



***McMaster University Retirees Association***

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Marianne van der Wel, Secretary

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
of McMaster University Retirees Association -  
Wednesday May 27, 2009, Celebration Hall in Kenneth Taylor Hall starting at noon**

The meeting was preceded by a light lunch starting at noon accompanied by a slide show of MURA members and events displayed on a big screen at the front of the hall. The lunch was followed by an interesting and informative panel presentation on “**Local Area Resources & Services for Seniors**” by Margaret Denton (Director, McMaster Centre for Gerontological Studies), Debbie Christie, (Executive Director, Hamilton Council on Aging) and Deirdre Pike (Social Planner, Social Planning & Research Council of Hamilton).

Two Prize Draws were held just before the business portion of the meeting. For attending, Rod Phillips won a lovely wine rack made by Al Fraser using wood recovered from the ABB cafeteria. For opting out of the postal delivery of *MURAnews* and switching to the on-line version, Arlene Ainsworth won a “remote holder” box also made by Al Fraser from the ABB cafeteria wood.

There were approximately 95 people present for the luncheon and presentation. Most stayed for the business meeting which started at 2:10PM. The minutes of the business meeting follow.

**MINUTES for ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
of McMaster University Retirees Association -  
Wednesday May 27, 2009, Celebration Hall in Kenneth Taylor Hall at 2:10PM**

These are the minutes (to be approved by Council provisionally on June 10th, 2009) of the twenty fourth Annual General Meeting.

Helen Barton opened the meeting and thanked Margaret Denton, Debbie Christie and Deirdre Pike for discussing the work they are doing on behalf of seniors and poverty reduction in the Hamilton area. Helen reminded everyone present that there was lots of written material on services for seniors available in the Hamilton area at the back (east side) of the Hall. MURA note cards were also for sale at the back as well as the information on MURA trips.

## **1. Approval of the minutes of the 23<sup>rd</sup> AGM, held May 28th, 2008**

### **MOTION:**

Janet Fawcett **motioned** that the 2008 AGM minutes be approved as circulated to those present.

**Seconded** by Alvine Lawson

**Carried** with no objections.

## **2. President's Report (Helen Barton)**

**MURA Membership:** Total membership in May 2009 was 1894. There were 108 new members since last year's AGM while we lost 38 members who died during the same period. A detailed breakdown is provided in the attached Appendix.

### **2008-2009 MURA Highlights:**

**Service to Retirees:** MURA Council has continued to work on improving communication with our members by using our web page, e-mail list and *MURAnews*. Since MURA is a member of CURAC (College and University Retiree Associations of Canada), MURA members have access to discounts available for car and home insurance (through Waterloo Insurance), CARP (Canadian Association of Retired Persons) and the "Literary Review". CURAC also provides us with excellent national information about pensions and other concerns.

**Trips:** Anne Sinclair continues to arrange great trips for our members many of whom do enjoy traveling. Trip events this past year included two to the Shaw Festival, one to Stratford, one of the Hamilton Bay and Niagara Wine country, a production of "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" and "the Brit Show". Future events include the fall 2009 River Boat cruise in Provence & Burgundy, France, as well as the November 2009 Mediterranean cruise, and a train trip through the Caledon Hills, Ontario this coming September .

**Special Events:** Margaret Jenkins arranged successful events such as the "Art Bus" tour in the Fall, a Fall Dinner with Gary Warner speaking on "The Challenge of Diversity in Canada", the "Glass Under Glass Exhibit" at the RBG in February and a show at the newly renovated "McCallion Planetarium" at McMaster.

On June 18, 2009 there will be a fun day of golf at the Oak Gables Golf Club in Ancaster with a lunch only option. This is being arranged by John Harvey, a MURA member.

**Christmas Luncheon:** This year, the Christmas luncheon is moving to campus at Celebration Hall (same place where this AGM is being held) on Monday December 7, 2009. Much thanks goes to Peter George and the University President's Office for giving MURA a subsidy so we can afford to provide the lunch at a price to our members comparable to what we have paid in the past.

**MURA's Academic Awards Endowment Campaign:** Despite the negative press, the study of Gerontology at McMaster University is well and alive although it is being restructured. Since the early 1990's we have provided a scholarship of \$1000 to a full time Gerontology student and a \$250 prize to a part time Gerontology student. Our campaign has a goal to raise \$32,000 by year 2010 to endow this scholarship and prize. We are already at 80% towards our goal which we hope to reach by September and then go beyond so we can increase the value of these awards. A campaign letter was mailed today (May 27/09) to all MURA members.

**Volunteer Network:** This project came from a desire to find a way for retirees to connect and be involved in campus life. With support from the university president, Peter George, and Karen McQuigge and her staff from the Advancement Office, the volunteer network was launched with lots of interesting volunteer opportunities that are intended to appeal to a wide cross section of staff and faculty. For example, we already have had retirees volunteer for the Bay Area Science Fair. For this event, retired faculty volunteered to be judges and retired staff volunteered for duties such as helping with registration. We've also had volunteers help out at Convocation, helping with the university archives and to review retiree benefits booklets for Human Resources.

**MURA Note Cards:** We have already sold 1500 of the MURA note cards that were made and printed a year ago. This means we have covered our expenses and from now on, we will make money on future card sales that we intend to use for a special project for MURA's 25 Anniversary year in 2010. Besides advertising the cards to MURA, we have also informed the alumni with the hopes of increasing our sales.

**Acknowledgements To MURA Councillors and Others Who Helped:** Helen Barton expressed her appreciation to Lorraine Allan who sat in on the Board of Governor's meetings as MURA's observer and provided excellent reports to council. Helen also thanked Ellen Ryan who, although not a member of council, provided much advice, suggestions and help in a variety of MURA initiatives. For example, Ellen helped us find this year's AGM speakers panel, and provided suggestions for the newly formed volunteer network and the MURA scholarship and prize endowment fund campaign.

Helen Barton gave her personal thanks to Les Robb, our representative for salaried retirees on the Pension Trust Committee, for his advice and alerts on pension matters and to Cliff Andrews who represents the hourly retirees on their pension committee.

Helen Barton expressed her gratitude to both Kathy Overholt and Pam Penny who have finished their first three years as MURA council members. She also thanked Geoff Evans who has finished four years. Each are willing to continue for a second term as indicated in the nominating report if elected.

Both Kathy Overholt and Geoff Evans have served on the Pension & Benefits committee, Geoff Evans as chair of that committee as well as MUFA liaison. Kathy Overholt has also developed and handled the sales of the MURA Note Cards and was liaison for CAW local555. Pam Penny looks after MURA's database and is our membership chair. She has organized three successful MURA Christmas luncheons and this year's AGM.

John McCutcheon served two years on council from 2006-2008 as well as in the 1990's even serving as MURA president. Rod Phillips served council from 2004-2008. Helen expressed her thanks!

Helen also thanked Marianne Van der Wel who has served as secretary from September 2006 and who is now leaving this post to concentrate on MURAnews as co-editor with Helen Barton as well as looking after MURA's web site. Helen then recognized, with appreciation, Wayne Rouse for taking on the secretary role for next year.

Helen Barton, in her last official role as MURA's president, then thanked all council members for their hard work and team spirit.

Helen thanked Parking Services for providing complimentary parking for people attending this year's AGM and Audio Visual for providing the projector system.

Lastly, Helen recognized the contributions made by Michele Leroux and Jeff Chuchman, both from the University Benefits and Pension Unit, for all the support they have given MURA and its members over the past year and before that.

In closing, Helen reported that the switch to Celebration Hall has saved MURA \$600 in rental fees and remarked that she found the atmosphere in the hall friendly.

### **3. Trips Report (Anne Sinclair)**

Anne mentioned the successful trips to the Shaw festival and to Stratford. She noted that 21 people will be joining her for the river boat cruise in France and 23 people for the November cruise in the Mediterranean. She thanked all the retirees who joined her for the trips she has organized for MURA and appreciates their participation.

The financial statement of activity for the Trips Program for 2008-2009 (ending April 30, 2009) was included in the handout circulated to those present. Anne commented that the positive balance of \$5791.12 was accumulated over many years and is extremely useful when she needs to pay for a trip 2-3 months in advance before she can collect the fees from people attending.

### **4. Treasurer's Report (Beth Csordas)**

Beth Csordas presented the MURA financial statements for the year ending April 2009 along with explanatory notes. Beth noted this year's income (2009) slightly exceeded expenses while last year we had a slight shortfall. She pointed out that since the MURA cards are now paid for, she expects the revenue for the cards to greatly exceed the expenses next year. She also pointed out that postage accounts for 52% of the overall *MURAnews* budget of approximately \$6000, and asked members to consider switching to the on-line version of the *MURAnews*.

Helen requested a motion to accept both the "MURA Trips Financial" and the "MURA Financial" reports.

#### **MOTION**

Joan Parker **moved** that the "MURA Trips Financial" and the "MURA Financial" reports be accepted as circulated to those present.

Gail Britton **seconded** the motion.

**Carried** without objection

### **5. Auditor's Report (Eleanor Gow)**

Eleanor Gow presented the Auditor's Reports which were circulated in the package given to the AGM attendees. For the year ending April 30, 2009, Eleanor reported that she has examined both MURA Trips' Finances, MURA's finances and all supporting documents she deemed necessary and found

everything a fair representation of our finances and in order. Eleanor Gow invited members to contact her by e-mail if anyone has further questions or comments at [gowe@mcmaster.ca](mailto:gowe@mcmaster.ca)

Eleanor requested a motion to accept both the auditor's report for "MURA Trips Financial" and the auditor's report for "MURA Financial" reports.

**MOTION:**

Cliff Andrews **motioned** that the auditor's report for "MURA Trips Financial" and the auditor's report for "MURA Financial" be accepted as circulated to those present.

**Seconded** by Joe Laposa.

DISCUSSION: "Les Robb asked if Clinical Faculty were helping fund MURA. Helen Barton then explained that MURA's operating budget is currently supported by MUFA, CAW local 555, and the university president's office. These three groups fund \$10,750 of our operating budget proportionally, based on the respective numbers in the retired faculty, salaried staff and management groups. We have discussed funding with SEIU (the union that represents most of the hourly employees). While their executive seems in favour of contributing to MURA on behalf its retirees, there has not been approval at the national level. The Clinical Faculty Association does not contribute at this time. Les suggested that the new MURA Council should address this matter.

**Carried** with no objections.

**6. Reports on Pensions**

Salaried Plan (Les Robb: Voting Member of Salaried Pension Trust Committee)

Because of the 2008 stock market's significant downturn and the fact that our salaried pension increases are based on the average performance over the past five years, we cannot expect any increases for some period of time. Les also assured us our pensions are secure despite the shortfall in university funding. Even in the extremely unlikely event that the university were to become bankrupt we would become unsecured creditors, but even then the university has such huge assets there would be more than enough to cover pension liabilities.

Both Cliff Andrews, Observer Member of Hourly Pension Committee, and Les Robb invited questions from the attending members. Margaret Jenkins asked if the under-funding was related to McMaster contribution holidays. Les Robb indicated that the Pension Surplus payouts a few years ago and the poor market conditions were the prime factors for the current under-funding conditions.

**7. Nominating Committee (Helen Barton)**

Helen Barton, chair of the 2009 Nominating Committee, presented the Nominating Committee's Report for 2009-2010 which had been circulated to the members present. Three times, she asked if there were additional nominees from the floor. There were none.

**MOTION:**

Pat Goodall **motioned** that nominations be closed.

**Kathy Ryan seconded** the motion

**Carried** with no objections

## 8. Election of Executive and Council

Since there were no nominations from the floor, the slate of nominees recommended by the Nominating Committee for 2009-2010 stands.

## 9. Incoming President's Address

Joan Parker thanked everyone for their support and vowed to continue council's activity. She ended her remarks with a good funny story.

## 10. Other Business

Pam Penny, on behalf of the United Way, personally thanked all the retirees who contributed a total of about \$53,000 which was one-quarter of the \$200,000 donated to the 2008 McMaster campaign.

## 11. Adjournment

Kathy Heywood motioned we adjourn the meeting at 3:15PM

### Appendix: Membership as of May 1, 2009

#### **Regular Members**

Affiliates	35
Clinical Faculty	105
Faculty	520
Hourly staff	234
Research Associates	8
CAW 555 staff	601
The Management Group (TMG)	142

#### **Associate Members**

Survivors	247
Honorary	3

**GRAND TOTAL: 1894**