



SIMON SAYS

It's not just what you've done, but what you are doing and what you aspire to do next.



The Engaged University: What's the Buzz About?



President Andrew Petter's Message

Simon Fraser's new Strategic Vision is that of an "engaged university" – one that inspires our diverse internal and external communities to come together, build new relationships, and collaborate in new and innovative ways.

After extensive consultations with thousands of students, faculty and staff, as well as alumni, supporters and community members, [SFU's new Vision](#) was launched in February 2012. The Vision seeks to define SFU as "the leading engaged university defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research, and far-reaching community engagement." Simon Fraser University is a community of communities – local, national and global. We want our students to see the world as their extended classroom, and to become engaged global citizens.

The new Vision is comprised of three inter-connected goals: "engaging students," "engaging research," and "engaging communities." Each goal contributes to the others and will guide Simon Fraser University's actions and innovations in the years to come.

The SFU Retirees Association (SFURA) has long been involved in creating and maintaining the connection between SFU retirees and the SFU community. A great example of this is the SFURA Seminar Series. Held several times throughout the year, the initiative features lectures on a variety of subjects and are open to members of the SFURA, their partners/spouses, and the SFU community. As well, the SFURA organizes events and outings throughout the year, including seasonal receptions, information sessions of interest to retirees, and promotes interaction with other retiree/seniors organizations. The SFURA is also vital in encouraging members to donate their time and resources to University activities, which in turn helps SFU reach its mission to be an "engaged" university.

As illustrated by the diverse initiatives displayed on SFU's [world engagement map](#), SFU students and faculty are engaging communities and making a difference at home and around the globe. For example, Mathematics student Melania Alvarez created a math mentorship program that will inspire young Aboriginal children in Vancouver's inner city. Communications student Richard Loat's non-profit organization, Five Hole for Food, organizes road hockey in cities across Canada to benefit local food banks. And business student Fahad Yasin completed a co-op term in India through SFU's BC-India Mobility Initiative where his job was to promote Canadian businesses and discover new opportunities for Canadian investors.



President's Message Continued

SFU is also engaging communities through its research. From addressing the health needs of Metro Vancouver's ethnically diverse populations, to helping the City of Surrey reach its sustainability goals through the application of clean technologies, to addressing the economic and social challenges associated with an aging demographic, SFU enables communities to be active partners – not as research subjects, but as contributors in a multi-directional and mutually-beneficial flow of knowledge and ideas.

The newly-created [SFU Public Square](#) is a signature community engagement initiative designed to establish SFU as the place for the community to look for dialogue and discussion on key public issues. In September, SFU hosted its inaugural Public Square Community Summit – “Alone Together: Connecting in the City” – which addressed issues of isolation and disconnection in Metro Vancouver. Delivered over six days, events included an opening forum at the Orpheum followed by a youth workshop, libraries event, business community dialogue, mayors' roundtable, and cultural events such as a comedy cabaret and a film festival. The quality and extent of engagement that took place during the Summit suggests a promising future indeed for SFU Public Square.

SFU has always had an adventurous spirit and a willingness to embrace bold initiatives, and the focus of our new vision is very much in step both with where we have come from and where we want to go. Our hope now is that SFU students, staff, faculty, alumni, supporters, community partners and retirees will embrace the vision, see where they fit in, and work individually and collectively to help SFU realize its goal of being “the engaged university.”

For more information visit: <http://www.sfu.ca/engage.html>

In My Opinion...

Marilyn Bowman

On Developing New Friendships



I was jolted recently when a clinic insisted that I have a friend accompany me after a minor treatment and suddenly I found myself with a problem. There was nobody easily at hand to help me because of friendship losses and changes in my life. I started thinking about friendships, how we form them, and the roles they play in our lives.

Once retired and in this late stage of our lives we no longer have the daily interactions with co-workers that contributed to our feelings of connectedness, and we start losing loving family and friends to death, geography, and family changes. These losses affect both our feelings of belonging with others, and our participation in mutual help.

As our relationships shift toward new people, we discover that we can't force building new friendships. They have to evolve gently and naturally, and there can be problems. Most people form their close lasting friendships in late adolescence and young adulthood, from prolonged contact in school and work. Most people we encounter in the leisurely days of retirement thus have a fairly stable group of friends, and this stability creates an invisible barrier of habits that are a bit closed to the intrusions of new people.

New friendships are also difficult now because of who we are. I have become a very “formed” person, not as amenable to changes in my values, interests, or style as I was when younger. Similarly, the people who are gradually entering my life are also quite “formed”, with their own sets of beliefs and expectations. Lacking a shared history, we find navigating our joint quirks is a bit more difficult with new companions than the bemused acceptance we share with old friends. A friendly cheery new friend turns out to be a terrifying driver, or a new friend has magical beliefs about illness while your own beliefs are more biological. We have to use careful diplomacy to manage these lumpy bits.

Discovering and appreciating new companions takes time, and the pleasures and problems mean some ebb and flow is necessary. We have to take the initiative much more than we are accustomed to doing, because being passive will lead to isolation. Our initiatives have to be more directed to personal connections than simply going to public events as a single. Becoming a friendly companion and a willing helper for mutual benefit can be an uneven journey but it is one we must take.



The Socialist Report

Tom O'Shea

As I write this column our next event is coming up in two weeks' time. We're looking forward to a concert at the Vancouver Academy of Music followed by lunch at the nearby Epicurean Caffe Bistro. The concert features the ARC Ensemble performing Mozart's quintet for clarinet and strings, and a new piano quintet by R. Murray Schaefer. I look forward to Schaefer's piece but I have some trepidation regarding the Mozart having just suffered through the Metropolitan Opera's HD production of Mozart's La Clemenza di Tito.

In a previous newsletter I lamented the demise of the Vancouver Playhouse and asked for suggestions for suitable afternoon performances at other venues. Having received none I would like to promote one of my favorite theatrical groups ... the United Players of Vancouver (<http://www.ujitedplayers.com>) whose home is the Jericho Arts Centre in Kitsilano. I've been a subscriber now for several years and (for the most part) enjoy their productions. They provide a welcome alternative to what has become, in my opinion, very fluffy Arts Club programming. This year we've enjoyed United Players productions of E. M. Forster's "A Room with a View" and Noel Coward's "Present Laughter." I note that they have a matinee performance for each production. In Spring 2013 they are presenting "Hecuba" (Nicholas Kilmer's interpretation of Euripides' play) and "The Prince's Play" (a new adaptation by Tony Harrison of Victor Hugo's story that inspired the opera Rigoletto). Matinee performances are on February 17th and April 21st, respectively. If anyone has a preference for one of these plays please let me know. Otherwise, I think I'll choose one and see if

we can generate a retiree event.

Another possibility is the venerable Metro Theatre in the Marpole area of south Vancouver (<http://www.metrotheatrevacouver.com>) Their production of Agatha Christie's "Murder on the Nile" is scheduled for February/March with matinees on February 24th and March 10th. "Murder" is directed by Alison Schamberger, a wonderful character who taught drama and theatre at Burnaby North High School for many years before she retired five years ago. I know this is a far cry from Euripides and Hugo, but who can argue with Agatha Christie's record of theatrical successes.

So the Playhouse dies but Vancouver is alive with other theatrical events. A friend maintains that there are around 70 active theatre groups in the Lower Mainland. Astonishing. So much to see, so little time (and money).

* Erratum in previous newsletter. In October, Malcolm Page (not Malcolm Toms) presented a talk entitled "Sappers and Gold-miners: Theatre in British Columbia" at the Wilson Centre in Port Coquitlam. My apologies to both for the confusion.

The Answer at Last...

Norman asked Tasos, "If Atlas holds up the world, what is he standing on?"

Tasos replied, "He's standing on the back of a turtle."

Norman pressed, "But what is that turtle standing on?"

Tasos said, "Another turtle, of course!"

Norman, insistent now, asked..."And that turtle?"

Tasos patiently answered, "Norman, you know: it's turtles all the way down."

Adapted from Plato and a Platypus Walk Into a Bar: Understanding Philosophy Through Jokes by Thomas Cathcart and Daniel Klein. Penguin, 2007.



Walking with the SFURA Ramblers. David Ryeburn

The walking group is one of the more active SFURA groups, scheduling walks of varying degrees of difficulty nearly every Wednesday, rain or shine, the year around. Depending upon the weather and the nature of the trip scheduled, anywhere between three and twenty people will show up for these walks. They are held in various locations, from near Point Roberts in the southwest to the Pitt Meadows area in the northeast, with some walks nearly level (usually near watercourses) and others with steep sections (most often in the woods). The walk announcement always indicates how difficult the walk is, what distance is involved, and how long it will likely take.

Life on the Trail

Here are some pictures taken on recent walks. The first, taken July 25 in Lighthouse Park, shows Ted Cohn and me eating lunch and having an argument about something—perhaps politics, perhaps whether one should use walking sticks. Ted's walking stick is on the ground beside him, but I do not believe in them. The second, taken September 12 on Dog Mountain west of the Mt. Seymour Park shows Lilian Chun, Parveen Bawa, Jackie Viswanathan, and Cathy Snyder having lunch out in the bright sunlight near the summit. The third, taken October 24 under less favourable weather conditions in Lynn Headwaters Park, shows Peter Corless helping Shirley Cohn down across a stream, with Ted Cohn next in line. Peter's wife Denyse Dallaire has already been helped across, while walk leader Lilian Chun, who runs right down across such places on her own, awaits the others.

We're a talkative (and sometimes argumentative) bunch; the talking goes on during the walk, and during lunch as shown in the one picture, though we do quiet down at times when looking at scenery or wildlife. Lunch, by the way, is usually a feature of the walk. On longer walks, in suitable terrain, we will stop for lunch about halfway through the walk, and on other walks, or where the terrain or weather do not lend themselves to a mid-walk break, we will eat afterwards, either back at the cars or occasionally at a nearby restaurant.

What to Wear

What sort of gear do you need to participate? For some walks, running shoes are adequate; I used mine, rather than hiking boots the day before I wrote this on a circuit of the PoCo Trail, shorter portions of which we often do together. For other walks, hiking boots are more appropriate; the walk announcement will make this clear. Some of us use one, or even two walking sticks; others strongly argue against them, on the basis that keeping one's balance without using such aids is in fact the safer choice. In good weather layers of warm clothing are what you need—the layers allow you to take off or put on clothing depending upon conditions, and most of the time when we stop for lunch we add a layer or two, and maybe a hat. If there is the slightest chance of rain, you'll want to bring along some sort of rain protection. Others use breathable rain-resistant or rain-proof garments; those made from Gore-Tex are popular. better yet, synthetic material. You will want to wear a day-pack to carry water, clothing you are not wearing at the moment, your mid-trip lunch or a snack. perhaps a cell-phone.



If you haven't been on one of our walks, give it a try. The announcements always indicate how to contact the leader, and he or she will be glad to answer any questions you may have. Some people who were beginners a year or so ago are now very competent walkers and have become walk leaders, and we can always use more leaders! But the way to begin is just to come on a walk and enjoy it.

The SFURA President's Message from Hiromi Matsui



Wherever you are, in the tropical sun or here in rain and snow, I wish you all good tidings. Thank you to those members who have given us their suggestions for planning new events. We had a good meeting on travel insurance and will be following up with more sessions of interest to members. While our primary function is to provide social events for our members, we are aware of the questions that members raise about issues such as governance and strata councils, and will be considering how to proceed with those items.

We were pleased that Dean John Craig, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences set up a retirees research fund to allow retirees to continue to be part of the Simon Fraser University community by applying for a grant of up to \$5,000. Ten grants were awarded to faculty and Associate Dean, Paul McFetridge says he thinks the initiative was very successful. At this time there has been no decision about whether this funding will be continued; this will depend on the budget available for 2013/14. We look forward to hearing more about these projects.

Simon Fraser University is moving forward with a new vision that includes respect for faculty and staff who made significant contributions to the University. Community engagement means yes, retirees do matter. A new inter-disciplinary colloquium has been developed by the President for Spring, 2013. The theme is "Justice Beyond National Boundaries". In the first lecture on January 17th, from 3:30-6:30 pm, Kit Wellman will discuss "Do the Boundaries of Political States have Moral Significance For Distributive Justice?" Retirees are welcome to attend but because of the high level of interest, spaces must be reserved in advance through the on-line registration event site.

Alison Watt is helping to microfinance four sustainable projects (so far) around the world through Kiva. The rate of repayment is very good; her first project in the Congo is paid back in full; the second, a food project in Kenya, is more than half repaid already. Alison urges us all to take part. We can begin for as little as \$25.00, and we can all be part of the SFU Team. Contact Kiva at <http://www.kiva.org/>.

President Petter has also launched the **SFU Public Square**, to spark, nurture and restore community connections and to lead to productive conversations about issues of public concern. Did you know that as part of this initiative, SFU is hosting events such as poetry readings downtown (lunch poems@SFU) ?

SFURA celebrates a time where "inclusive" has meaning, where diverse voices can resound and be heard. Yes, retirees do matter.



From My Bookshelf

Percilla Groves



One of the joys of retirement is knowing when I wake up that there is absolutely nothing to prevent me from reading all day long in one delicious binge. That's exactly how I enjoyed some of these...

Boyle, T.C. **The Tortilla Curtain.** New York: Penguin, 1996. Vicarious participation in the Presidential election demanded the reading of an American political novel. Boyle's story follows a few weeks in the lives of two couples, one impoverished, the other yuppified, both living in Topanga Canyon L.A. Boyle brings a Dickensian plotting style to his tale which covers many themes of current Vancouver conversations: immigration, environmentalism, public space, and of course the ever-popular matter of real estate values. Next Canadian election, challenge each candidate to read this book and then to share their reactions.

Clark, Tom. **Edward Dorn: A World of Difference.** Berkeley, California: North Atlantic Books, 2002. Author of the epic poem *Gunslinger*, Ed Dorn was an American original and his life story reads like a novel. Dorn spent time in some of the world's most respected universities and also bushwhacked for a time just across the border in the Skagit Valley. Read this one for insight into that student in your class who was clearly so much more gifted than the others but who seemed to steer away from being a success on your terms.

Cornwall, Claudia. **At the World's Edge:** Curt Lang's Vancouver 1937-1998. Salt Spring Island: Mother Tongue Publishing, 2011. Curt Lang was a Renaissance man in the Vancouver that ceased to exist around the time it morphed into a 'world-class city'. He also may have been a person more enjoyable to read about than to know intimately. From partying with Malcolm Lowry to LIP grants to founding computer startups, Curt Lang did it all. The book never bogs down in nostalgia. Still I envy him.

Djwa, Sandra. **Journey with No Maps: A Life of P.K. Page.** (Montreal & Kingston): McGill-

Queen's University Press, 2012. P.K. Page determined early in adulthood to excel as a poet, and later pursued her other gift as Patricia Irwin, painter. Djwa tracks her subject from cradle to grave, and in the process reveals much about the history of literature and writing in 20th century Canada. Her account of Page's long relationship with F.R. Scott evokes a time before such relationships were Twitter and tabloid fodder. An excerpt appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

Hall, Phil. **Killdeer.** (Department of Critical Thought, No. 4) Toronto: BookThug, 2011. Phil Hall and I, unknown to one another, grew up in Verulam Township, Victoria County, separated by The Lake, but united in our admiration of Amy Cosh, librarian in Bobcaygeon, Ontario. Amy understood weird kids that liked to read. Killdeer, named for Hall's totem bird, won the Governor General's Award for Poetry in 2011. Hall honoured Amy in *Hearthedral*: A Folk-Hermetic (London: Brick Books, 1996) which for me is the better book.

Kaplan, Alice. **Dreaming in French: The Paris Years of**

Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy, Susan Sontag, and Angela Davis. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012. Be ready for some surprising revelations about these three women, icons in the true sense of that much over-used word. Predicting how the various international programs now offered by SFU (China, India, Italy, Mexico – and more) may affect the futures of our students and ourselves is irresistible.

Livio, Mario. **The Golden Ratio.** New York: Broadway, 2002. Livio writes about a number: the "Golden Ratio" phi. There are many personalities here as well as much history (Fibonacci numbers), anthropology (how do people count?), mysticism (the Pythagoreans), crankery (the Mysteries of the Great Pyramid), aesthetics (the Parthenon), biology (Fibonacci numbers again, but then they are everywhere) and philosophy (the unreasonable effectiveness of mathematics: discovered or invented?). A true phi-sci fan will miss some uncovered topics (e.g. phi-nary numbers), but there is enough here to interest casual readers.

Peterson, Barry and Blaise Enright (photographers).



111 West Coast Literary Portraits. Saltspring: Mother Tongue Publishers, 2012. Text by BC Authors. Dedicated to "the power and the beauty of literacy" this handsome anthology has SFU connections: Blaser, Bowering, Braid, and Brett, and also Dulai, Miki,

Thesen, Robertson, Warland, and Wong, and many others that you may have heard read "on the hill". A model of the capture of the subject's essence in a photograph.

I'll conclude by saying that working at the November United

Way Book Sale is a dangerous pursuit for a reader, but that I restrained myself and brought home only five books that I would not have found anywhere else. Make sure to attend next year!

I Am Not a Geezer!

by Gnarly



I am not happy with the title "retiree." Are you? It's a loser's name, and I think we can do better. I don't want to be known for what I used to be, or as someone who is perpetually in a state of leaving what I used to be. I prefer our newsletter motto: "It's not just what you've done, but what you are doing and what you aspire to do next," and we should be known by a term that catches that spirit.

Did you 'retire from the field' defeated? Were you put out like a hapless batter and retired in failure? Did you remove yourself and retire to a secluded place away from the world in embarrassment? Are you taking steps backward as in fencing? Are you receding? Have you disappeared or vanished, or are you just in bed with the covers pulled up to your chin? Of course you are none of these definitions of retired, and neither am I, but these are the meanings that drift around our title like rags on a scarecrow. Why not be done with it and simply call us senescents--the old. Why not "zombies" while we're at it; at least that's fashionable?

Perhaps because neither age nor the act of leaving defines us. When we reach sixty-five we still have another full adulthood ahead of us, with our faculties in tact more than ever now, and the richness of our previous lives to nurture us. Add time and resources, and we are ripe for what comes next, and many people are on the move with all of that potential energizing them. They are not retiring, nor should that be the concept in their minds or ours. As one life ends, another is just beginning. Let the wonderful Thelma Finlayson be our model; then we also can pause to catch our breath after decades of action--when we are ninety-four.

If not "retirees," what should we be called? "Seniors" and "Elders" are possibilities, but Seniors is age-based and Elders seems to be taken to refer to a special group and their wise practices. "Geezers" is a degrading epithet, but "Grandees" has a nice ring to it. The "Progenitors" is strong and new-agey. How about "The Patrons," "The Guardians" or "The Ascendents"? No, I'm not getting close; but the language is magnificent and we are the discoverers, so let's throw out a net to cover all of our members and see if we can find or fabricate the perfect word to describe and inspire us. Gnarly will create a plaque commemorating the creation of the best word any member can come up with. Email your winner to Gnarly, care of the newsletter editor mauricegibbons@shaw.ca. And no one nod off, okay: it's too early to retire.



Our Heroine, Thelma Finlayson



"If health considerations hadn't forced me to retire from mentoring undergraduate students three years ago at age 95, I would still be doing it today. Although it's uncommon for someone of my age to have continued mentoring students for so many years after retiring from academic life, for me there was never a question I would continue to do it for as long as I could.

Student mentorship, academic advising - whatever you prefer to call it - is a fundamental part of the undergraduate experience. Studies have shown that mentorship results in higher GPAs, more units completed per semester and a lower dropout rate. But it does more than that: It shapes futures by boosting confidence at a very tumultuous time in a young adult's life.

Knowing you have touched the lives of students and supported them in their growth is hugely satisfying, especially considering how far academic advising has come since it was first implemented as a formal program in the early 1970s."

[from her article in the Vancouver Sun, Oct. 11th. Thelma worked with 8000 students over forty years of advising.]

Centre Named for SFU's Grande Dame

Enriching the student experience is at the heart of the university's Thelma Finlayson Centre for Student Engagement, which opened on Oct. 11 in Maggie Benston Centre at the Burnaby campus.

The centre is fittingly named, given Finlayson's "boundless generosity and compassion towards students" as a volunteer advisor, says Rummana Khan Hemani, director of Student Success.

Finlayson, who helped establish SFU's first academic advising centre and continued counseling students on campus twice weekly until three years ago, will be at the centre's official opening 3-5 p.m. in MBC Rm. 2000.

"I was so surprised to learn that they were naming the centre after me, I couldn't believe it," she says. "All I know is, this will be good for the students," who "need our help, more than ever."

The Finlayson centre will provide a central, welcoming space where students can receive personalized information, guidance and advice on academics and co-curricular learning opportunities, says Tim Rahilly, associate VP-students. "The space and its programs and services will definitely offer more opportunities for students and support student-led initiatives."

An entomologist who helped found SFU's pest management program, Finlayson is an SFU honorary degree recipient and a member of the Order of Canada.

Watch the opening of Thelma's centre at <http://lidc-imagelib.lidc.sfu.ca/XRAID/Greg/movies/Finlayson%20Centre%20Opening%2010%202012/> Thelma is a Member of the Order of Canada, and in May was awarded The Diamond Jubilee Medal from the Governor General.



Euroland: How the Core Cremated the Periphery

(a summary: complete paper on request)

James W Dean. (jdean@sfu.ca)



Leaders of the euro-zone in Brussels, Paris, Frankfurt and Berlin have allowed the insolvency of a few small peripheral economies like Greece to threaten the solvency of core economies like Italy. I argue that this contagion from the periphery to the core was quite unnecessary, and was due to misdiagnoses compounded by coordination failures. I identify five misdiagnoses by euro-zone leaders:

1. They failed to recognize – or at least were in denial about – the fact that the Greek government was, at least as long as three years ago, clearly insolvent, not just illiquid.
2. They failed to recognize three years ago that an orderly, coordinated and expeditious write-off of Greek public debt would have been in the interest of all: not just Greece and the rest of the periphery, but also Germany and the rest of the core.
3. They failed, and are still failing, to mobilize coordinated liquidity and in particular debt relief that is agreed upon by all creditors and all debtors to be in their mutual self-interest. Indeed the IMF is now in something close to pitched battle with the Eurozone finance ministers (read: Germany) over whether to offer more debt relief to Greece. *The advantage of debt relief over repeated “bail-outs” is two – fold: first, it removes the “overhang” of future debt obligation that deters long-term investment and second, it reverses rather than reinforces the build-up of debt (so called “bail-outs” are really just long term loans from the public sector rather than the private sector. ²*

In fact by their procrastination, eurozone leaders have compounded their coordination problems. Throughout 2011, France and Germany tried to buy time on write-offs of outstanding Greek debt so that their big banks could “re-structure” their portfolios. What this has meant in practice is that the big, core European banks sold off Greek and other sovereign bonds to hedge and vulture funds. The upshot was that by the time the banks, Brussels and Athens finally agreed to a partial write-off in March 2012, creditors were far more diverse and difficult to coordinate. Indeed, these “outside investors” are now questioning why they should accept any losses at all, and are muttering about seizing Greek assets in any jurisdiction where they can obtain a favorable legal ruling.

4. They misdiagnosed the problem of the periphery as fiscal deficits rather than current account deficits. This has prompted them to impose punitive short-term fiscal discipline on the debtor countries, rather than the reverse. If creditor countries ever hope to repay, the last thing they need in the debtor countries is slow growth, high unemployment, unstable politics and rioting in the streets.

This is not to deny that deficit reduction is needed in the long run, along with supply-side structural adjustment and reform to increase wage flexibility and improve productivity. Indeed the crux of the eurozone’s problem is a balance of payments crisis that will not go away (short of reverting to flexible exchange rates) until the periphery countries both eschew government waste and become more export-competitive. But summit after summit, Brussels and Berlin repeat the same old mantra: fiscal contraction first, liquidity and debt relief later. The sequence should be precisely in reverse.

5. They have tied the hands of the European Central Bank, thereby castrating the only organ that could have disseminated regenerative relief in the context of misguided fiscal stringency. The ECB was of course conceived in sin, forbidden at its creation from being a lender of last resort to its constituent countries or their banks.



University & Sun Life Funds Available to SFU Faculty & Staff (Financial Interest Group Seminar)

Marvin Wideen, Tom O'Shea, & Phil Mah.

The first seminar organized by the Financial Interest Group for this year occurred on Tuesday, October 2 on the Burnaby Campus. Debbie Wilson from Human Resources, and Burk Humphries from Sun Life reviewed the investment options available to us through the SFU Group LIF & RRIF funds. These options come in the form of 24 different mutual funds grouped into nine categories ranging from guaranteed income to equity funds.

Besides offering many options to us these funds have many other advantages. The low management expense ratios (MERS) represent the first of these advantages. In the last newsletter Konrad Colbow expressed his dislike for mutual funds because of the costs involved. The Sun Life LIF & RRIF funds carry the lowest MERS in the industry. Also, we can change funds every 30 days at no cost using the SFU/SUN Life website. The returns of these funds are also reported on the website. We also have access to the SFU Academic Pension Plan Balanced Fund, managed by the Trustees, that has a diversified portfolio of money market, bonds, domestic & foreign equities. It has a MER of only .55%.

These funds have an interesting historic background. In 1994, Alan Black, the former Manager of Pensions & Benefits and Rob Grauer, who is the Chair of Trustees of the Academic Pension Plan and has been for the past 12 years initiated a deal with Sun Life to invest the SFU pooled retirement funds at low costs with Sun Life. Charleen Turner, an SFU grad, working out of Toronto spearheaded the deal from Sun Life. Pooling the funds from SFU created a sufficiently large amount of money to enable the reduction of management fees for the funds that today rank among the lowest. Most of these funds are available to faculty, staff and their families. The University has also established a yearly practice of review and discontinued those funds that do not meet performance standards, and it will replace a similar fund that addresses performance and cost criteria.

The authors, who plan the Financial Interest Group seminars, welcome any suggestions you may have for future seminars that deal with financial matters that affect retirees and those approaching retirement.

To end with a bit of financial humour: what is the difference between a stock investor and a pigeon? A pigeon can make a deposit on a house.



Don't Run Aground with Your Travel Insurance

by Percilla Groves
with Marilyn Bowman, Allyson Dallas, and Hiromi Matsui

Reading "the fine print" in policies and deciding which insurance policy is best for our individual situations is a challenge for many of us. As one seasoned traveler at the discussion pointed out, most insurance policies now are entirely in fine print!

SFURA Members Percilla Groves, Hiromi Matsui, and Marilyn Bowman recently facilitated a member discussion on this topic, joined by Allyson Dallas, Coordinator, Pensions and Benefits, SFU Human Resources. This article is an attempt to summarize some of the ideas that were shared at this event.

Coverage You May Already Have

In addition to basic coverage through the BC medical plan (MSP or Medical Services Plan) most SFU retirees have extended health coverage with a lifetime payout limit of \$150,000 per person through Pacific Blue Cross Extended Health. Depending on your hire date, and for those who retired with less than 10 years of service, there is a much lower lifetime limit of \$15,000 and you pay 100% of the premium. (Some people choose not to participate in the Pacific Blue Cross Extended Health plan after retirement. You will know who you are.) You can check the balance remaining in your Pacific Blue Cross Extended Health plan online at the Caresnet site: <https://caresnet.pac.bluecross.ca/CARESnet/>

Most of us want to preserve the Pacific Blue Cross Extended Health lifetime limit for as long as possible to help us with the cost of prescriptions, glasses, hearing aids, physiotherapy and other needs not covered by MSP. Though out-of-province emergency expenses are covered by the plan, such expenses can quickly deplete the \$150,000 and still not cover the entire bill. Therefore it is wise to have travel medical insurance through a policy that is a "first payer". The emergency expenses covered are only the first

hospital visit, and relate only to the initial emergency. Non-emergency continuing care, treatments, etc. are not covered.

The Pacific Blue Cross offers travel medical insurance at a discount of 20% to members of the Pacific Blue Cross Extended Health plan. This PBC travel medical insurance is then the first payer and so the balance in the extended health plan is not depleted. Pacific Blue Cross contracts with a plan MediAssist which will immediately begin to cover costs for insured members as soon as notification is made. (Note: MediAssist is provided by a company called CanAssist.) Keep the contact information for MediAssist where you and/or your travel companion can access it easily.

First Payer

The concept of first payer refers to which private insurance pays your costs directly and first. If your travel medical insurance company is a 'second payer' it will pay the costs directly but will then try to charge as much as possible back to your Pacific Blue Cross Extended Health plan so be certain to determine that the company you are considering is a first payer. NB: Some plans (e.g. Medoc



Johnson) can be either a first payer or a second payer depending on the cash limits in the individual's Extended Health plan so make clear what limit you have in your Extended Health plan.

Currently the limit on our extended health care plan is \$150,000 (or \$15,000, depending on your SFU service.)

If you do purchase additional insurance, you should ensure that the insurance policy is the "first payer". First payer means that your policy will pay any eligible claims you have. If your policy is not first payer and you have a claim, your policy will require your extended health plan to pay first, and then your purchased policy will pay any claim not covered by your extended health plan. As a result, if your travel insurance is not first payer and you have a claim, your extended health plan lifetime limit of \$150,000 could be quickly exceeded, leaving you with no further extended health coverage for the rest of your life!

Coordination of Benefits

This refers to the process by which one insurance company or policy recovers payment from another insurance company or policy. For example, Pacific Blue Cross Travel Insurance will not "coordinate benefits" with Pacific Blue Cross Extended Health. Medoc Johnson will not "coordinate benefits" with Pacific Blue Cross Extended Health for SFU members because the lifetime limit for Pacific Blue Cross Extended Health is under (well under) \$200,000.

Coordination of benefits refers to how the claim is paid, if duplicate coverage is allowed. For example, if you have a travel plan that is first payer, this plan should pay eligible expenses first. If there are additional/non-eligible expenses,

your secondary plan (i.e. PBCEH plan) would then adjudicate the claim. These plans would also coordinate with MSP for the eligible expenses at the cost had they been incurred in B.C.

Pre-existing Conditions

Be scrupulously honest in reporting any medical conditions which you have when applying for travel medical insurance. Failure to report will result in denial of coverage if you have a travel medical event involving one of these conditions. Companies treat pre-existing conditions in different ways:
*giving insurance coverage, but not for anything related to the pre-existing condition;
*giving insurance coverage, but at a higher rate;
*giving insurance coverage for the pre-existing condition if it has been stable for six months;
*giving insurance coverage if the pre-existing condition has been stable with no change in treatment for six months,
and so on.

Ultimately the insurance company will have access to your medical file if they want to check on your pre-existing conditions.

Whether your doctor says that you are safe to travel makes no difference to insurance companies. Insurance companies are interested only in whether they will likely have to pay out. It is important to find out exactly what the company means by "pre-existing conditions" or a "change" in a pre-existing condition. A test or a change in medication may be interpreted by the company as a change in condition. Ask!

Trip Cancellation

If traveling with friends or family, pay your own costs for flights,

hotels, tours, etc. so that you have proof of payment of your expenses. Claiming will be difficult or impossible if the cancelled cheque or receipt for online payment is in someone else's name.

Repatriation of Patient or Patient's Traveling Companion

Coverage differs between companies so ask! The most economical travel either to destination or departure point, for example, may be what is covered. Ask also about payment for extra costs for a travel companion, which will be very important if that person is a child or anyone who cannot be expected to travel alone. Our Pacific Blue Cross Extended Health plan covers repatriation of remains if worse goes to worst. You may also want to consider covering repatriation of your vehicle if you are taking a driving holiday across the border.

Emergency Actions

Call your insurance company, or Medi-Assist (see above), immediately (or within 24 hours) in the event that medical treatment is needed. Keep the card for Medi-Assist with you in a safe place along with a copy of your passport.

Call the closest Canadian consulate or embassy if you are outside Canada and have trouble reaching the travel insurer's number or if you are overwhelmed by the situation. Several people at the discussion reported excellent assistance from our External Affairs people posted abroad.

SFU Human Resources web site for Retirees with links to Extended Health Plans: <http://www.sfu.ca/human-resources/retirees.html>



Representatives in University Departments

UBC Association of Professors Emeriti (UBCAPE)
Bonita C. Long, (Chair, Membership Committee)

Over the past year, we have attempted to recruit one representative emeritus/a from each Department and School, as well as from the Librarians. Of the approximately 70 units, we have successfully recruited 46 representatives. These people provide a critical link between the Association, emeriti, and the university at the local level, and play a key role in supporting emeriti in their units. Representatives act as Association contact persons by liaising between the Head/Director or Dean of their unit, and the Association. Representatives at the local level have intimate knowledge of their unit's culture, as well as the interests, desires, and needs of their colleagues.

We recruited representatives through a three-stage process. First, the president of our Association wrote to the Deans, Department Heads, and School Directors to seek their support in our recruitment process. Next, we enlisted the help of a member of our Association from each of UBC's 12 faculties. Their role was to recruit one representative from each of the academic units in their faculty. Emeriti who had played an active role in the Association were particularly effective in this role.

Once an individual was identified as a potential representative, the Chair of the Membership Committee followed up by contacting each representative, providing appropriate materials (e.g., application forms, lists of emeriti in their units, UBCAPE Brochures, a report form), answering any questions, and setting a date by which a report from them was expected. A standardized form was developed to make reporting as straight forward as possible. Finally, we published the names and affiliations of our representatives in our Newsletter so that our members know who they can contact in their unit. If their unit does not have a representative, we have encouraged our members to volunteer for this important role.

We have identified several important tasks for our representatives, although the scope of their role in the Association is still evolving as we look for new ways to draw on their unique placement to better serve the needs of our members, and emeriti in general. For example, representatives may be responsible for reminding members to pay dues, recruiting new members, updating contact information, organizing emeriti groups within their units, and nominating emeriti from their units to UBCAPE positions. Moreover, representatives are encouraged to publicize the various activities of emeriti in their units through short articles or items in our Newsletter. We also encourage our representatives to provide feedback on ways we can improve our services, and we plan on forming working groups from among our representatives to tackle specific issues as they emerge.

Once a year we hold a wine and cheese reception for our representatives so that they can learn more about the Association and its activities and to meet other representatives. Of note, it is an opportunity for the Association to show our appreciation for their efforts.

We have recently engaged in a very successful membership drive in which our representatives played an important role. Through personal contact, they encouraged lapsed members to renew, and other emeriti to join our association. As a consequence, we have increased our membership by approximately 70 members. Moreover, through their diligent sleuthing, we have updated contact information on many emeriti, greatly enhancing our ability to keep in touch.



It's All About You

Evelyn Palmer



In this column we hope to bring the SFURA community closer together with stories of the important events in the lives of our members.

Sheila Delany has been translating texts by a French revolutionary atheist and scholar, Sylvain Maréchal. Her first book in this project came out a few months ago: *Anti-saints. The New Golden Legend (1790)* of Sylvain Maréchal, University of Alberta Press, 2012. She has offered to give a presentation stemming from this work in the period around the French Revolution.

Sheila has also been working with two small groups: 1) CCFA =Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association, and 2) SFSC=Seriously Free Speech Committee, mandated to defend freedom of speech in relation to the Palestine-Israel conflict. Anyone interested in knowing more about either group can contact her at sdelany@sfu.ca.

Sandra Djwa recently published *Journey With No Maps: A Life of P.K. Page*. (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012). Sandra states: Page was a remarkable woman -- poet, visual artist, diplomat's wife and an important influence on Canadian poetry. The biography has been reviewed in *The Globe & Mail*, *The Montreal Gazette*, *The Vancouver Sun*, *The Victoria Times-Colonist* and *B.C. Bookworld*.

Sandra launched the book in Victoria and Toronto in October and November and gave several lectures about the biography at McGill University and various lower Mainland and Victoria locales including the International Festival of Authors. She has accepted a special Lansdowne Lectureship at the University of Victoria and will be visiting there from January 9-11 to meet graduate students and give a public lecture on Page.

Tasoula Berggren, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Cyprus was the organizer and the host of the fifteenth annual European Union Film Festival here in Vancouver. The country of Cyprus currently holds the presidency of the European Union and so was responsible for organizing the European Union Film Festival (EUFF). The EUFF attracts audiences whose members come from all over the world, and enjoy the unique and award-winning films. These are films that are made recently and often reflect the realities of our world.

On November 22, 2012, on a typical Vancouver rainy evening, one hundred ninety invited guests, gathered at Vancity Atrium for the EUFF Opening Night Gala. At the opening was Mr. **Iacovos Giragosian**, Consul General of Cyprus in Toronto, as well as other VIP's, members and spouses of the Consular Corps of BC and community members from 27 EU countries. The Gala was followed by the screening of the Cyprus film, a romantic comedy, "Small Crime," which everyone enjoyed.



Tasoula and Len Berggren, formerly of the math department. Len was the chair of the department.



Steve Henslow was delighted to learn that he is the steward of the papers of his grandfather George Henslow. George was the son of John Stevens Henslow, mentor and correspondent of Charles Darwin, and editor of John's papers. George was, like his father, a well-known Botanist at the University of Cambridge. Steve found out about his stewardship when he was contacted by one of the Darwin Societies for permission to use his papers -- some of which had not yet been published.

Steve writes: I have the hallmark silver desk set that was presented to George when he retired from Presidency of the Royal Botanical Society in London -- just about 100 years ago. I doubt anyone today would ever receive such a gift -- it has two hand cut glass inkwells with the family crest engraved on their tops and the engravings of his service to the Royal Botanical Society -- it weighs over 3 pounds and is solid hallmark silver except for the hand cut crystal inkwells.

My grandfather was a brilliant editor and writer and won a prize from the Royal Family for a paper he wrote about Shakespeare. He edited most of my great grandfather's notes while living in Indian Head Saskatchewan -- where he ran the grain elevator.

Tasos Kazepides, formerly in philosophy in Education, published *Education as Dialogue* in 2010 and later received a review in "Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries" which included this comment: "Kazepides discussion is clear and convincing: his elucidation of Wittgenstein's thinking...is particularly lucid. If his teaching was as good as this book, his students were well served...Highly recommended." Congratulations Tassos.

George Suart and Barbara Rae remain quite active in retirement. Barbara started a new career 6 years ago with a new business in Home Staging. Her company, DEKORA is doing very well. George is a "day trader" and says that this year he is "8% ahead, not bad for an old guy". They took a little time off to go to Hawaii in November, and claim they would like to slow down. Sure.

Please send me items about your life in retirement. Are you taking a trip? Starting a new company? Writing a new book? Participating in volunteer activities? Let us know at: [<evelyn@sfu.ca>](mailto:evelyn@sfu.ca)

In Memoriam: Edward M. Gibson

Our colleague Edward Gibson died in Vancouver on October 26th, 2012. He leaves Marianne, who will be known to many retirees, and their son Walter, now of Elora, Ontario.

Ed was a Charter Member of SFU, appointed to the Department of Geography. Raised in Ontario, he graduated as the gold medalist in his class at the University of Western Ontario. Following an assignment in Germany as a member of the Black Watch Royal Highland Regiment of Canada, Ed, with Marianne and their infant son Walter, returned to Canada where he took his MA back at 'Western'. He then came west to UBC to study for the PhD with Walter Hardwick. His scholarly interests paralleled those that were emerging strongly in Vancouver at the time, cultural geography and urban planning, architecture and the visual arts. These were to form the framework of his teaching and scholarly work, as still recalled by many students. His monograph, *The Urbanization of the Strait of Georgia Region*, published through Environment Canada, gave expression to the work of this period.

In time, Ed's interests drifted increasingly to the arts. Along the way, he participated



institutionally by helping to organize the first major international conference held at SFU, *Cultural Discord in the Modern World*, a week-long seminar in the Centenary gathering of the International Geographical Congress - held once every four years, and only once in Canada (1972). He served as a member of the founding group of the Centre for Canadian Studies, and participated at an early stage in the Schools of Natural Resource Management and the School for Contemporary Arts. He also served as President of the Western Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers, and finally as Director of the SFU Galleries. Ed was a very popular teacher, as many former students have recently attested. He was also active in the wider community discussions of urban and cultural development in the city.

Leonard J Evendon

The Story of David

Tom Poiker

In the Summer of 1968, I had a quiet, almost shy student named David in a course in Economic Geography that I was teaching. In his final essay, on railways in the Southeastern United States, he referenced an article, but it wasn't clear to me whether he had copied the article or had just used a table from it. So I called him up and invited him to see me. When he entered my office, I waved his paper and said: "I'm undecided between an A+ and an F". He smiled and showed me the referenced article which he had brought along, expecting that my questions would relate to it. When it became clear that he had used only the table from it, I gave him an A+ for the paper and an A for the course.

Unknown to me, he hadn't done so well in the rest of his courses. He had Fs in two other Geography courses and a D in a Math course. My A brought him up to an average mark of C- and enabled him to stay at the university for another semester, "on probation". Had I not talked to him and had simply given him the average of the A+ and the F--a C--he would have been kicked out of the university. Within a year, David had produced his first publication with another professor, and after four years, he graduated; clearly one of the best students in the department. He went to UBC for his Master's Degree, and came back to SFU for his PhD. David went to the University of Buffalo in New York where he taught with distinction for years.

But there is another side to this story. When David was accepted into our PhD program and chose me as his advisor, I couldn't find the right word for our relationship, so I used the German equivalent which is "Doctoral Father". This is a totally neutral use of the word: you are not my doctoral son if I'm your doctoral father. But David apparently hadn't gotten the fine points of this term. I noticed this quite a few years later when his first doctoral student approached me with the term "Grand-Dad" and I had to explain to him that Professor-student relationships could not be inherited. I realized that David hadn't done much to clarify "Mark Genealogy" when I got an email message from one of his PhD students in Texas referring to me as their great-grandfather, and then asking me to tell them about my own doctoral father.

I was the first doctoral candidate to do research in location theory, and in Germany that was in the hands of economists. When I submitted my thesis, my geography advisor didn't understand it and he wanted to fail me. Only the intervention of the two economists on my committee saved my career. Now, does this make me an unwanted child in the Mark Genealogy? Or is this reverse polygamy because I have three advisors?

This example shows that the new academic discipline, the Mark Genealogy, will need some major development and it might be some time before it expands beyond the realm of geography departments.



As I Remember It

by Ron Baker

Compulsory Courses at SFU

Simon Fraser began without making English, Maths, a language, and a science compulsory, and I've often been told that that was because we were frightened that we wouldn't attract students if they were compulsory. I've no doubt that we did attract some students for that reason, but that wasn't why we made that decision.

There were about fifteen new universities in Canada at that time and SFU was unique in that one person, Gordon Shrum, had almost complete control of the original plans. The other new universities were different. Many of them were newly independent from older universities (UVic from UBC, Calgary from Alberta, Regina from Saskatchewan) or from church related universities (St Mary's, St. Dunstan's, Waterloo Lutheran) and they had inherited faculty, regulations, and governing ideas from them. They could make changes, but the changes usually required documentation, paper trails of the reasons for the changes. And in all cases, there are memory trails. Many people were involved in those discussions and they remember. In some new universities (York, for instance) there was lengthy and intensive discussion with the

community about what should be done. In Quebec, the government had a very strong voice. Even in universities like Brock, Trent, Lakehead, and Laurentian, government was consulted. But not in B.C., as far as I know, and certainly not about such things as compulsory subjects.

Shrum didn't like lengthy proposals. He liked to get the proposal and discuss it. As Hugh Johnson says in *Radical Campus*, "Baker proposed, Shrum disputed and McTaggart-Cowan went along with the outcome."

So there is no paper trail of why we made decisions. And sadly, as far as I know, neither McTaggart Cowan nor Shrum has left memories of those disputes. I do remember and I would like to start my memory and paper trails of those events now.

I proposed to Gordon Shrum that Maths not be a compulsory subject. To my surprise, he didn't immediately disagree. He asked why. I explained that when I took the freshmen year at UBC in 1947, I had had more than all the Maths before I was thirteen. In first year UBC, we were taught about logarithms and the final exam had questions like "Find the fourth root of X using logarithms. I had been using them simply as tools.

But many of the vets struggled with the Maths, and I spent many lunch times with vets going over some hopeless lectures. Over the years, I had seen my own children in North Vancouver high schools studying more and more Maths. Some were even beginning calculus. It started in second year when I was at UBC. So I consulted Harry Evans, later the Registrar at SFU, then the Registrar of the Provincial department of Education. Harry was a science grad from UBC. He probably knew more about BC schools than anyone else. He told me in detail how teaching Maths had changed.

Shrum listened and agreed. McTaggart-Cowan had some doubts, but when I added some of my arguments about the deleterious effects of compulsory subjects on departments, he went along with the decision. When I proposed that science not be compulsory, Shrum agreed and McTaggart Cowan wasn't sure but agreed as well. And that is part of the story about how we eliminated compulsory courses when Simon Fraser was being founded.

Ron Baker is an Officer of the Order of Canada. During the founding of SFU he was the Director of Academic Planning and a Professor of English.



Swartz Dings the Turtles

When I asked philosophers Tasos Kazipedes and Norman Swartz if I could use their first names for the Atlas-and-turtles joke, Norman sent this reply [Ed.]...

Hi Maurice, I am comfortable with your using my name in the way you describe. However, I am familiar with this so called 'joke', having heard it a few (too many?) times since I was an adolescent. I must say that I have NEVER found it the least bit funny. I am attaching two jokes, for your consideration, that I DO find funny. You might also want to have a look at my own <http://www.sfu.ca/~/wordplay.htm> Then, again, perhaps not. All my best, Norman

The Ultimate Ethnic Joke: An Englishman, a Scotsman, an Irishman, a Welshman, a Latvian, a Turk, a German, an Indian, several Americans (including a Hawaiian and an Alaskan), an Argentinean, a Dane, an Australian, a Slovak, an Egyptian, a Japanese, a Moroccan, a Frenchman, a New Zealander, a Spaniard, a Russian, a Guatemalan, a Colombian, a Pakistani, a Malaysian, a Croatian, a Uzbek, a Cypriot, a Pole, a Lithuanian, a Chinese, a Sri Lankan, a Lebanese, a Cayman Islander, a Ugandan, a Vietnamese, a Korean, a Uruguayan, a Czech, an Icelander, a Mexican, a Finn, a Honduran, a Panamanian, an Andorran, an Israeli, a Venezuelan, an Iranian, a Fijian, a Peruvian, an Estonian, a Syrian, a Brazilian, a Portuguese, a Liechtensteiner, a Mongolian, a Hungarian, a Canadian, a Moldovan, a Haitian, a Norfolk Islander, a Macedonian, a Bolivian, a Cook Islander, a Tajikistani, a Samoan, an Armenian, an Aruban, an Albanian, a Greenlander, a Micronesian, a Virgin Islander, a Georgian, a Bahaman, a Belarusian, a Cuban, a Tongan, a Cambodian, a Canadian, a Qatari, an Azerbaijani, a Romanian, a Chilean, a Jamaican, a Filipino, a Ukrainian, a Dutchman, a Ecuadorian, a Costa Rican, a Swede, a Bulgarian, a Serb, a Swiss, a Greek, a Belgian, a Singaporean, an Italian, a Norwegian and 2 Africans, walk into a very fine restaurant.

After scrutinizing the group, the maître d' says, "I'm sorry....you can't come in here without a Thai."

Norman also included a bell-ringer joke that he may share with you upon request, and then again, perhaps not. [Ed.]

Editorial



We are speaking in our small voice because, as a result of poor editing, we have so little space left to speak our mind. So one point, after we thank all of the great writers who have made this edition special: thank you all for your effort, gifts, and patience. What editor has a better team of writers to work with? It's an honour.

We agree with President Petter's vision of an "engaged university," and his invitation to "come together, build new relationships, and collaborate in new and innovative ways." This is a great time for the retired faculty and staff of Simon Fraser to become more acknowledged by, and involved with, the University. I say acknowledged because many members are still productive either working for the University or conducting their work with the University's name attached, the way the inspirational Thelma did. References in this edition hint at the great things our members are doing.

We also have great services to offer. The flow of retirees is quickening and we are well positioned to help them all through the transition. Many members are still active and could be available to assist in such ways as advising students. Members make great ambassadors. We look forward to these promising developments.

We wish all of our members and the University community at large a joyful and loving holiday.