefits Committee. (John Barry)
 - b. Communications Committee. (Randy Barkhouse)
 - i. Website. (Randy Barkhouse)
 - ii. "Newsletter." (Ken Rozee/Blanche Potter)
 - iii. Caring and Sharing sub-committee. (Carol Smillie)
 - c. Complaints and Advocacy Committee (Ken Rozee)
 - d. Membership Committee. (Blanche Potter)
 - e. Pension Advisory Committee. (Robert MacKay/Paul Huber)
 - f. Social Committee. (Sid Sodhi/Blanche Potter)
9. Representatives' Reports
 - a. SCANS (Seniors' College Association of Nova Scotia) (Ken Rozee/John Barry)
 - b. CURAC (College and University Retirees Associations of Canada) (Philip Welch)

10. Elections: Report of Nominating Committee (Blanche Potter)

Officers: President
Vice President(s)
Treasurer
Secretary

Board of Directors Members at Large

12. New Business: Special resolution. (Stuttard)

That the by-laws be amended

- i. *At Article II, clause 8, by deleting the words, “and transfer of” in the heading; and in the second sentence deleting the words, “membership is transferred without any fee to” and substituting the words “the benefits of membership for the remainder of the calendar year are conferred on the spouse of the deceased member at the time of death without any further fee.”*
- ii. *At Article IV, clause 8, by deleting the word “record”, after the words “The Secretary shall”, and inserting the words “ have responsibility for the preparation and custody of all non-financial books and records, including”*
- iii. *At Article V, clause 7, after the word “execute,” insert the words “deeds, bills of exchange, and”*

These changes, in addition to changes previously adopted at our 2008 AGM and our General Meeting on December 10, 2008, will bring the wording of our by-laws into conformity with the wording currently specified by the Registry of Joint Stock Companies in accordance with the NS Societies Act.

13. Any Other Business.

13. Adjournment.

DRAFT MINUTES (03/01/09)

ADRP GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, 10 December 2008 in the Lord Dalhousie Room, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

1. **Adoption of Agenda:** With about 40 members present at 2.06 pm, President Welch called for the adoption of the agenda as circulated. AGREED (by consensus)
2. **Remembrance of Deceased Members:** Members observed a minute of silence to remember Dr. Roland Smith, former Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and Kathleen Stewart, widow of Chester Stewart, former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine. (see Newsletter)
3. **Minutes of Annual General Meeting, 23 April 2008:**
With the correction of a figure in the Treasurer's report - \$5 to Contingency fund, not \$15, the minutes were APPROVED as circulated (Kamra).
4. **SPECIAL RESOLUTION** (Board of Directors, distributed to all members, with rationale, on Nov. 26):
That the by-laws be amended:
 - (i) *At Article I, section 6, by deleting the words: "quarters of the members present", and substituting the words: "fourths of such members entitled to vote as are present in person";*
 - (ii) *At Article I, section 7, by inserting after "s. 24], " the words: "including the provision that 'No by-law or amendment to by-laws shall take effect until the Registrar approves of it'."*
 - (iii) *At Article I, section 10, by converting from passive to active voice to read: "INSPECTION OF RECORDS. Any Member may inspect the books and records of the Association at any reasonable time at the registered office of the Association. The officer charged with maintaining such books and records may require one week's notice prior to inspection, except in the two weeks immediately preceding the Annual General Meeting."*
 - (iv) *At Article II, section 10, by recasting the penultimate sentence to read: "After due consideration, and by a simple majority, the recommendations of this committee shall be accepted, accepted with modifications, or rejected."*
 - (v) *At Article III, section 6, by inserting after "members" the words: "by email or regular post".*
 - (vi) *At Article IV, section 3, by converting the final sentence to the active voice to read: "At or prior to the Annual General Meeting any member of the Association may make additional nominations".*
 - (vii) *At Article IV, section 8, by inserting the words: "and use" after the word: "keep" in the penultimate sentence.*
 - (viii) *At Article V, section 1, by inserting the word: "such" between the words: "at" and "places".*

- (ix) *At Article V, section 4, by deleting all words after the words: “one vote”.*
- (x) *At Article V, section 7, by deleting the words: “two-thirds” and substituting the words: “three-fourths”.*
- (xi) *At Article VI, section 3, by recasting the second sentence in the active voice to read: “In the absence of the Committee Chair, a designated alternate member may represent the Committee.”*

The motion was CARRIED

5. **NS Pension Review Panel:** Pending Paul Huber’s arrival, Welch reported that on behalf of the Association, Huber had drafted a submission to the Panel in response to their interim report, and had noted the Panel’s failure to consult with any retirees. The Panel had issued an invitation for input on December 17. Welch deferred further discussion of this item until Huber had arrived.

6. Reports

a. **President:**

Welch summarized parts of President Traves’ latest report to the Board of Governors (BoG): Dalhousie’s pension funds were doing well, having \$170m in cash and short-term funds; the University’s enrolments were up and fuel costs down; the Memorandum of Understanding with the provincial government foretold funding increases to Dalhousie of \$4.7m next year, \$6m in 2010 and a further increase in 2011, but the ending of mandatory retirement next July was expected to have an adverse financial impact. Welch thought there was no evidence for the latter claim. Also, Traves had reported that the University faced more structural problems, and the Pension Trust Fund (PTF) was carrying a \$150m deficit. Welch thought this was an inflated figure. The Retirees’ Trust Fund (RTF) had a surplus that was still in the \$10-12m range, down from an earlier estimate of \$40-50m. The dispute between the DFA (on behalf of pensioners) and the BoG concerning the proper interpretation of the indexing provisions in the pension plan was scheduled for arbitration next month, but Welch did not foresee any immediate benefit for pensioners, even if the DFA/ADRP interpretation were to be upheld by the arbitrator.

- b. **Treasurer:** Dick Sutherland declared that the Association currently had a slight surplus, and reminded members to pay their 2009 dues as soon as possible.

- c. **Benefits Committee:** John Barry drew members’ attention to his report in the December Newsletter. He expressed optimism that the recent meeting he and President Welch had had with VP Sheehan and Lee Crowell could mark a breakthrough regarding Blue Cross premiums; and a second meeting had been arranged. He was pleased to report that Mike Bradfield had agreed to join the Committee and assume the task of taking minutes.

Welch shared Barry’s optimism about Blue Cross premiums, noting that the administrators had not challenged the ADRP’s analysis that retirees paying the family rate were being overcharged by about \$75 per month. He did not know whether there would be any possibility of a rebate.

In response to Om Kamra’s query about ADRP’s request to have a member appointed to the University’s Employee Benefits Committee, Barry reported that VP Sheehan had

demurred. Welch added that Sheehan had suggested monthly meetings with herself, which might be more effective than having a voice without vote on the EBC about twice per year.

Susan Sherwin wondered about two items that were included the employees' Blue Cross coverage, but were excluded for retirees; namely, travel health costs and drug costs. Welch confirmed that the ADRP was requesting either a restoration of this coverage, or a reduction of about 72% in the cost of premiums to reflect the loss of coverage. Barry added that, according to VP Sheehan, the ending of mandatory retirement meant that Dalhousie's Blue Cross plan would cover the cost of individual enrolment in the NS Pharmacare program (for over-65s) and prescription co-pay costs as well as drugs not covered by the Pharmacare program. He again referred members to the ADRP Newsletter for a report of a complaint about the imposition of the Blue Cross family rate for retired couples without dependents.

d. **Communications Committee:**

- (i) **Web Page.** Randy Barkhouse reminded members to consult the ADRP web page for relevant information and links to other useful sites for retirees.
- (ii) **Newsletter.** He expressed thanks to Jan Scott and Emerson Moffitt for their yeoman service in producing the ADRP Newsletter for the past five years. Moffitt regretted being unable to continue, but had enjoyed being editor and thanked the Association. Welch also thanked Scott and Moffitt on behalf of the Association, and members applauded.
- (iii) **Caring and Sharing.** Carole Smillie expressed good wishes to all members and solicited contact information for any shut-in members who might appreciate flowers during the holiday season. She reported a list of thirteen cards of celebration, "Get Well", and bereavement sympathy sent on behalf of the Association during the past year.
Barry remarked that the Newsletter was very important, and hoped members would consider taking on the editor's job. Welch asked potential volunteers to contact him after the meeting.

e. **Complaints and Advocacy Committee:** Ken Rozee reported a dull year with no complaints regarding the ADRP, though there had been a few pension problems. Paul Huber took his cue to add that about a dozen members had asked him for pension advice, some minor but some very serious. VP Sheehan had been involved in finding some solutions and had been very helpful. One complaint was about non-receipt of pension. The University's lawyers had become involved and this seemed to preclude a resolution for the complainant. Welch added that the ADRP was an important source of friendly advice for individuals who found University lawyers to be rather dismissive.

f. **Membership Committee:** Blanche Potter reported a 2008 membership total of 261, with some tardy dues payments still trickling in. She asked members to advise the Association of any new or changed email addresses. Welch stressed the need to increase membership to gain or boost respect for the Association and recognition of it. Barry lamented the employer's practice of withholding new retirees' contact information from the Association, and would raise the issue with VP Sheehan. Potter observed that the annual retirement workshop provided one avenue of contact with

potential ADRP members. Also, Dalhousie's personnel office had agreed to send ADRP material to all retirees every two or three years, at ADRP expense. A member wondered what might be the effect of the ending of mandatory retirement. Welch responded that most employees would probably retire within 18 months of their sixty-fifth birthday, and anyone eligible for early retirement could become an associate member of the Association before they actually retire.

- g. **Pension Advisory Committee:** Robert MacKay referred members to his article in the December Newsletter and noted that the annual PAC report would be published on Dalhousie's Admin. web site, and would be linked on the ADRP web site. In response to a questioner, Paul Huber (a member of PAC and its sub-PAC) said that the Pension Trust Fund was severely under-funded (about \$90m on November 1st), but the Retirees Trust Fund was still in surplus.

Regarding the ADRP submissions to the NS Pension Review Panel (Bill Black, chair, Dick Crawford, and Ron Pink), Huber noted three significant points: (1) Retirees' interests differ in some ways from those of employees who are union members, although some interests did overlap. Retirees lack collective bargaining and need protection under pension legislation, especially regarding indexation to the cost of living. This is true for all retirees, not only former university staff. (2) Retirees need protection with respect to provisions for winding up the pension. (3) Retirees want a voice in the operation of pension plans, rather than being sent to purgatory by their former employer. Unfortunately, the NS Panel seemed to be biased against hearing from retirees. Huber vigorously challenged this bias, because more than 50% of pension-plan provisions relate to retirees. Dalhousie's administration had also flagged some of the same concerns, and would soon meet with Bill Black, who seemed to be conducting much of the Panel's business on his own.

In response to another question, Huber explained that the RTF trustees choose the particular asset mix for the Fund, but one or more asset managers, who are chosen by the trustees, determine the actual investments within each class (such as Canadian equities). Trustees, in turn, operate under a deed of trust and are regulated by the NS Pensions Act. The University's senior administrators (on behalf of the BoG) choose the trustees, except for one trustee nominated by the DFA and one by the University Senate. Retirees also have one representative; previously this was Huber, but now it was David Cameron, who is not an ADRP member. Trustees hold about four meetings per year.

Huber also explained that he was not willing to meet with Bill Black at the same time as the DFA, since, as noted earlier, the interests of the two groups are not the same and they could not make an amalgamated submission. Also, the ADRP has some members who either were never union members, or were in non-DFA unions.

- h. **Social Committee:** Blanche Potter reported that several events had been organized in the past year, but most had been very poorly attended (see Newsletter).
- i. **Seniors' College Association of Nova Scotia (SCANS):** Rozee reported that the College had been a success from its inception 15 months ago, with 110 members in the first term, rising to 209 members currently. He lauded Bob Anderson for the latter's superb organizational efforts on behalf of the College.

The meeting adjourned at 15:40 h.

27 March 2009

APRIL NEWSLETTER
PRESIDENT'S REPORT

First, an update on the Dalhousie pension indexation shortfall, now standing at around 10% for all those who retired around 2002 or earlier. The joint ADRP- DFA grievance hearing on this matter was finally held on the 2nd and 3rd of February 2009. The question at issue revolves around the surplus in the Retirees Trust Fund (RTF), which can only be used for retirees, the vexed question of “when is a surplus not a surplus”, and the proffered Humpty Dumpty- style answer “when I say it’s not a surplus”. There is no time limit on the arbitrator to report his conclusion, thus the timing of the outcome is totally unpredictable. If the grievance is upheld, although this will be a significant moral victory, it is most unlikely that it will result in any shortfall indexation catch-up, as any decision to do so is at the discretion of the RTF trustees, who are likely to see greater needs than those of Dalhousie retirees' pension shortfall. Please see my President’s Report in the December newsletter for further details and recommendations regarding potential ADRP members' actions.

On the question of Dalhousie Blue Cross premiums for the over 65 retirees, the prospects are somewhat better. The University Administration has now accepted that the premia demanded from this group have been far too high for at least 18 years, and probably more than 30 years. We estimate that the over-65 retirees have been subsidising the Dalhousie Blue Cross plan for regular employees by about 4% of their total plan costs for many years. The University Administration have also accepted that these premiums should be reduced— discussion now centres on the question of how much reduction is appropriate, and with what other effects, adverse or otherwise. Stay tuned but rest assured that you WILL see a significant premium reduction.

We have finally obtained the agreement of the University Administration to reinstate the Blue Cross coverage for surviving partners of deceased retirees; we anticipate that this should be completed in the near future and reinstated in the Dalhousie Blue Cross contract. (If any such survivors have been denied continuing coverage in the Dalhousie Blue Cross Plan, please contact the ADRP office, or any member of your Board.)

I would also like to bring to your attention the Atlantic Regional Meeting of the Colleges and Universities Retirees Association of Canada (CURAC), to be held as a single day meeting in Moncton on the 20th of May. There is no registration fee and the only cost is that necessitated by individual travel arrangements, plus a \$15 charge for lunch. The agenda of this meeting is included in this newsletter, also information concerning the National Meeting of CURAC, scheduled to be held on the 21st and 22nd of May, also in Moncton. Any ADRP members interested in attending either of these meetings are asked to contact the office or one of your Board members.

Please note that CURAC has arranged for a special discounted price of membership for ADRP members who may wish to join CARP. Further details of this discounted membership subscription is provided in this newsletter. CARP is a national organization for retired and older

Canadians which has made some useful progress in protecting the rights and benefits of older Canadian citizens.

On both a personal and national note, we are all painfully aware of the current economic downturn and its impact on our savings, and also its indirect impact on Dalhousie pensions. A side effect of the current economic situation is that those who administer pension plans will industriously seek ways to diminish the “costs” of these plans, by decreasing the benefits emanating from the plan whenever possible. The same downturn is also acting as an incentive and encouragement for many to claim that pensions are too generous, or that the financial risks to the employer for a “defined benefit” plan (such as we have at Dalhousie) is too great and these financial risks should be shared with employees, or replaced by a “defined contribution plan”, in which all the financial risk is born by the employees. These tendencies, currently in vogue from many pension “advisors” should be resisted. It has to be remembered that the present economic situation, though significant, will be short term when considered in the overall time frame of pension plans, and that the defined benefit plan, properly administered, is much the most advantageous for the employee and the community at large.

Finally, a plea for your help! This organization is dependent on its members. We need you to assist with the committee work of the organization. A number of members have written to members of the University Administration to voice their concerns regarding the relationship of the University Administration to this organization and many have withdrawn their financial support of the University, their intended gifts, financial donations, and considered bequests. We encourage you to give this your earnest consideration. This is probably the best way of drawing the attention of the Administration to the importance of their retirees. We would also like you to tell us what activities you feel that your Board should pursue in providing retirees with informative, educational, and social gatherings. We need your input!

Wishing you all the best for the Spring (where is it?) and the hoped for summer.

Philip Welch
President, ADRP

Treasurer's Report and Proposed Budget for 2009-2010

<u>ADRP Financial Statement for 2008 and Budget for 2009</u>			
	2008	2008	2009
<u>REVENUE</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Dues & Donations	5600	4650.00 [1]	5000
BMO Account Interest	5	1.47	2
BMO GIC Interest	547	471.90	300
TOTAL	6152	5123.37	5302
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
Telephone	400	358.58	360
Postage	0	510.96 [2]	500
Other office costs	700	243.21	250
NS Registration Fee	28	27.21	28
CURAC dues	100	97.50	125
Travel	850	1286.20 [3]	850
Committees			
Members	200	358.97	350
Communications	450	296.36	300
Complaints	0	0.00	0
Liaison	300	0.00	300
Benefits	500	0.00	500
Social	900	653.02	700
TOTAL	4428	3832.01	4263
<u>SURPLUS</u>			
To Contingency Fund	1400	1200.00	1000
Residual Surplus	324	91.36	39
<p>[1] Includes some dues for years prior to 2008 plus some for 2009.</p> <p>[2] Dalhousie does not itemize postage charges by committee.</p> <p>[3] Includes a late payment of \$519.85 for travel in the 2007 budget year.</p>			

ADRP Balance Sheet as of 31 December 2008

ASSETS

LIABILITIES

Cash in bank	1733.92	Dalhousie payables	26.57
BMO GIC	14967.97	Contingency fund	8380.00
SCANS receivables	463.03	Accrued surplus	8758.35
TOTAL	17164.92		17164.92

Wm. Richard Sutherland, Treasurer

Auditor's Report

This is to state that I have examined the financial records of the Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners and find them in good order.

Norman Horrocks
School of Information Management

Committee Reports:

Benefits Committee

Yearly Report from the Benefits Committee

Through the past year, the ADRP Benefits Committee has been comprised of Shirley Dean, Sheila Johnson and Ken Easterbrook; as well our President, Philip Welch, attends our meetings. I joined the committee in June of 2008 and in November, Mike Bradfield joined us as our Secretary.

Back in the early summer the committee completed a survey of health insurance available to the public from such as CARP, Manulife, Blue Cross and a few others. Eventually we turned our attention to bettering the conditions that surround our Extended Health Benefits (EHB) of our Dalhousie-Medavie Blue Cross (MBC) contract.

In June, Philip wrote to the chair of the Employee Benefits Committee, Carolyn Sisley with copies to all other members of that committee, to protest the sorry history of the University repeatedly ignoring the concerns of retirees, and the outrageous MBC Premia demanded from the >65 year old retirees. To date there's not been the courtesy of a reply

from Ms Sisley or from any other member of the Benefits Committee. Our committee learned from research Philip had undertaken that we were paying substantially more in our premia than was justified on the basis of benefits received. This overpayment is and has been going on for eighteen years.

In mid August, Philip wrote to the Chair of the Dalhousie Board of Governors Human Resources Committee, Nancy MacCready-Williams, to protest the situation and the lack of any response or apparent interest from Univ. Benefits Committee. In early October, a letter was received from MacCready-Williams stating that she had discussed these issues with Katherine Sheehan, Asst. V.P for Human Resouces, and a member of the Univ. Benefits Committee, who had indicated her willingness to meet with representatives of the ADRP to discuss our concerns. Philip promptly wrote to her and asked for an appointment to meet.

In November, Ms.Katherine Sheenan and Lee Crowell, Director of Employee Benefits, agreed to meet with Philip, who requested that the chair of the Benefits Committee be allowed to join them. So I, and in January, Mike Bradfield became the ADRP side of meetings that have continued monthly since their inauguration. The Administration side has had Wade Harding of Morneau Subeco, charged with setting appropriate premia for the plan as a guest at these meetings.

The prime item of discussion up to this point has been the issue of the overpayment of our MBC health benefits which we find to be more than double what we should be paying. We had hoped to be able to come to an agreement of what is proper by the April payroll date but this looks to be an unlikely outcome as of today, late in March. In short we are seeking to obtain the best situation for our interests coupled with fairness for other members of The Plan.

It's hard to say when we'll be successful.

At the most recent meeting with Sheehan et al., I requested that the members have accurate information on their benefits in the information booklet we're given and on the website. In this case we've for some time, waited for the spousal benefit to a deceased member to be restored to our Blue Cross Plan. That is soon to be rectified, if the latest promise is fulfilled.

This winter our committee surveyed Atlantic universities as regards the health insurance available to their retirees and the premia that they are assessed. A number of them have linkages with their respective provincial pharmacare programmes. Several also have a portion of the premium paid by the university and in most cases the benefits they receive are more substantial than our meagre offerings.

But one thing has struck me in the parts of our survey that I have become familiar with. It is that at most of these institutions, their retirees are cherished.

The institutions' home pages at many of these places have very easy navigation to their websites that are pertinent to retirees.

I've also found that access to information via e-mails to heads of personnel departments at several of the universities I wrote was forthcoming and complete. At Dal secrecy,

sullenness and non response are more the order of the day although Katherine Sheehan seems to be an exception and as such, is a welcome change. Sometimes you have to wonder if the corporate attitude at Dal is derived from some Ops Manual authored by Dick Cheney.

The Benefits Committee hopes to canvass the membership before long as to their wishes for benefits coverage so we can have a feel for respondents' needs.

I would like to express my thanks to my committee members for their faithful and diligent efforts through the months and for the advice they provide us as we make approaches to better our lot.

I would also like to convey my gratitude to Jan Scott and Emerson Moffit who's effort in getting out our Newsletter was invaluable for us. And I convey best wishes to our new editors, Blanche Potter-Creighton and Ken Rozee. Long may their big computer word process!

Over the course of the year, about a dozen requests for information or assistance pass by the committee. I welcome any such queries or any other correspondence that are destined for the Benefits Committee to receive or act upon.

Please contact me either at john.barry@dal.ca or via Canada Post at the ADRP office.

John Barry
Chairperson
ADRP Benefits Committee

29 March 2009

Communications Committee Report:

The Communications Committee of the ADRP comprises three distinct operations – maintenance of the web site at ADRP.DAL.CA, the outreach activities of the Caring and Sharing sub-committee, and publication of the ADRP Newsletter.

Web Site

The adrp.dal.ca web site was updated frequently during the year providing notice of upcoming events, posting new issues of the newsletter to the archives section, and providing links to the sites of other affiliated groups. One of those sites is that of the Seniors College of Nova Scotia (SCANS) which is co-hosted on the ADRP site. Regular updates of SCANS course offerings are posted to that site.

Caring and Sharing

We lost two ADRP members, Dr. Rowland Smith (Professor of English and former Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences) and Kathleen Stewart (wife of Chester Stewart who was Dean of Medicine). She became a member after her husband's death) early in September of 2008. Sympathy cards were sent to their next of kin.

Get well wishes were sent to Diane Prosser on behalf of her friends at ADRP. A thank you was also extended at the time for Diane's continued work with the Association.

An expression of sympathy was extended to Philip Welch on the loss of his brother and more recently to Elizabeth Lambie on the loss of her husband Vincent.

Christmas cards were sent to Madeline Murphy, Dorothy Meyerowitz and Lothar Schluter and a Christmas plant was delivered to Margaret Stoker.

I depend upon members to let me know about those who the Association would like to acknowledge with a greeting. The situations requiring acknowledgement can be both sad or happy. This year a celebratory card was sent to Dr. Philip Welch and his wife Elvira on the occasion of their fiftieth wedding anniversary. I hope that I am not missing other occasions that are significant to the members as they proceed through their life's journey. - Dr. Carol Smillie

Newsletter

The past year marked a milestone in production of the ADRP newsletter. The longtime editor, Emerson Moffitt and assistant Jan Scott, turned over the reins to a new team, but not until they had put out four issues from April to December 2008. A big thank you is due to Emerson and Jan for their past service to the membership.

The new team which has taken over newsletter production is Ken Rozee as editor, assisted by Blanche Potter.

The newsletter is e-mailed to members who provide an e-mail address, sent by paper mail to the remainder of the membership, and is posted to the ADRP web site as soon as each issue is published. Both new and continuing members can then refer to past issues via the web site.

Complaints and Advocacy Committee - Ken Rozee - no report

Liaison Committee – Colin Stuttard – no report

Membership Committee:

As of the time of the printing of this newsletter our membership stands at 181 members, with membership renewal coming in regularly. Notices have been sent to those who have yet to pay their 2009 Membership Dues. Many thanks to Diane Prosser and Sheila Johnson for their assistance.

To check the status of your membership contact me at (902) 454-5554 or Email at tcreighton@eastlink.ca - Blanche Potter

Pension Advisory Committee - Robert MacKay

Actuarial Valuation. - Due to the drop in interest rates over the last few years (5.8% in 2005 to 4.3% in 2007), the Actuary recommended a change in the long term assumed interest rate of the Plan from 7%, to 6.50%. This is a significant assumption in the going concern interest rate. Changing the long term assumed interest rate from 7% to 6.50% would move the total Plan, which includes the Pension Trust Fund (PTF) and the Retirees Trust Fund (RTF), from a surplus position of about +\$7 million to a deficit position of around -\$7 million.

Every 3 years the Plan valuation must be filed with the Superintendent of Pensions for Nova

Scotia, although a valuation can be filed earlier. Sub-Pac has looked at the possibilities of filing early and have recommended to PAC that the Valuation be filed as of June 30th 2007 with the CRA This Valuation assumes a long term interest rate of 6.75% (rather than 7%) and PRIA of 4.55%. Under this Valuation the RTF has a surplus of about \$39.9 million and the PTF a deficit of about \$39.7 million. This leaves a small surplus in the combined PTF and RTF. The next valuation required under the Pension Benefits Act will be the 30th of June 2010. PAC approved this recommendation.

Rule 10B - PAC approved changes to Rule 10B which deals with Mandatory Forms of Pension to a Member with a Spouse. The Rule is being clarified and brought in line with Provincial regulations, to address the possibility of separation of Member and Spouse at the time the pension starts to be paid.

Relationship of the Actuary to PAC - The report calls for the actuary to be reviewed along with the actuary's relationship with PAC, at the end of the Chair's term. The evaluation will take place in January and February. The Chair and Vice Chair of PAC will solicit comments on the actuary's performance from all PAC members including members with voice but no vote. A report will then be prepared. The report was reviewed and approved.

Exgratia Payments - Exgratia Payments, as of June 30, 2008. There are 26 individuals who retired before 1982 and do not qualify for indexation under the existing Plan rules. The University provides exgratia payments to these individuals which amounts to about \$112,000/year. Payments to individuals range from about \$1200 to \$9700 per year.

Deferral Amendments and Payments. - This is in regard to those former employees whose pensions were deferred. When they do retire, their pensions will be limited by Revenue Canada to less than they would have received under the old pension rules. In February 2008 the Superintendent of Pensions for Nova Scotia approved the payments, and the letter that was sent to these members. This information has been passed on to those affected members.

A Critical Appraisal of the Bill Black (Nova Scotia Review Panel) Pension Report Paul B. Huber - 1 April 2009

Political Appraisal - Issued on 27 January 2009, this Report was primarily authored by a failed candidate for the N.S. Conservative Party leadership and a failed electoral candidate for that party. The likelihood of its recommendations being legislated is probably low. For one thing, a provincial election may occur this year and derail the Report; for another, the Report's proposals are ideosyncratic, differing from those in both the Ontario and the BC/Alberta reports and almost certainly different from those that are likely to emerge from the current Federal review of pension regulation. Moreover, significant employers (such as Dalhousie), as well as the actuarial and legal communities, are, at best, unenthusiastic toward the Black Report.

Gerontological Appraisal - As the ADRP submissions to the Panel pointed out, employees and pensioners are distinct groups, not just in legislation and regulation, but in practice. Pensioners rely directly on their monthly pensions for income, not wages or salaries. Most retirees from defined benefit plans have little or no say regarding the administration of their pension plans after retirement, and they possess almost no leverage to prevent adverse changes in their terms or in the interpretation of their terms. Yet a third to a half of the liabilities of mature DB pension plans in Nova Scotia relate directly to pensioners, and retirees' groups are seriously concerned regarding the security of their pensions.

In its interim report in October 2008, the Panel ignored pensioners and dismissed retirees. In this respect, the Panel's final report is more ambiguous, but still fails to recognize the direct and immediate interest of pensioners in pension regulation. The unwillingness of the Panel to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the current pension regulatory regime in relation to pensioners suggests strongly that it has not genuinely concerned itself with key objectives of its terms of reference. Consider the following:

- * "The Panel commissioned independent research with respect to employer and employee attitudes towards pensions," but this research excluded pensioners.
- * The Panel comments on the attitudes of employers, employees and union leaders towards pensions, but does not consider the attitudes of pensioners.
- * The Panel proposes giving Advisory Committees slightly enhanced powers, but specifies that the Committee members should all be selected by unions in a completely unionized environment, or otherwise, by the plan sponsor. Groups of pensioners – no matter how representative – are to be excluded from the selection process.
- * The Panel's stated focus is "to create an environment where pension promises are met. This requires complete transparency of information, so employees (and their representatives) can be fully informed on issues affecting their plan. . . ." The Panel later explains that transparency implies that the Advisory Committee finds out about Plan amendments and other Plan information simultaneously with its filing with the Provincial regulator, in other words, too late to have any influence on what is filed.
- * Again, the Panel's "Goals of Pension Legislation and Regulation," reads (in part):
 - "1. To maximize the likelihood that pension promises are met by: . . .
 - (c) Providing appropriate rules for the protection and benefit of employees in the event of discontinuation of employment, early or late retirement; and of spouses or beneficiaries in the event of the employee's death, or marriage breakdown.
 - 2. To ensure that employees have appropriate access to information about their individual benefits; . . ."

Employees, spouses, beneficiaries all capture the attention of the Panel; where are the pensioners, and the beneficiaries of pensioners?

Funding Appraisal - The centrepiece of the Black Report is a proposal for a unique system of determination of the actuarial soundness of a pension plan, which incorporates both positive and negative features. .

On the positive side, almost all benefits under the Plan would be required to be funded (which at present does not apply to indexation). Furthermore, asset smoothing would be disallowed, thus removing a significant source of confusion and artificiality in plan surpluses/deficits. On the negative side, the minimum funding requirements would be set lower than at present, discretionary catch-up indexation might be disallowed if a plan were in deficit, death benefits could arbitrarily be cut back by the Plan sponsor if in excess of the statutory minimum (as at Dalhousie), and contribution holidays would become automatic if funding exceeded 105% of the lowered Black Panel's minimum required funding level. Some of these proposals appear likely to destroy some key advantageous features of the Dalhousie Pension Plan and of the DFA's veto of unilateral contribution holidays. (Perhaps that was intended; Black is a trustee at Dalhousie.)

Governance Appraisal - The Black Panel claims to believe that "employee and/or union involvement in plan administration should be encouraged" as a way of improving governance. (Where are pensioners and pensioner organizations?) But Black and his colleagues have strange ideas about addressing governance problems. The Panel proposes that every pension plan in the Province would have to develop a "Governance Plan" which would address eleven different aspects of governance. This Governance Plan would have to be filed with the Nova Scotia Superintendent of Pensions and annual self-evaluations of these Plans must be submitted as well. However the Panel recognizes that the Superintendent lacks the resources to review these 1500 Governance Plans and 1500 annual filings. So unless complaints arose, all this flood of paper would simply be put in the file cabinet. But "failure to follow [a] filed Governance Plan . . ." would be deemed evidence of poor governance. Really.

Over the last thirty years at Dalhousie, we have experienced seriously incorrect financial statements for the pension trust fund (PTF) approved by the external auditor (and inadequate corrections again approved), failure to make agreed transfers of funds into the Retirees' Trust Fund, statements by a senior administrator that he did not concern himself much about legal obligations with respect to pension matters, resistance over many months by other senior officials to comply with regulatory requirements to keep pension and employer funds separate, unwillingness by one chair of the trustees to accept that he owed a primary duty toward plan beneficiaries (he thought incorrectly that his primary duty was toward the Board of Governors), failure for years by some trustees to attend meetings of the trustees. Doubtless similar or worse problems have arisen at other institutions. Interpreting this record, one might reasonably conclude that incompetence, ignorance of the regulations and absence of a sense of fiduciary responsibility were the real governance problems, not missing pieces of paper.

Overall appraisal "D" to "D minus"

Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Pension Indexation Report - March, 2009

This ADRP sub-committee was formed in response to a motion passed at the December 2007 meeting of the ADRP. The mandate of the subcommittee was to consider potential actions or courses of action that the ADRP executive or its members might pursue that would offer a

reasonable prospect of overcoming the pension shortfall and improving the level of indexation of Dalhousie pensions. This committee, consisting of John Barry (Secretary), William H. Charles, D. J. Wallace Geldart, Paul B. Huber, Toni Laidlaw (Chair) and Gilbert R. Winham, met seven times over the course of the summer. A new member, Denis Riordan, joined the committee in September. We received a number of suggestions from ADRP members as to possible tactics and strategies that the membership and executive might undertake to convince the University and pension fund trustees to make up the pension shortfall.

The primary focus of the first seven meetings was to develop for ADRP members a clear, concise and detailed picture of the events leading up to the indexation shortfall from 2002 to 2005, including the roles and responsibilities of the university administration and pension fund trustees. Through a process that included conducting background research, writing and rewriting, and engaging in animated discussion, the committee has produced a document entitled, *Our Story Re Indexation* which was provided to members in the September Newsletter, with tables that included both overall percentage losses and examples of actual lost income resulting from the shortfall in pension indexation to date.

The sub-committee has suspended meetings until the outcome of a DFA grievance is determined, which directly relates to our mandate. Briefly, the grievance concerns the interpretation of the word "surplus" as it appears in rule 9(f) of the pension Plan. For 20 years it was understood to be the surplus in the Retirees Trust Fund (RTF), some of which could be used to provide 'catch-up' indexation, at the discretion of the RTF trustees (and was so used, on at least two occasions during that time). Then in 2003/4 Vice-President Mason produced a legal opinion which claimed that the reference to 'surplus' meant the surplus in the Plan as a whole, including both the RTF *and* the Pension Trust Fund (PTF). Since the PTF had (and continues to have) a large deficit, the RTF trustees were told they no longer had the 'discretion' which they had exercised in the past. This interpretation has meant no catch-up in indexation. Arguments on both sides of the grievance have been heard and we await the ruling of the arbitrator. Please see *Our Story* for a detailed account of the indexation issue.

Submitted by Toni Suzuki Laidlaw, Chair.

Social Committee:

The committee hosted two social events, both at the University Club, – our annual summer BBQ and our December Holiday Festivity. During the year with brought in speakers on the following subjects: Palliative Care, ABC's of Fraud, Pier 21 – A Living History, and Growing Good Sense – Halifax Seaport Market. We coordinated and publicized a CPR course organized by Dr. Philip Welch, and in cooperation with Paul Huber and the Dalhousie Economics Department, a panel discussion on The Current Financial Crisis – How did we get there? How do we get out of it? We were disappointed at the turn out for some of these events but know they were much appreciated by those who did attend. We are both resigning from this committee but know that whoever takes over the Social Committee would be more than pleased to hear your suggestions for future events. You may pass on your suggestions by either phone or Email to our ADRP office. – Sid Sodhi, Blanche Potter

Representatives' Reports:

SCANS (Seniors' College Association of Nova Scotia)

The College has had its second year of successful operation and shows signs of increasing popularity. Membership at the end of 2008 had grown to over 200 members and programs, 9 in the Fall and Winter and 4 in the Spring sessions, have been well subscribed and attendance has been in the 75-80 % range. For the most popular programs over-subscription has been the norm and some of these have been repeated. The program committee, under Bob Anderson ,and the instructors have worked very hard and deserve our appreciation for their efforts. They are always open to suggestions for additions to our syllabus and please convey suggestions to Bob or any committee member.

The SCANS Board are pleased to report that the College is in good financial condition and able to meet all our obligations for teaching expenses and room fees. We have planned a retreat to meet as a Committee of the Whole to develop future plans for the College related to expansion or any other innovation that would enhance our service to our members; basically "Where do we go from here."

Those members of ADRP who have not experienced SCANS and have any questions both John and/or myself would be pleased to answer them. Recently the Executive has appointed a new Registrar in Rodney Padmore who will be confirmed at the next AGM on June 6, 2009. In the interim Blanche Potter will continue to assist in this matter.

Visit our web site at <http://retireesandpensioners.dal.ca/SCANS/> to learn about our Spring Courses which start the week of April 20. You are cordially invited to attend our Open House on Wednesday, April 15th starting at 1:30pm, Rm. 208, Bloomfield Centre, Agricola St., Halifax.

The current Board of Directors for SCANS: Blanche Potter Creighton, President; Jean Sherrard, 1st Vice-President; Fred Vaughan, 2nd Vice-President; Valerie Latus, Treasurer; Eve Burns, Secretary. Committee Chairs: Bob Anderson, Curriculum; Sid Sodhi, Membership & Publicity; Valerie Latus, Finance; Jack Potter, Research & Development; Rodney Padmore, Registrar. Board Members appointed by ADRP – Ken Rozee and John Barry. Members-at-large – Jack Potter (one vacancy). Past president – Susan Stuttard.

CURAC (College and University Retirees Associations of Canada) – Philip Welch

Atlantic Regional CURAC meeting in Moncton on the 20th May and the National CURAC - AGM on 21st and 22nd May

Atlantic Regional CURAC Conference – 434 Taillon Building, Universite de Moncton

Provisional Agenda

- 10:30 Arrival in 434 Taillon Building – Refreshments
- 11:00 Opening orientation
- 11:05 Self-introductions – one highlight from each association's activities in past year
- 11:30 Roundtable on effective retiree organizations
- 12:30 Lunch buffet (\$15.00)
- 13:30 Roundtable on getting the most out of CURAC (Input to national meeting)
- 15:30 Assessment and adjournment

The related themes of our conference are how a shared Atlantic perspective can increase our local effectiveness and help to strengthen CURAC' usefulness to all its member associations.

Information about the national conference program, transportation to Moncton, hotel arrangements there and similar matters are available on the CURAC web site:

<http://www.curac.ca>

There is no separate registration fee for the Atlantic conference, but if you want the lunch buffet, you will have to make a reservation - E-mail esimpson@mun.ca before May 19.

Report of Nominating Committee:

The following have agreed to have their names put forward for nomination:

President	Philip Welch*
1 st Vice Pres.	Ken Rozee
2 nd Vice Pres.	Toni Laidlaw
Secretary	Colin Stuttard
Treasurer	Dick Sutherland

Members at Large: Randy Barkhouse
John Barry
Paul Huber
Andy Wainwright

*Philip Welch has already served three terms as president, however as no nominations were received for the position of president and in the light of our ongoing problems with benefits and pension, he has agreed to let his name stand for nomination. Our by-laws state "the president shall not **normally** hold office for more than three consecutive terms". The "normally" would allow him to continue should the membership so wish.

Three members are retiring from the board: Bob MacKay, Blanche Potter and Sid Sodhi.

The chairs of the standing committees are appointed by the board, and these appointments will be confirmed at the next board meeting.

Nominating Committee: Randy Barkhouse, Mike Bradfield, Blanche Potter (Chair)

Proposed additional ADRP by-law changes, as required by the RoJSC, March 25, 2009

II, 8: TERMINATION OF ~~AND TRANSFER OF~~ MEMBERSHIP. Membership in the Association shall cease upon resignation of a member, or if a member fails to pay the annual membership dues by March 31 of the current fiscal year, or if the member is expelled. On the death of a member, ~~membership is transferred without any fee to the spouse of the deceased member at the time of death~~ *the benefits of membership for the remainder of the calendar year are conferred on the spouse of the deceased member at the time of death, without any further fee*. On retirement, an Associate Member will become an Individual Member without paying further dues for the year of retirement.

IV, 8: The Secretary shall ~~record~~ *have responsibility for the preparation and custody of all non-financial books and records, including* the minutes of General Meetings, Special Meetings and the Annual General Meetings of the Association and the minutes of meetings of the Board, and shall maintain custody of these minutes and other correspondence and records of the Association, as required by law, these by-laws, and custom, and shall keep and use the Association's official seal. The Secretary shall, at the direction of the Board, attend to correspondence and perform such other duties as ordinarily pertain to the Secretary's office.

V, 7: BORROWING AND CONTRACTING. By a three-fourths majority vote, the Board may specifically authorize the Treasurer and the President, acting jointly, to enter into contracts, to execute *deeds, bills of exchange, and* other instruments and documents, and to borrow on behalf of the Association; however, no borrowing or contract may be entered into by these signing officers for a sum in excess of the amount determined from time to time by the Board, unless this has been approved in accordance with Article I.4 of these by-laws.

- Colin Stuttard

IN MEMORIAM

Since the last newsletter and the December General Meeting we have learned of two ADRP members who had passed away in 2008. They are: Zbigniew Konizacke, Professor, Department of Economics; and Sydney Patrick, Professor, Biochemistry and for many years served as Secretary to the Faculty of Medicine. Our condolences go out to their wives and families.

Announcements and Updates

ADRP/DFA Grievance: The ADRP/DFA grievance re: the designation, and therefore potential utilization, of the Retirees' Trust Fund surplus has been upheld by the Arbitrator. This means that if the RTF has a surplus, the Trustees may exercise their discretion to allot some of that surplus to decrease any indexation shortfall among the retirees. (Our best 'guesstimate' is that the surplus that existed in the RTF has currently evaporated, in consequence of the market economic downturn.)

This is reassuring good news, but see also my cautionary comments in my President's Report.

- Philip Welch

Announcements and Updates (cont.)

CURAC Meetings: The Atlantic Regional CURAC meeting in Moncton on the 20th May, and the National CURAC – AGM on 21st and 22nd May.

Further to my comments on these meetings in my President’s Report, I am very pleased to report that the office of the Dalhousie Asst. V.P. for Human Resources, Ms. Katherine Sheehan, has offered to assist the facilitation and involvement of ADRP members in these meetings. Accordingly, we can provide \$50 to any member who wishes to attend the Regional Meeting on the 20th May, which should cover auto, travel costs and the \$15 lunch charge. We will also provide some financial assistance for any member who wishes to attend National CURAC – AGM on 21st and 22nd May. The agenda and other details of these meetings can be found in this Newsletter, or accessed through the CURAC website. – Philip Welch

Alzheimer Disease: Volunteers, aged 65-90, are being sought for a Brain Imaging Study on Alzheimer Disease. Anyone interested should contact Alma Major (473-4906), or Janet Marshall (473-1850) for further information.

CARP: CURAC/ARUCC President Tarun Ghose has signed an agreement with CARP that now lets us offer CARP Membership (and subscription to CARP’s “Zoomer” magazine) to retirees belonging to our Member Associations at a 25% discount from the advertised fee. CARP has graciously agreed to extend the current pricing until May 31, 2009, although their normal fees will be increasing on April 1, 2009.

Until May 31, retirees may join CARP for one year for \$14.95 (regularly \$19.95) or for three years for \$44.85 (regularly \$59.85). After May 31, 2009, the CURAC/ARUCC rate will increase to \$26.21 for one year and \$78.64 for three years (regular rates \$34.95 and \$104.85, respectively). Retirees who are already CARP members may extend their memberships at the CURAC/ARUCC rates for one or three years.

Information about the CURAC/ARUCC - CARP agreement is posted on our Website (<http://www.curac.ca>). The special Membership Form to join CARP (or extend a membership) at these special rates can be found at

http://www.curac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2009/03CARP_signup_Form_2009a.pdf

Dalhousie Dental Faculty Practice: The Faculty of Dentistry, Dalhousie University is pleased to announce the opening of the Dalhousie Dental Faculty Practice. The Clinical facility is located within the Faculty of Dentistry building and has a team of six, fulltime, teaching faculty members and auxiliaries who provide general and selected specialty dental services and dental hygiene clinics with the most up to date equipment and materials. Students will not provide care in this practice. Clinic hours are weekdays between 8pm and 4pm. For inquiries or appointments, please call Melissa or Maureen at 494-3868. New patients are welcome!