

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2009-2010

I have had the good fortune of assuming the position of president at a time when the basic structure of UMRA is well established. Evidence of that is found in the fact that no changes to our constitution are being proposed at this AGM. There was one amendment to our by-laws since the last AGM: on February 1, 2010, the Executive Committee approved a motion to create the Interest Groups Committee as a standing committee of the Association.

In May, 2010, I was UMRA's delegate to the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada (CURAC) conference held at York University in Toronto. It was very useful to find out what other retirees have achieved, and the problems they face. I came away from the conference with several observations. First, UMRA is more inclusive than some other associations. While some groups represent only retired faculty or only retired support staff, membership in UMRA is open to all retired employees, as well as their spouses/partners. We need to ensure that our Executive Committee and our standing committees continue to reflect the diversity of our membership. Second, UMRA enjoys a more cooperative relationship with the University administration than do some other associations. We should not take for granted the support we receive from the University such as the sponsorship of the semi-annual President's Reception for Retirees, and the printing and mailing of the *Retirees' News*. My third observation is that the U of M lags behind some institutions in regard to the pre- and post-retirement assistance available to employees. In particular, I was very impressed with the extensive range of services provided by the Retirement Planning Centre at York University (<http://www.yorku.ca/retire/>).

York's Retirement Planning Centre offers seminars, workshops, and individual counselling on retirement-related issues to the university's employees and retirees. The Centre has a full-time coordinator and part-time administrative assistant. Its Advisory Board has representatives from the York University Retirees Association's (YURA), campus unions, and the administration. YURA's office is located in the Centre. While it may not be possible to create an exact duplicate of York's Retirement Planning Centre at the U of M, it can serve as a model of "best practices" that we can try to achieve here.

Looking ahead, we need to find a solution to UMRA's "homelessness." UMRA is currently "homeless" in that we have no office on campus where we can keep our files, supplies, etc. The office space we had in the Alumni House was lost when that building was demolished. We then were given space in Smart Park, and were able to use their boardroom for Executive Committee meetings. Unfortunately, building renovations forced us to vacate that location. Since last fall, the University of Manitoba Faculty Association generously has let us use their Board Room for our meetings. However, we need a "permanent" office.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the members of the Executive Committee, the members of our standing committees, and Janice Mann (our webmaster) for their efforts on behalf of the Association. Special thanks to the two individuals who are leaving the Executive Committee: Bonnie Stovel, who did such a capable job as Secretary, and Ed Rzeszutek, for his contributions as a Member-at-Large. I look forward to working with the new and returning members of the Executive Committee during the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

Jay Goldstein