

# UVRA -- President's Report for 2015-2016

UVRA Annual General Meeting

June 1, 2016

This has been a very active and a necessarily reactive year for your association.

On the active front: readers of our Newsletter, *Grey Matters!*, will be aware of the success of the **UVRA Elder Academy** series, which continues to draw consistently enthusiastic audiences each month. We hope to find some administrative relief for David in the coming months.

This year's **MasterMinds** was another highly successful series of four wonderfully-varied topics. Our thanks go to Geri van Gyn for attracting such engaging speakers during her term as coordinator. Geri has decided to move on, but not before planning next year's offerings.

As with many of our activities, including MasterMinds, we are generously supported by the staff of COAG (now known as the Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health - IALH), led in her inimitable way by Lois Holizki.

Sadly, today marks the departure of Jane Milliken from our Board. Jane has been a stalwart organizer and coordinator of our several well-attended **social events** over the past two years, as her report shows. One new and hopefully recurring cultural occasion was the first Diwali lunch last November. We were treated to a bright and brisk introduction to the Hindu festival of light by Andy Jani.

An important outreach activity for us is following the efforts of our peer associations in BC and the wider world. Keeping track of the aspirations and benefits of our colleagues elsewhere gives us a sense of where we stand and where we have yet to go.

As we learnt at the **Tri-Universities Retiree Associations** meeting in early April, UVRA is a leader among our peers in offering talks, physically active 'work-shops', social events, and lectures. This year was our turn to host our colleagues from UBC-APE and SFURA. Ferry traffic being what it is, we tend to have about 4 intense hours to exchange information and ideas on how to improve the lot of our respective members.

Some highlights:

- UVRA has the lowest annual membership fee of all (\$16 vs. \$30 at UBC and SFU), and the highest membership numbers;

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- SFU Retirees have published a History of that University's first 50 years (a copy is in our Office);
- UBC-APE continue to survey members' research contributions as they seek financial support for retirees doing research (for which some SFU Faculties already offer up to \$5,000).
- Both associations now have part-time office assistance paid for by their universities.
- In terms of contributing to university governance, UBC-APE members now occupy 3 of the 10 elected convocation seats on UBC Senate, and are actively pursuing more. I am our sole representative on UVic Senate – so far.

Comparing notes on a broader scale, the triennial Survey of member benefits by **CURAC**, the umbrella organization of Canadian post-secondary retiree associations, took place this year. The survey merits much further analysis and will be a topic of the UVRA Board's next meeting in September.

Of course, all of the note-sharing on benefits is grist to the mill of our **Memorandum of Understanding** with UVic -- an agenda item of this AGM. We are in discussion about the MoU with our new liaison person to the University, the Director of Alumni Relations, and look forward to reporting some progress soon, as he explores how best to present our case. "They know we're coming," though, since I made the point at the most recent **Retirees' Recognition dinner** in May, which was attended by most of the university's senior executive.

On the topic of Reaction: today, we present to you the first steps of the amendments to our **Constitution and Bylaws**. In part, the changes on today's table are the result of the introduction of the University ONECard; in part, they move us towards the requirements of the new BC Societies Act which comes into force on November 28, 2016. Our thanks are due to Winona and her committee for the work you see today.

That committee will be re-formed shortly to make the (we hope) mainly editorial changes necessitated by the new Act.

It is now my pleasant task to thank all those who have volunteered their time and energies to make your Association the energetic, progressive organization that I believe it is, and with your help will continue to be.

*Respectfully Submitted*  
*Peter Liddell, President, UVRA*