



Courier

Queen's University Staff Association

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Volume 5/2006

QUSA ~ Working For YOU!

DECEMBER 2006

EDITOR: *Sharon David*

EXECUTIVE REP: *Karilee Reinbold*

DESKTOP PUBLISHING: *Betty Pollard*



President's Report

by Spring Forsberg

As the year draws to an end, the time to reflect on a year gone by is an important way for me to ascertain whether I have made any progress on my life journey. If you are like me, there were ups and downs, and sometimes two steps forward and one step backward.

The QUSA Executive also pauses to reflect on a year gone by. I am pleased to report that we have already made progress on the review of our Job Evaluation System <http://www.hr.queensu.ca/toolkit/me-promo-jobeval.php>. A member of the QUSA Executive is currently working with Human Resources to select a Job Evaluation System provider. Once that provider is selected, the process of evaluating positions will begin. This will be a lengthy project, demanding a great deal of time from all parties involved. But with luck we will see a new and improved system in place in 2008.

Furthermore, our Salary and Benefits Committee is a driving force to advance additional items in our Memorandum of Agreement <http://www.queensu.ca/qusa/compensation.html>. They meet regularly to strategize with regards to ensuring items are on the Administration's radar.

Other important issues for the Executive include the ongoing discussions regarding the Queen's Pension Plan <http://www.queensu.ca/fins/dept/pension.html>. Additional meetings have been called with the Queen's Actuaries, key stakeholders and employee groups with more information to be revealed and additional discussions to take place in the New Year. Communications regarding this matter will be forthcoming when there is information to share with our membership.

May you take some time to reflect on the year 2006 and may you find peace as you travel your own journey. Happy Holidays and a very Happy New Year!





STRESS EFFECTS: *Avoiding the Strain Drain*



A 60 hour work week; your three kids whining at the same time; rushing to the dry cleaner and arriving as it closes. All of these situations can cause stress to increase. And when it continues for long periods of time it can have a huge impact on your physical and emotional health. Learn to recognize the warning signs of stress and understand how they can influence your well-being. Why? It'll help you cope better and stay calm when faced with everyday challenges.

● **Warning signs.** Research shows that 43 per cent of adults suffer harmful health effects related to stress. 'Fight or flight' is the body's reaction to a threat or stress. To prepare, your body releases chemicals that signal increases in blood pressure and heart rate, rapid breathing, sweating and a sudden rush of strength. Behavioural warning signs of stress include anxiety, overreacting and difficulty concentrating. Physical indicators of stress include fatigue, trouble sleeping, weight gain or loss and sweaty palms. And if you're having arguments with friends, family or co-workers, don't feel like being social or begin using alcohol or drugs to cope, prolonged stress may be the culprit.

● **The stress circuit.** Your body releases hormones that respond to stress—the fight or flight reaction. When your baby is colicky or your manager keeps piling up the work, these stress-fighting hormones go into overdrive and can wreak havoc on your heart rate, blood pressure, digestion, mood, memory and appetite. Over time, your body's stressed out response can lead to migraines, arthritis, depression and even cardiovascular disease.

● **Raging hormones.** Known as the stress hormone, cortisol, which goes into overdrive when you're under duress, takes its toll on the body if it's continuously present at high levels. Over time, it'll burnout the body's coping devices causing fatigue and depression. Cortisol also interferes with serotonin production, which boosts mood, sleep and sexual responsiveness. When serotonin is low, it can trigger depression and sleep disorders.

● **Battle of the bulge.** Did you know that fat and cholesterol are released to energize and equip the body for stress? Your brain also tells the body to store fat. Imagine the health repercussions when you're stressed for a long period of time: weight gain, high cholesterol and constricted arteries.

● **System down.** Your immune system is another victim of stress leading to more colds and flu. And if you've moved to a new city or changed jobs, you have a greater chance of contracting an illness. The fight against inflammation, infection and white blood cell production are all weakened by continued stress too, meaning uncontrolled stress can lead to sniffles, a sore throat and bad allergies.

● **Stomach grumbling.** Who hasn't had a nervous stomach before a presentation? Well there's actually a medical reason that the tension you feel is throwing your digestive system for a loop. The hormones that fight stress prevent stomach acid from being released and the stomach from getting emptied. At the same time, these hormones speed up the emptying of the colon which leads to frequent trips to the bathroom, causing internal mayhem. If that wasn't enough to stomach, weight gain and increased appetite are common—which is why many people turn to a tub of ice cream after a nasty argument.

● **Stress slayers.** Beat stress and strengthen your health by:

- **Exercising** - 30 minutes a day will improve your mental and physical health.
- **Laughing** - it releases feel-good chemicals more powerful than morphine.
- **Taking time for yourself** - whether it's a long bath, a yoga class or reading a book.
- **Setting boundaries** - leave the laundry until another day and learn to say 'no' to unessential requests at work and at home.
- **Getting help** - from loved ones or a professional.





Not being able to get out of bed after finishing a proposal or a migraine after an intense meeting is just your body's way of fighting back. But when one stressful event follows another, your body doesn't get to stop the fight or flight reaction. That's when you get into trouble. Get to know your body's warning signs of too much stress. Then, find ways to cope, relax and resolve issues to protect your most important possession—your health.

Need more information on how to better manage stress? Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help. You can receive support through a variety of resources. Call your EAP to see if you are eligible at 1.800.387.4765 for service in English, 1.800.361.5676 for service in French.

This content is meant for informational purposes and may not represent the views of individual organizations. Please call your EAP or consult with a professional for further guidance.

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Pot-Pourri



FOND FAREWELLS



A fond farewell and best wishes to **Janet Ryder from the School of Nursing**, who will be retiring on November 30, 2006, after almost 30 years of service at Queen's. She will spend this next phase of her life being a more active grandparent to her grandchildren, and travel the roads with her husband in their new camper. She will be very much missed by her fellow staff, the faculty and students in the School of Nursing. We wish Janet all the best in the coming years.

Courier Bids Farewell To Bonita Summers



Bonita Summers, co-editor of the QUSA Courier for three years, recently resigned her position, much to our regret. Bonita's articles, story ideas and insight into the staff at Queen's University will be missed by her readers. Thank you, Bonita, for your contribution!



WANTED: NEW COURIER CO-EDITOR

If interested please contact the QUSA Office at: qusa@post.queensu.ca for more information.

CONGRATULATIONS!

to first time grandparents, **Patti (Purchasing Services) and Keith George (Grounds)**, on the arrival of their grandson Kowin Timothy Keith Webster on November 7. Mother, Father and baby are doing well. Granny and Gramps are already spoiling baby Kowin.



to **Barbara Schlafer, Ban Righ Foundation Director**, who was presented with a Recognition Award by the *Canadian Afro-Caribe Foundation* at a Dinner/Dance and Award Presentation Ceremony on November 11, 2006. The Award recognizes Barb's years of support to the academic success of past and present mature women students, among them many women students of African and Caribbean origins. The African and Caribbean women students thanked Barb for perceiving their unique needs and qualities and for assisting them to achieve their dreams in their new home.



Pension Plan AGM

Thursday, December 7, 2007 at 1:30pm
Dunning Hall Auditorium.
Details: Ext. 36414



The Office Next Door presents ...



The Queen's University Phytotron

By Dale Kristensen, Manager

If you've ever looked up at the south side of the Biosciences Complex after dark your eyes would be drawn to the bright lights of the greenhouse, which represents half of the Queen's University Phytotron, a controlled environment facility built in 1997 to support the growing needs of the Biology Department. The Phytotron includes this modern climate-controlled greenhouse, as well as 26 environmental growth chambers, a potting area, and a seed collection/sorting room. It is designed to maintain the precise environmental conditions for plant research and other biological applications.



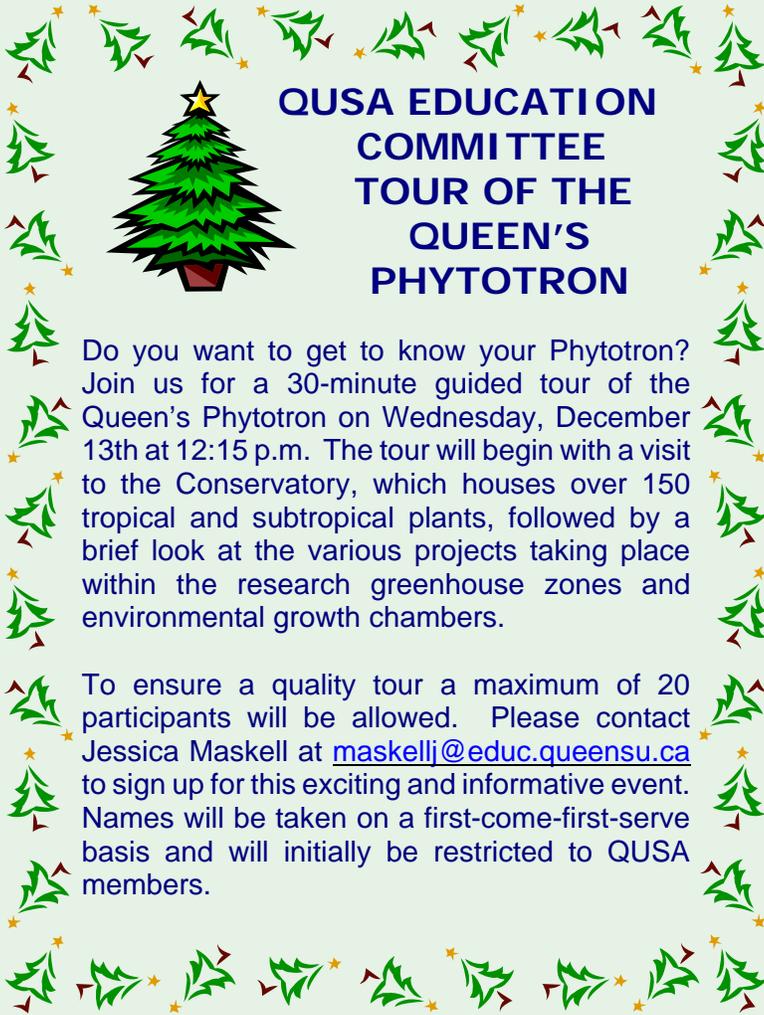
The Phytotron is an instrumental component of many plant research trials here at Queen's – supporting 9 principle investigators and their research teams and 7 undergraduate laboratory courses. Research includes Sharon Regan's investigations into genetic expression in hybrid poplars, W.C. Plaxton's studies of the metabolic pathways of the castor bean, and Chris Eckert's investigations into the evolutionary consequences of self-pollination in isolated plant populations. Some other notable work that has taken place here includes endangered species recovery (deerberry) for Parks Canada and investigations into the migratory habits of the monarch butterfly (Barrie Frost, Dept. of Psychology). The Phytotron is also the current home of Performance Plants Incorporated, a crop genomics company investigating methods of improving crop performance in canola, soybean and corn.

Our tiny conservatory houses more than 150 tropical, subtropical and Mediterranean plant species from a wide range of taxonomic lineages and biogeographic regions, and includes orchids, palms, bananas, bromeliads and cacti. This remarkable display of evolutionary diversity is used to great effect in several undergraduate biology courses, and is the main attraction for visitors to the Phytotron. It is also an inviting place for faculty, staff and students to relax and enjoy the tropical ambience, particularly over the winter months.

Tours of the Greenhouse are given regularly by the facility manager, Dale Kristensen. On these tours visitors are introduced to the ecology of select Conservatory species, the various roles plants play in our society, and some of the plant research conducted here at Queen's. (See *information following this article for a QUSA organized tour December 13 at 12:15 pm*)

For more information, please visit us at <http://biology.queensu.ca/%7Ephyttron/> or contact the Manager, Dale Kristensen at 613-533-6151.





QUSA EDUCATION COMMITTEE TOUR OF THE QUEEN'S PHYTOTRON

Do you want to get to know your Phytotron? Join us for a 30-minute guided tour of the Queen's Phytotron on Wednesday, December 13th at 12:15 p.m. The tour will begin with a visit to the Conservatory, which houses over 150 tropical and subtropical plants, followed by a brief look at the various projects taking place within the research greenhouse zones and environmental growth chambers.

To ensure a quality tour a maximum of 20 participants will be allowed. Please contact Jessica Maskell at maskellj@educ.queensu.ca to sign up for this exciting and informative event. Names will be taken on a first-come-first-serve basis and will initially be restricted to QUSA members.

OTHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE EVENTS



How to Celebrate Christmas in Your Office While Respecting the Beliefs of Others: Understanding December Faith Dates

Presenter: Brian Yealland, Chaplain

Location: JDUC, John Orr Room

Date: Thursday, December 7

Time: 12:10 - 12:50

BOOK CLUB

Want to share your love of reading with others? We are looking for interested members to join a book club. If you would like to either join, or lead a book club, please contact Sandra Jeffers at:

jefferss@post.queensu.ca.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

The Education committee will be holding a food drive for the local Partners in Mission Food Bank. Watch for more information on how to get your department involved and for drop-off locations. For more information

email Jessica Maskell at:

maskellj@educ.queensu.ca.

QUSA Executive Committee Retreat 2006

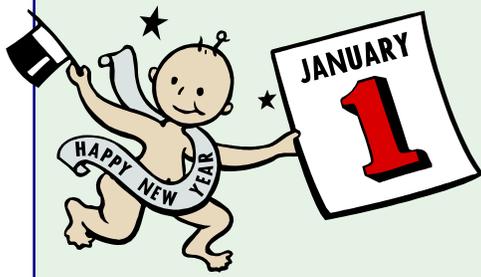


The Annual QUSA Executive Retreat was held on October 6, 2006 in the West Lake Dining Room at the University Club. The purpose of the Annual Retreat is to provide direction for the Executive Committee by setting goals for the upcoming year. This year, Committee members discussed goals for the Standing Committees on Membership, Education, and Research, Grants & Contracts.

We determined that this year's focus for the Executive Committee should:

- Provide more opportunities for West Campus to learn about QUSA and to participate in events.
- Develop a QUSA Award policy.
- Promote QUSA membership by raising the awareness of QUSA, by providing greater coverage of QUSA events, and by developing new QUSA-only benefits.
- Develop an Education plan for the year providing a variety of opportunities for members and non-members to learn and share.
- Attempt to gain more information on Research, Grant & Contracts positions, especially conversion to Continuing status.

by Karilee Reinbold



The New Year and a Time to Reflect



by Sharon David

The holiday season is fast approaching and the New Year is just around the corner. Whether or not you make New Year's resolutions this time of year is a good time to reflect on what you have and want in your personal and professional lives, and what you need to do to achieve those goals.

In our professional lives we as Queen's staff have several options to advance our skill-set. First, we can get a Queen's degree through the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), or take job-related courses outside of Queen's through the Professional Development Fund: <http://www.hr.queensu.ca/workandcareer/tuitionass.php>. Certificates through St-Lawrence College such as Office Management <http://www.sl.on.ca/parttime/Certificate.htm>, or online courses from Ontario Learn <http://www.sl.on.ca/parttime/OL.htm> offer boundless possibilities. This is not a simple undertaking as it can be difficult to juggle work, family responsibilities and a social life, but it can be done, and the professional rewards can outweigh the sacrifices.

Second, there are two Queen's certificates, offered through Human Resources, which can help us in our current positions, or to advance to a higher position: the Administrative Professional at Queen's <http://www.hr.queensu.ca/workandcareer/cw-cert.php?certid=5> and the Certificate in Workplace Communication <http://www.hr.queensu.ca/workandcareer/cw-cert.php?certid=7>.

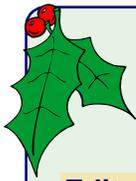
Many of us are taking advantage of these opportunities as Wendy Lloyd, Human Resources, reports that the TAP has 115 staff currently enrolled, the Administrative Professional at Queen's Certificate has 106 graduates with 175 currently enrolled, and the Certificate in Workplace Communication has 120 people registered and will see its first graduates in June 2007.

Now work isn't everything and for our mental health we need to take some time for ourselves. A good start to the New Year would be to try to spend at least 1 hour a week doing something you enjoy. Take a leisure class <http://www.sl.on.ca/parttime/Kingston.htm>, visit the symphony <http://www.kingstonsymphony.on.ca>, see a musical or comedy show, or go to the movies <http://www.whatsonkingston.com>.

Volunteering is a great way to meet new people and make new friends. Various Kingston charities <http://www.volunteerkingston.ca> and samples of other charities need help:

- Operation Red Nose: <http://www.operationnezrouge.com/en/inscript.asp?f1=276> – the annual December campaign against impaired driving.
- Kingston General Hospital: http://www.kgh.on.ca/volunteer/volunteer_purpose.asp.
- Salvation Army: http://www1.salvationarmy.org/can/www_can_ONE.nsf.
- Multiple Sclerosis Society: <http://www.mssociety.ca/ontario/volunteer.htm>.
- The Andy Fund: <http://www.kingston.org/andyfund/>.
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB): <http://www.cnib.ca/community/ontario/volunteers/kingston.htm>, and highlighted in the QUSA February 2006 Courier: http://www.queensu.ca/qusa/volume1_2006.pdf.
- Heart and Stroke Foundation: <http://ww2.heartandstroke.ca/Page.asp?PageID=742&CategoryID=20&SubCategoryID=0&Src=Volunteer&Type=Article>.
- Canadian Cancer Society: http://www.cancer.ca/ccs/internet/standard/0,3182,3543_587555536_4517_69_langId-en,00.html.





While the holiday season can be stressful, think of the New Year as an opportunity to reflect on your personal and professional goals, and how you can achieve them. Most of all have a safe and happy holiday!

Editor's Note:

If you have completed or in the process of completing a Queen's degree through the Tuition Assistance Program, or took another certificate program outside of Queens, and would like to share your experience we would be happy to hear from you. Submissions can be made online at <http://www.queensu.ca/qusa/newsletter.html> or by emailing QUSA at qusa@post.queensu.ca.

***Celebrating Diversity in
December***
by ***Karilee Reinbold***



In December we celebrate holidays cherished by several religions. December is also Universal Human Rights Month because on December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. December 10th is officially Human Rights Day and the entire month of December is dedicated to disseminating information about human rights all over the world. The full text of the Declaration, available at <http://www.udhr.org/udhr/> is made up of 30 articles stating over 50 "equal and inalienable rights" that all people are entitled to.



Our community at Queen's University is made up of people who are diverse in many ways yet we all share the common goal of creating an environment that both acknowledges and celebrates our differences. To learn more about global human rights issues the Human Rights Watch website, www.hrw.org, provides information by country. For an update on United Nations activity, you can refer to <http://www.un.org/rights/>.

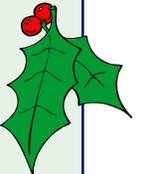
***Staff Recognition Award
Winners***

- Nancy Barker, School of Computing*
- Linda Graham, Film Studies*
- Kathy Hoover, Geography*
- Bonnie Lawrie, International Centre*
- Bonnie Livingstone,*
Office of Executive Director of Housing
- Lynn O'Malley, Sociology*

Awards will be presented at 12:30 pm at the ***Principal's Holiday Reception*** Tuesday, December 5, 2006 from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm in Grant Hall

Non-perishable food items will be accepted at the door for the Partners in Mission Food Bank

Start the day with a complimentary medium cup of coffee, tea, or hot chocolate until 10:45 am. Just show your staff card at JDUC, Mackintosh-Corry, Botterell Hall, Biosciences, Goodes Hall, Rez Express and West Campus cafeterias.



Welcome - New Members

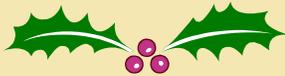
- Debra Allen, Health Sciences
- Karen Burkett, School of English
- Csop Glew, Cont.&Distance Studies
 - Kathleen Julien-Michels, University Secretariat

Seasons Greetings

*To members of the community of
Queen's University:*

*Greetings and sincere best wishes to you
and your families for a safe and joyous
holiday season and a New Year filled
with happiness, peace and goodwill.*

*Karen R. Hitchcock
Principal and Vice-Chancellor*



*As the holiday season approaches, we wish
you a safe and happy holiday and a very
Happy New Year.*

*Sincerely,
your QUSA Executive and
Courier Editors.*

Let's Hear From You

*Take a few minutes to write us
2 or 3 lines on E-Mail to:
QUSA@post.queensu.ca*

SEND A BOUQUET:

*Give someone a pat on the back: let
us know if something is going right.*



SOUND-OFF:

Have a comment, complaint, question?

Bouquets/Sound-offs should be sent to
the QUSA Office, Room 235, JDUC

POLICY REGARDING LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, SOUND-OFFS, OR BOUQUETS

We would ask that submissions be signed so that,
if need be, we can clarify any information with the
writer. If you wish to have your name withheld,
should your letter be published in the Courier,
simply indicate so and we will honour your request.

Contributors Wanted for:

- Announcements
- Bouquets
- Compassion in Action
- Sound-Off
- The Office Next Door
- Any other topic

NEW! Announcements for staff members other than
yourself must be accompanied by written
permission from the staff member concerned.

2006/2007 QUSA EXECUTIVE

		Members-at-Large	
President - Spring Forsberg, Cont.Distance St.	78560	Jane Dauncey, Psychology	32876
Vice-President - Gail MacAllister, Psychology	36406	Peg Hauschildt, Physics	32169
Secretary - Sandra Jeffers, International Centre	32604	Patti George, Purchasing	74233
Treasurer - Sheri Foster, Political Studies	77451	Jessica Maskell, Fac. of Education	74286
RG&C - Pamela Bandy-Dafoe, Chemistry	32630	Carolyn Morrison, Psychology	32493
RG&C - Karilee Reinbold, HPCVL	78485	Lori Rand, Residences	32048

**QUSA OFFICE - Betty Pollard, Business Administrator, Tel: 32215, JDUC Fax 533-6190
OFFICE HOURS: Monday to Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Closed July & August**