

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As we advance into 2023, I am reminded that nothing is certain and change is inevitable. What matters is how well we adapt and move forward. Over the past three years, we have learned how to function in a pandemic and its aftermath. We are adjusting to rising costs for food, fuel and housing and we live with very real examples of climate change and of continuing political conflict, not only Ukraine but globally. Retirees are not exempt from these challenges, but perhaps our life experiences have taught us how to cope and find hope and comfort in the small day-to-day occurrences that bring us joy.

In that context, I greatly enjoyed meeting our new chancellor Mary Anne Chambers at the Fall Forum, which worked successfully in a hybrid format, with equal numbers participating in person or on Zoom. Sorry, no Timbits for those on Zoom. A summary of her talk follows in this newsletter. Please also review Christine Platts' guidelines for conversations with health care providers. This will be especially informative for those who were not able to participate in November.

Planning for the Spring Forum is almost complete. Focused on water sustainability, Arlene Slocombe, co-founder of Wellington Water Watchers, and Dr. Susan Chiblow, Assistant Professor in Indigenous Environmental Stewardship in the School of Environmental Sciences, will speak to the need to protect natural water systems and engage communities as stewards. Hold the date, Thursday, April 20, 2 to 4 p.m., and plan to attend either in-person at the Arboretum Centre or virtually by Zoom.

I am happy to announce that Clarence Swanton, retired professor and former chair of Plant Agriculture, responded to my plea to fill the vacant position on the UGRA board. We will benefit from his experience on campus and in the community-at-large. His interim appointment by the directors gives us a complete slate of volunteers to share in our efforts to serve you. Clarence will stand for election at the AGM June 15. Two other board members complete their terms at that time, so please consider joining us. In particular, we need persons who are comfortable with digital



media (website, communications) and we would like more representation from support staff. As we work to ameliorate the continuing erosion of post-retirement privileges (email, library, parking, etc.), we need a diversified perspective to determine which are most significant to various employee groups.

Likewise, CURAC (ARUCC), College and University Retiree Associations of Canada, has three board positions open. CURAC represents approximately 21,000 retirees across 40 similar associations. Participation of UGRA volunteers will help enhance our association's relationship. Contact CURAC or UGRA, if interested.

Thanks for your generous support of the UGRA scholarship fund, we are inching toward our target of increasing the endowment by \$30,000 in celebration of UGRA's 30+ years. The 2022 award was increased to \$3,000, including a \$500 supplement from UGRA's reserves. Its perpetuation at this amount necessitates achievement of our goal. More information is inside this issue.

Please also consider supporting our forums and UGRA's efforts on your behalf by becoming a voluntary contributing member. You can contribute directly from our website at <https://ugra.ca/join-us> or by using the form at the end of this newsletter.

Pat Shewen
President

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University of Guelph RETIREES Association

UGRA

Editor: Cathy Ralston

www.ugra.ca

UGRA Spring Forum

Save the date!



Please join us at the Spring Forum that will be held **Thursday, April 20, 2023, 2 to 4 p.m.** at the University of Guelph Arboretum Centre and accessible simultaneously via Zoom. We are pleased to welcome two speakers who will address the theme:

Water Sustainability and Community Engagement



Arlene Slocombe, Co-founder and Executive Director of Wellington Water Watchers, will speak about Grassroots Advocacy.



Susan Chiblow, Assistant Professor in the School of Environmental Sciences, who recently participated in the United Nations Climate Change Conference COP27, will discuss her work in Indigenous Environmental Stewardship.

Watch for the full program on our website. The Zoom link will be sent by email closer to the date.



UNITED WAY

By Julie Hutchins

The United Way campaign for 2022 has ended. I want to thank everyone who donated. We knew this year's campaign was going to be a difficult one based on the state of the economy. The University of Guelph retirees proved once again how generous they are! We raised a whopping **\$106,830**. You are utterly amazing! I had the pleasure of speaking with some of you and hearing the reasons why you contribute. Guelph Wellington Dufferin United Way is so fortunate to have such generous contributors. I love that I get to volunteer for a worthwhile charity in a wonderful city!

If you would like to donate now, please go to <https://ecommunity.unitedwayguelph.com/comm/SinglePageRegPledge.jsp>

One retiree, George Thurtell, won a lovely prize package!

- a gift certificate (\$25) for Sweet Distractions, Elora's Candy Boutique
- a gift certificate (\$25) for Einstein's Café
- a jar of Summer Blossom Honey from the UofG apiaries



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2022 Fall Forum Speaker Presentation Summary

By Christine Platt

Geriatric Systems Implementation Facilitator, CMHA Waterloo Wellington



The *Waterloo Wellington Older Adult Strategy (WWOAS) Community Members Network* developed the self-advocacy workshop for navigating healthcare conversations to teach older adults techniques to improve conversations and outcomes at their healthcare appointments. The workshop presented the **ACTIVE** and **SPEAK** strategies.

ACTIVE is about having the right mindset, centering your needs and recognizing that older adults are valued individuals who deserve quality care. **ACTIVE** stands for the following:

1. Adopt an attitude of self-worth;
2. Centre your needs;
3. Take up time, space and resources;
4. Identify your rights;
5. Value your support system; and
6. Expect challenges.

The **SPEAK** strategies teach older adults to speak up in a way that gets results in a medical setting.

1. Start at home is all about how to prepare before an appointment;
2. Present requests is about getting the accommodations you need;
3. Explain the issue teaches techniques on how to tell your story and emphasize your needs in a way that medical providers will respond to;
4. Ask to understand gives prompts with questions that slow conversations down and increase understanding;
5. Keep asking is all about what to do after the appointment, including the follow-up with healthcare providers and things the older adult can do. These straightforward techniques provide a guide to slowing conversations and gaining clarity whilst also ensuring that you optimize time in your appointments and actually focus on your personal priorities.



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Words of Inspiration

from Dr. Mary Anne Chambers at the 2022 UGRA Fall Forum

Chancellor Mary Anne Chambers shared her thoughts on the value of education and importance of opportunities to access education. In her presentation, she reflected on her own journey and how she influenced the delivery of education beginning in her home country of Jamaica, to her tenure at Canadian universities and political advocacy as a cabinet minister in the Ontario government. She shared her reflections on changing attitudes to accessibility, equity, diversity and inclusion, particularly in higher education and lauded the goal of the UofG to “Improve Life”.

Early in her journey through education in her native Jamaica, Dr. Chambers joined the nuns during her summer holidays to help teach students who could not otherwise get a basic education. Recognizing that to make the best of their future educational opportunities, she addressed the early schooling, or lack of it, for 5 to 6 year olds. She encouraged the government and teachers colleges to address the need for programs to not only educate the students while still young, but also to train their teachers so their students learned the basics leading to better success in elementary school. The success of this program was reflected in the joyful greetings she received from students who could now read, write and do arithmetic. It was through this early experience in education, that Dr. Chambers recognized the importance of mentorship in improving the lives of others, and that the mentor benefits as much as the mentee. Quoting the Jamaican bard Bob Marley's refrain “no woman don't cry”, Dr. Chambers suggested that this song was meant to reflect that life for women could improve, as they “free their minds from mental slavery” through education. Of course, considering the demography of her UGRA audience, this quote was instantly recognizable, even though we might not have interpreted the words in the same way. While still in her early twenties, Dr. Chambers related how she also initiated an adult literacy program for men in Jamaican factories, who missed that opportunity. Though by the end of the day, when classes started, they were tired, she noted that they were still eager to learn and simply did not have the opportunity.

She also recognized early that it is mostly the lack of opportunity that restricts otherwise able students from continuing their education. To this end and while she was a member of the Board of Governors at the University of Toronto (1993 to 2001), she advocated a still existing policy for the university, and one adopted by several others, that no student

should be prevented from completing their studies due to financial hardship. Perhaps her most influential impact on education in Ontario was as a member of cabinet, first for Training Colleges and Universities and then Child and Youth Services (2003-2007). In both, she championed the importance of education for the province, including the importance of honoring the Liberal Government's pledge not to raise tuition fees. While she noted many universities did offer student assistance programs, she lamented that many awards were not claimed, largely due to lack of awareness. Consequently, she encouraged universities to improve their communications about such awards. After pointing out to educators that only a few students living below the poverty line would complete high school, she pushed for income-based, non-repayable tuition grants and improvements in the OSAP program to ensure that interest in academics and ability, not financial restrictions, should dictate if students can continue their post-secondary education. While a member of the Board of Governors of the UofG (2010 to 2016), Dr. Chambers also championed better opportunities for people of colour, the indigenous community and students with challenges, and pushed to improve the diversity of staff and faculty who she mentioned have important impacts as mentors and serve as role models. She reflected during her installation as Chancellor, that some progress was being made at the UofG as she looked over a more diverse graduating class compared to when she started on the Board of Governors. In closing, she reminded us of Guelph's guiding principle to Improve Life, and the need to tackle issues like climate change, food insecurity and geopolitical instability (dare I say responses to pandemics). Addressing these problems, she noted would require the brightest minds to allow for improved connections, collaborations and partnership. She emphasized that the University, as an educational institute has an important role to play and has the responsibility and ability to foster and engage these bright minds. While the students have to decide their own future, they will still need the support (mentorship) of others.

Following her presentation, Dr. Chambers engaged in a discussion on how the UofG could play a more active role in ensuring accessibility, equity, diversity and inclusion. She gave us lots to think about, encouraging us to contribute to these ongoing goals, including ensuring opportunity for all who desire further education.

By Peter Krell

Update

on UGRA Scholarship Contribution Drive

By Peter Krell

As mentioned in our Fall Newsletter, Grant Maxie, Edward Dickson and Clifford Loughheed won the draw for donors to the UGRA Scholarship endowment. If you have yet to pick up your prize, please contact Ayshia Degia from Alumni Affairs and Development (AA&D) at adegia@uoquelp.ca. The grand prize, won by Brenda Coomber, was a Hungarian dinner hosted by chef and UGRA member, Éva Nagy and sous chef and former UGRA president, Peter Krell.



Brenda Coomber, seated left, her guests and sous chef Peter Krell, standing right

To date, we have raised more than \$18,000 of our \$30,000 goal. Thank you to those who have donated. As we have yet to reach that goal, we encourage you to donate to this worthwhile educational cause, even those who have already contributed. Through your donations, you are making it possible to offer, in perpetuity, a \$3,000 annual scholarship to a child, grandchild or great grandchild of a UGRA member.

Donors receive a tax receipt. Donations can be done on line at https://bbis.alumni.uoquelp.ca/BBIS_Cannon/give/uofg. If you are interested in donating securities for additional tax benefits, please contact Ayshia Degia adegia@uoquelp.ca at AA&D.

Recent Retirees

October 31, 2022

Muhammad Arif
Carol Dockeray
Su-Anne Dubreuil
Karen Pentland

Plant Agriculture
OVC HSC Administration
Hospitality Services
Admissions

November 30, 2022

Della Sample

Academic Programs

December 31, 2022

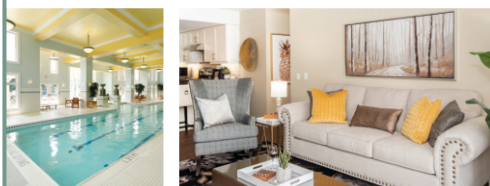
Cathy Beattie
Teresa Crease
Michael Denk
Isabelle Depaula
Doug Goff
Alnashir Hasham
Kyungsim Hong
Kenneth Kudo
Peter Milton
Nancy Orso
Premila Sathasivam
Sandra Walters
Christopher Whitfield
Lori Wright

Analysis & Planning
Integrative Biology
Chemistry
Hospitality Services
Food Science
Phys Res-Custodial
LSD-Animal Health Lab
PR-Plan&Eng&Constrn
OMAFRA Research Stns
Ann & Planned Giving
Human Hlth&Nutri Sci
LSD-Analytical Biol
Molecular & Cellular
Plant Agriculture

January 31, 2023

Mioara Antochi
Elizabeth Copland
David Kelton
Antonieta Plozzer

LSD-Animal Health Lab
Chemistry
Population Medicine
Hospitality Services



Ailsa Craig
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Tips For Retirees

Service Ontario Digital Reminders

Sign up for free digital reminders to let you know when your Ontario vehicle plate, driver's license or photo card and health card is about to expire at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-serviceontario-digital-reminders>. Notices are sent 60 and 30 days prior to the renewal date by email, text, phone call, or any combination of these.

Home Renovation Financial Assistance for Seniors

Four government programs help seniors with renovations to adapt to changing capabilities as they age. Applications require documentation and some must be approved before work begins.

Ontario Seniors' Home Safety Tax Credit:

Approved in the 2021-22 budget but not for 2022-23. Therefore, this applies to expenses in 2022 for senior homeowners or those living with a senior regardless of household income. It provides a tax credit of 25% for up to \$10,000 in expenses to install grab bars, wheelchair ramps, stair lifts or other adaptive conversions, including creation of senior living space on the first floor in multi-storey homes. See <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-seniors-care-home-tax-credit>.

Ontario Renovates:

A federal-provincial jointly funded program administered by cities and counties assists low-moderate-income households to renovate to improve accessibility. It may be a zero-interest or forgivable loan or grant depending on local criteria. See <https://www.ontario.ca/page/find-your-local-service-manager>.

Senior or Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief:

Administered by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), this exempts homeowners from increases in their home's assessed value resulting from renovations to accommodate seniors or persons with disabilities. Several conditions apply. See <https://mpac.ca/en/makingchangesupdates/exemptionseniorsandpersonsdisabilities>.

Canada Home Accessibility Tax Credit:

A non-refundable federal tax credit of up to \$3,000 for a maximum of \$20,000 in expenses per year, claimed on line 31285 of the personal tax form for the year in which the expenses were incurred. It may be split between the senior and the relative who owns the home where the senior lives. Eligibility is not reduced if you receive another tax credit, loan or grant. See <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/programs/about-canada-revenue-agency-cra/federal-government-budgets/budget-2022-plan-grow-economy-make-life-more-affordable/home-accessibility-tax-credit.html>.



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Passings

Paul Huber	September 1, 2022
Freeman McEwen	September 16, 2022
Owen Slocombe	September 19, 2022
Gina Trabucco	September 23, 2022
Frank Diccio	September 26, 2022
John Bullock	October 1, 2022
Minoru Fujimoto	October 8, 2022
William Stammers	October 18, 2022
Deborah France	October 26, 2022
Elvira Janicki	November 5, 2022
Mollie Hiskett	November 14, 2022
Edward Emslie	November 16, 2022
Jack MacDonald	December 1, 2022
Beatrice Ryan	December 8, 2022
Tom Rockola	December 9, 2022
Christopher G Gray	December 15, 2022
Susan Ellig	December 26, 2022
Inez Scapinello	December 26, 2022
Kenneth Kasha	December 28, 2022
Edwin Mast	December 28, 2022
Donald Johnson	December 29, 2022
Margaret Williams	January 9, 2023
Jack Alex	January 14, 2023
Henry L Orr	January 19, 2023

Big Brothers, Big Sisters Looking for Volunteers



By Rich Moccia

Did you know that the addition of just one caring and consistent adult role model can have a remarkable impact on the healthy development of a child? Big Brothers Big Sisters of Guelph is actively seeking new volunteers to serve as mentors across its array of programs in the community, and in more than 40 local schools. As a retiree, you have experience, wisdom and life skills to share to help shape the direction of the next generation of community leaders. For as little as one hour a week, you can provide guidance, mentorship, direction and the ability to listen to a child who just needs someone to talk to. Help Big Brothers Big Sisters achieve its vision that all young people are able to realize their full potential by visiting: www.bbbsg.ca or by calling 519-824-5154.

Did you have questions?

If you have questions about your benefits, please contact Sun Life by checking your claim at <https://www.sunnet.sunlife.com/signin/mysunlife/home.wca> or calling 1-800-361-6212. If you have questions about your pension or to change your address or status, please check out this website: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/retire>. If you other questions or concerns, please contact UGRA at ugra@uoguelph.ca and we will see if we can help.



Did you know?

The University of Guelph Retirees Association aims to foster a mutually beneficial relationship between retirees and the University of Guelph and to advocate for our members in matters such as access to university facilities and resources. The UGRA works hard to keep our members up to date on the university community through emails, newsletters and meetings and, from time to time, also shares information that is of more general interest to retirees.

All UGRA members are also members of CURAC that offers many benefits including discounts for insurance and travel, as well as access to educational events at other participating institutions. For details, check their website <https://curac.ca>.

The UGRA is run by fellow retirees who freely volunteer their time and talents. Funds needed to run the UGRA come mostly from members' contributions. With your support, we can maintain an electronic presence, produce the newsletters, as well as hold the AGM, spring and fall forums, and other events and activities to keep you connected to the university and fellow retirees. You can send feedback by email or physical mail.

Be a Contributing Member of the UGRA (2023)

We hope you enjoy this newsletter, our informative website (<https://ugra.ca/>), and our various on-campus functions throughout the year. An annual contribution of \$25 from you goes a long way in sustaining the UGRA so we can continue to work on your behalf.

University of Guelph Retirees Association Contributing Membership (2023) Form

☐ YES! I want to help promote the welfare of retirees and to foster a mutually beneficial relationship between retirees and the University by contributing to the UGRA's administrative costs.

My contribution is \$.....

Name..... Date.....

Address.....

City/Province..... Postal Code.....

Email..... Phone.....

(Note that the email address will be used for UGRA communications only.)

Please make your cheque payable to the University of Guelph Retirees Association. Mail this form with your cheque to: University of Guelph Retirees Association • PO Box 48-4916 • University of Guelph • Guelph Ontario, N1G 2W1

Electronic Payment

Instead of mailing in a cheque, you can now make a secure donation to UGRA electronically using PayPal and your credit card on our web page at: <https://ugra.ca/join-us>. You can also use e-transfer to pay using the email address ugraEtransfers@gmail.com. If you are new to e-transfers, we have provided a short primer <https://ugra.ca/join-us>



UGRA

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How to Contact Us

Don't hesitate to contact us with your questions, comments, and concerns. To advocate on your behalf, we truly want, and need, to hear from you. Here are the ways to contact us – don't forget to provide your name and contact information in your message so we can follow up promptly.

By Email:

ugra@uoguelph.ca

By using the 'Contact Us' tab on the UGRA website:

<https://ugra.ca>

By Phone:

519-824-4120, Ext. 52197

By Letter:

University of Guelph
Retirees Association
P.O. Box 48-4916
University of Guelph
Guelph, ON N1G 2W1

Advertising in the Newsletter

Do you have something to sell, rent, buy or announce for the next edition of the Newsletter? You may purchase space for a coloured box ad of various sizes, or a simple classified ad by contacting the Editor for prices. The next deadline is Friday, April 28, 2023.



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