

President's Report
Annual General Meeting
June 8, 2022

How can another year have flown by? I recall my sense of optimism last year as I wrote this report. I had expectations that the COVID 19 challenges would be eased by the fall. I realize now that thought was optimistic. We have certainly opened up more and travel is resuming but we are not at the same place we were in 2019 nor do I now expect that talk of this virus will end but instead will become part of our vocabulary like the flu virus. But we have learned a great deal over this time regarding hand washing, the use of hand sanitizer (now part of my routine) and remaining home when ill.

At UVRA we had anticipated a return to more in-person events but unfortunately, we recognized that the time had not yet arrived to begin. Our financial situation continues to be very positive and we do expect that in-person events will begin in the fall 2022.

. The UVic Office of Alumni Affairs remains our organizational link to the University and we will continue to proactively connect with its Director.

Here again are some highlights:

Membership

- UVRA now has just over 730 members. The majority being life memberships

Communications & Office

- Our website continues to be the repository of our activities at www.uvic.ca/retirees
- "Grey Matters!", the UVRA newsletter, with four editions per year is accessible online and holds an amazing amount of material each edition.
- Eventbrite - the on-line registration & ticketing service - continues to be an efficient and economical means of operating our range of events
- Office Support - The paid office support continued over the past year. Sanjit Roy again provided valuable and varied assistance administering our online sessions of Elder Academy and the Members Forum as well as monitoring and scheduling our membership email system.
- We appreciate the continued assistance and association of the Institute of Aging and Lifelong Health (IALH) which has provided us with office space in the IALH. Their ongoing and important support makes it possible for UVRA to continue its activities.

Social Events

- The social events and local visits were again suspended this last year due to ongoing pandemic health concerns. Given the lack of social events there will be no Social Event report this year.
- UVRA does not currently have a social event Coordinator or volunteers to assist us with this activity. One person has stepped forward (thank you) but more volunteers are needed to put on a regular program of activities.
- Members Forum - Begun in January 2021, the forum has continued its series of monthly Zoom sessions Topics this year included Voting - Compulsory vs Voluntary; Exercise

and the Brain; the Lifeworks Assistance Program and Mental Health and Well Being. The sessions were interesting and timely. I want to thank Jane Birkbeck for her excellent facilitation, Rebecca Warburton for great monitoring of the activity and Harry Kwok and Herb Weil for getting this idea started.

Community Outreach

- Elder Academy (EA) - The sessions continued throughout the year ending in May 2022. The Elder Academy Program Committee again created an incredible series of sessions.. The small but focused committee has decided to hold the last series in May. We want to thank them for their commitment over the years and for the valuable information and knowledge they have provided to our membership and the community.
- The Masterminds series continued for its 16th year holding the four sessions on consecutive Wednesdays in April. The Institute of Aging and Lifelong Health and University Communications once again collaborated with UVRA to organize these stimulating sessions by UVic retirees. Thank you to John Anderson for his dedication to ensuring we had an excellent range of speakers
- United Way: UVRA members showed their strong support for this worthy cause by surpassing the raised goal for this year. You outdid yourselves...thank you again for your incredible generosity.

University Outreach

- The two UVRA scholarships are now established and we continue to have enthusiastic recipients who are conducting valuable insights through the study of adults 55+. This year's recipient Cynthia McDowell has agreed to speak at the UVRA Annual General Meeting.

Benefits

- The extended health coverage continues with Blue Cross (continuation of UVic plan), the Retired Teachers of Ontario (RTO) and the Johnson plan. Some plans have had a few changes with some additional things being added in September 2022. UVRA's Benefits Chair, Peter Liddell will advise when these occur.

Ongoing and In Progress

- UVRA's participation in the Later Life Learning (LLL) Initiative of CURAC/ARUCC continues to provide information on the incredible sessions being offered across Canada.
- UVRA joined AROHE (Association of Retired Organization in Higher Education) which included access to Road Scholar and a range of amazing topics and webinars including aging and wellness.
- The annual CURAC/ARUCC Conference will proceed in May 2022. The Tri-University conference (UBC, SFU and UVic) is being held virtually this year.

The actions of the association could not be completed without the participation and energy of our dedicated team of volunteers. Our administrative, membership and financial support team - Louise Schmidt, Zulette Gordon and Richard Chappell have again done a superb job, despite the challenges of the pandemic to ensure that UVRA continues to function. I also want to thank my fellow UVRA Board members for their thoughtful discussions and activities on our behalf.

I want to make a very special mention again of the contribution of The Elder Academy Program Committee: Chair John Gunton, David Docherty, Richard Chappell, Barry Ming, Peggy Tully, Dwight Owens, Lou Schmidt and so many others who with their dedication to providing quality and inspiring knowledge have enriched our community. I heard praise on the quality of Elder Academy sessions from attendees from across Canada. Well done and thank you.

Again, I want to invite you to consider becoming involved as a volunteer with the association. Our membership is filled with people of amazing talents and energy. If you are interested in assisting us both with your ideas and your time it would greatly assist our ability to offer a range and volume of events. As mentioned, we will continue to monitor the situation as it relates to the pandemic but anticipate resuming more social activities later this year.

On behalf, of the UVRA Board, I want to wish all of you a safe and healthy summer. We keep looking forward with eager anticipation to connecting more with you in the upcoming year.

Keep well and all the best

Margaret Klatt
President, University of Victoria Retiree Association