

President's Report

Much of the Executive's activity since our AGM has involved preparation for YUFA negotiations, which are scheduled to begin soon. Following directions you provided in our survey, we conveyed advice to YUFA on demands we believed should be part of primary negotiating positions, and the YUFA membership approved our proposals. It now remains to be seen what success YUFA may have in pursuing those goals, which include improvements to health and dental coverage as well as means to assist members who wish to maintain their academic interests in retirement.

We have begun discussing some updates that need to be made if we are to continue being of use to the membership. Under Al Stauffer's direction, we are moving to update the ARFL web site, so that members can have easy access to up-to-date information and can look to the site as a useful source of news and advice. It has been some time since the ARFL Constitution has been updated, and we are poised to bring some amendments to the November AGM that will allow our rules to more closely reflect changes in our structure, as well as procedures we have adopted for ease and practicality. Our Treasurer, Stan Jeffers, in consultation with his predecessor, Barry Loughton, has moved to put our financial information in a somewhat more orderly format. We have also called upon retired York internal auditor, Bruno Bellissimo, to conduct the annual review of our accounts – a process that serves as a measure of accountability in an organization of our size that does not require a formal audit. Finally the Executive moved recently to formalize the use of the ARFL listserv for only ARFL and CURAC business and to encourage members to subscribe to the ARFL Discussion Group list as a means to share other news and views.

Our Secretary, Fred Fletcher, and our Newsletter Editor, Joe Green, have been planning to create a Newsletter feature that will highlight the post-retirement activity of senior scholars. As I said in the Spring Newsletter, Executive would appreciate knowing of members we might approach with a kind of "interview" to get those stories told, so feel free to volunteer on your own account or nominate those whose energy you envy, and we'll take it from there.

Keeping the membership list current is a continuing challenge, both in attracting new members and in being aware when one of our members has passed away. In regards to the former, I am pleased to say that the University's Pension and Benefits Office has agreed once again to include an ARFL letter in the package for YUFA bargaining unit retirees inviting them to join the organization. (The practice had been abandoned some time ago because of the allegedly adversarial tone of our brochure; a compromise version seems to have been found more acceptable.) In regards to the loss of members, we have no easy means of keeping up, so if colleagues could advise us when one of our members has "passed on to the pages of history" (as Ivan Fellegi of Statistics Canada used to say), we would be most grateful.

Finally, I need to remind you that election of officers is one of the main functions of our November AGM. If you are interested in standing for the Executive (or have someone you would like to nominate) please let us know as soon as possible.