



# Courier

Queen's University Staff Association

Est'd 1972

Volume 1/2005

*QUSA~Working For YOU!*

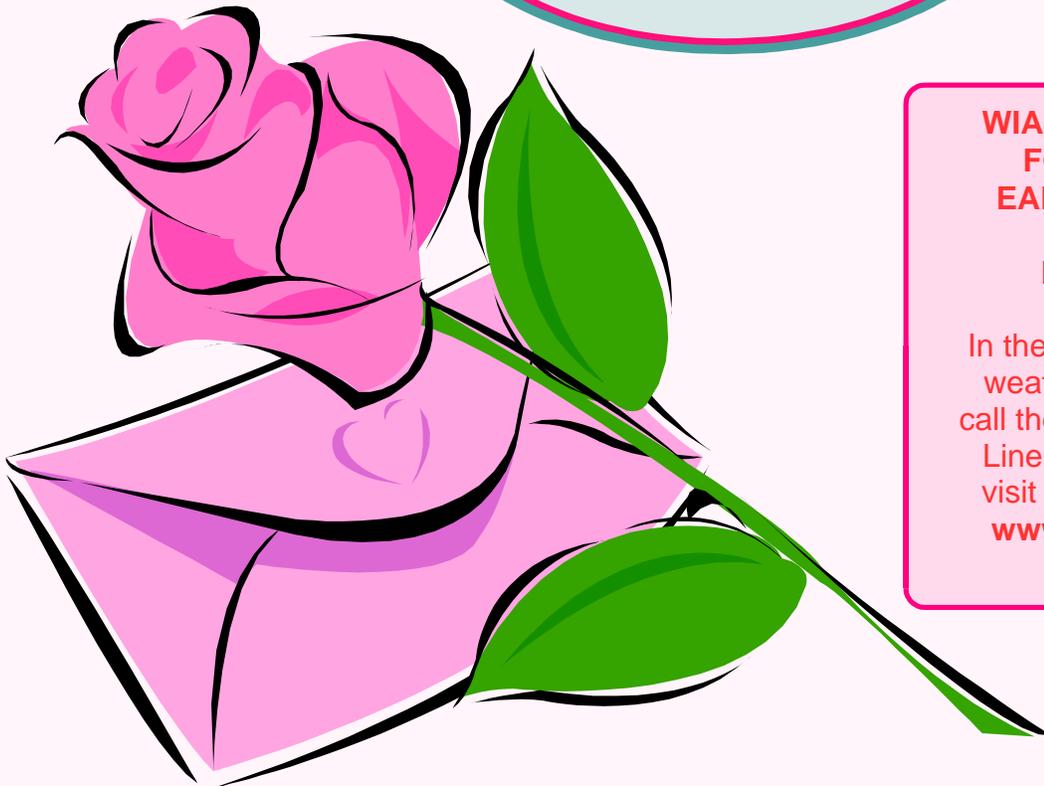
**FEBRUARY 2005**

**EDITORS:** *Bonita Summers & Laurie Vaughan-Evans*

**EXECUTIVE REPRESENTATIVE:** *Gail MacAllister*

**DESK TOP PUBLISHING:** *Betty Pollard*

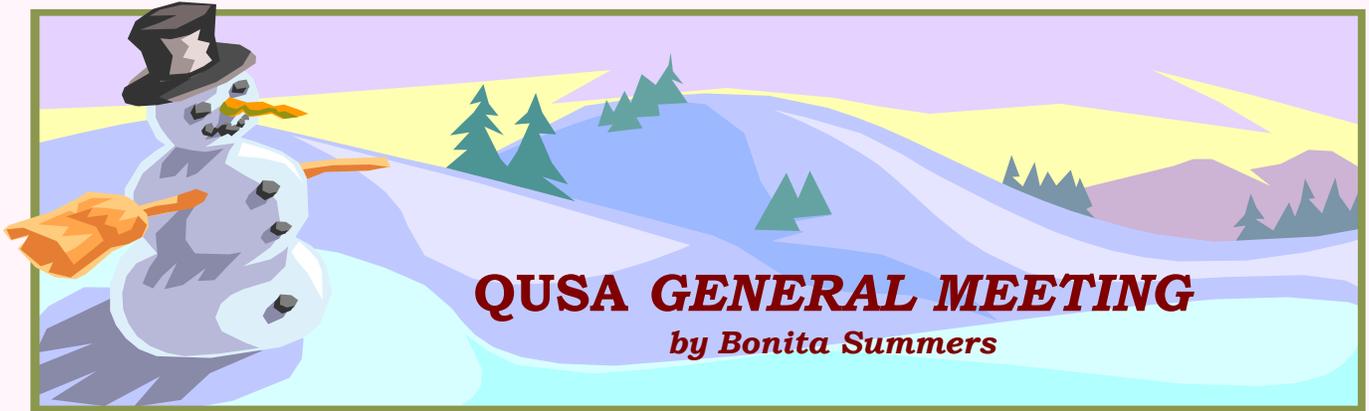
Happy  
Valentine's  
Day



**WIARTON WILLIE  
FORECASTS  
EARLY SPRING!**

**However...**

In the event of severe  
weather conditions,  
call the University Alert  
Line at 533-3333 or  
visit the web site at:  
[www.queensu.ca](http://www.queensu.ca)



**O**n January 26th, Dr. Karen Hitchcock addressed the general meeting of QUSA. Members of the Queen's University Staff Association had the opportunity to acquaint themselves better with the new Principal of Queen's and to respond to her inquiry as to the needs and concerns of staff.

**T**he meeting began with the President's report. Spring Forsberg discussed changes for QUSA, including the conversion of the QUSA Courier from hard copy to web-based, and changes to be brought forward by the Queen's Pension Committee, concluding with a plea for volunteer staff advisors.

**M**s. Forsberg also gave the Treasurer's report and brought forward a motion to amend a bylaw regarding the signing authority for QUSA-held accounts.

**T**he motion having been passed, the floor was given to Dr. Hitchcock for her address entitled, "State of the University". She began by thanking staff for "keeping us all on track." Her presentation included details on the Rae Review, with the expectation that recommendations from that review will be forthcoming in early February. Dr. Hitchcock anticipates "overall good news" to address the chronic underfunding affecting Ontario post-secondary educational institutions. New funding is anticipated, along with local control over tuition within specific boundaries.

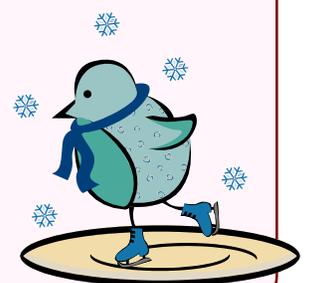
**I**t is expected that there will be more collaboration between colleges and universities regarding transfer of students between institutions. Dr. Hitchcock sees this as a "transformational time for higher education."

**D**r. Hitchcock spoke of the plans for the Queen's Centre as "stunning", noting that they had been redesigned so that the Centre would be comprised of several structures in order to preserve some of the heritage buildings in the area.

**C**onsolidation of the lands around the Prison for Women was the next topic of her presentation. It is expected that one-half to two-thirds of the lands will be used by Queen's, possibly to include a grad centre for the humanities and social sciences as well as a building for archives.

**D**r. Hitchcock updated staff on the task force established to address homecoming and other aspects of community/university relations. She stressed that the task force would be looking not only at homecoming issues but at various matters that affect students and the community at large.

**D**iverse questions from staff were addressed, from the future of energy-efficient buildings at Queen's and plans for a cogeneration plant to concerns of staff members on temporary contract. Dr. Hitchcock concluded by asking staff members what issues were most important to them. Morale and job stress were discussed. She ended her talk by encouraging staff members to come together from their various units to confer on issues central to the university.



## ♥♥♥ QUSA Education Committee Talks ♥♥♥

Free to Members  
Non-Members \$2.00

### Investments & Retirement Planning

Wednesday, February 9, 2005 - at Noon  
John Orr Room, J.D.U.C.

**Presenter:** J.C. Pasche, Regional Vice-President, Primerica Financial Services

Our presentation will cover debt management and consolidation, retirement investments, and methods and strategies to help achieve your goals.

We will also provide the opportunity for a complimentary, confidential, and customized "Financial Needs Analysis" (FNA) that shows where your finances stand today and what you need to do for tomorrow. Our presentation will cover every step of the way toward debt freedom and financial independence.



### Healthy Lifestyles

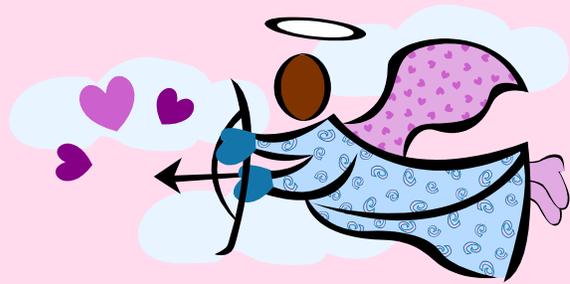
Wednesday, March 9, 2005 - at Noon  
John Orr Room, J.D.U.C.

**Presenter:** Alice B. Aiken PhD(C), MSc, BScPT, BSc(Kin),  
Manager/Registered Physiotherapist,  
The Physical Therapy Clinic @ Queen's

The key to a healthy lifestyle is balance and moderation. Exercise, eat right, breathe right, and keep your stress levels under control. In this talk we will explore some of the keys to maintaining balance in your daily life and learn some tips for enjoying healthy, lifelong exercise and nutrition habits. Bring your questions; hopefully, we can counter some of the modern-day myths!



## President's Report



Welcome to the new on-line version of the QUSA Courier. Congratulations to the Editors, our web site designer, and the members of the Courier committee for bringing us into the 21st century. We do hope you enjoy this new format, and we look forward to your feedback.

Although we are still in the dead of winter, it seems that spring is on its way. That time of year normally brings QUSA elections; however, 2004/2005 was our transition year where Executive service runs from May 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005. Therefore, the 2005/2006 executive members will serve from July 1 2005 – June 30, 2006, with that period being the new appointment term. Nomination information will be coming your way in a few months. Please keep your mind open to the possibility of getting involved with your QUSA Executive. Also this spring, the Salary and Benefits Committee will begin to plan and strategize for 2006 discussions. As we have done in the past, we will invite you to participate in a survey where we will seek your input for that important discussion.

We hope that you have had a chance to participate in a lunch-hour education session or the recent General Meeting where Principal Hitchcock met with members of the Staff Association. QUSA is your connection to the broader Queen's Community. While it is a difficult task to bring us together, we do hope that some of the sessions we offer will help you meet members from other departments and realize that you are part of the whole. As always, we welcome your ideas, suggestions, and participation to keep us moving in the right direction.

Sincerely,

*Spring Fornsberg*



## Tips for Making the Tax Season Less Taxing



*By getting organized and leaving enough time to do a final review, you'll ensure that your return is accurate and that you've claimed everything that you're entitled to. Here are a few ways you can reduce tax-time stress and focus on filling out your return accurately and completely:*

➤ **Create a tax workstation.** Find a place with lots of light where you can work comfortably. A desk or even the kitchen/dining room table works. Make sure the workspace allows enough room to sort papers in an orderly and accessible way.

➤ **Get organized.** Gather all documents including tax slips and receipts. Organize receipts into relevant categories: medical, legal, transportation, charitable donations, business expenses, entertainment, etc. It's much easier to work productively when you are not frantically looking for elusive paperwork.

➤ **Book time and clear away distractions.** Set aside a few hours or an entire day where you can be free of other responsibilities. Arrange for the kids to have something to do or be somewhere else. Turn off the ringer on the phone and do whatever you can to eliminate potential distractions.

➤ **Take advantage of your peak performance time.** The biggest error on income tax forms is math mistakes. So if you are a morning person, get up early to tackle your taxes. If you are an afternoon person, schedule the task for that time. You will get it done more quickly and accurately when you are at your best.

➤ **Consider your best mode of delivery.** Over 40 per cent of people file their taxes electronically, but if you aren't technically savvy then mailing a hard copy return may be the best alternative. If you are comfortable with electronic or telephone filing, this will cut processing time down substantially. An electronic or telephone tax return is often processed within two weeks, compared to six to eight weeks for a paper return.

➤ **File on time—even if you can't pay the tax due.** In 2000, over 200,000 people filed their tax return late. If you owe money and file late Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) will charge you five per cent of what you owe plus daily interest. So file your return on time even if you can't pay the money due. You'll still be paying interest that is compounded daily but you'll save the five per cent penalty.

➤ **Get professional advice.** If you report more

than just your employment income on your tax return, you will probably benefit from having the return prepared, or at least reviewed by a tax professional. Before you hire a professional, take time to decide on the level of service you require and weigh the cost of such services versus filing the return yourself.

➤ **If you use a professional, ask questions.** If you decide to use a professional tax service or accountant, be ready with the right questions. For example: How much will the service cost? Is it a flat fee or an hourly rate? What experience do they have? Do they have a professional designation? Are they up-to-date on changing tax laws, exemptions and deductions? Can they provide references? Remember, even if you have a professional prepare your tax return, you are responsible for any errors. Make sure to review your return before signing it.

➤ **Consider using a tax return software program.** If your tax return is relatively straightforward, and you are comfortable with computers, this may be a solid option.

➤ **Choose the right tax software program for your needs.** Before selecting a specific program to file your taxes, research and compare products. Consider the program's user-friendliness, available service support, compatibility with your home computer system and memory requirements. Vendors often provide sample copies of their software, so take the time to try it out. Choose a program that you will be comfortable using within a few hours, at most.

➤ **Give yourself a break!** When the going gets too tough, take a short 'time out' to shake off any frustration and to regain your focus.

*Need more information on tax planning? **WS Money Matters™** can help. This program is available to Queen's University employees and their families as part of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). For further assistance contact the EAP at 1 800.387.4765 for service in English, 1 800.361.5676 for service in French.*



**Welcome  
New  
Members!**

♥ **Heather Cooper,**  
**Alumni & Donor Relations**

♥ **Sheila Cornett**  
**Regional Assessment & Resource Ctr.**

♥ **Elizabeth Doucet, Law**

♥ **Carla Ferreira, Education**

♥ **Debra Fraser,**  
**Electrical & Computer Engineering**

♥ **Niki Kaloudas,**  
**School of Business**

## **STAFF POLICY MANUAL UPDATES**

Over the past several years, Human Resources has sent periodic updates of our Staff Policy Manual to each department. In late January 2005, we released our latest Policy Manual Update, which included changes to the family leave policies as well as some other policy updates. This was the last paper copy of the Staff Policy Manual. From this point forward, all policies will be updated directly on our website. This step is being taken to ensure that the most current policies are available at your fingertips.

If you wish to maintain your Policy Manual, it will be necessary for you to download the updated policies from our website as they become available, but we recommend that you always refer to our website to ensure you are viewing the most up-to-date version of any policy. If you have any questions, please refer them to the Employee Relations Section of Human Resources by email at: [hrsrel@post.queensu.ca](mailto:hrsrel@post.queensu.ca).



## **Staff Openings on the Board of Trustees and Senate**

The University Secretariat reminds staff that elections to the Senate and the Board of Trustees will take place in March 2005. Nominations are now requested for the following positions:

**1 Staff member - Senate - 3-year term until 2008**

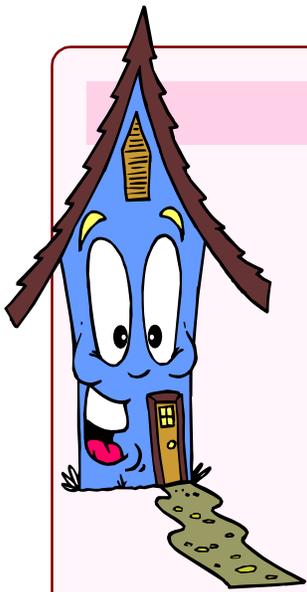
**1 Staff member - Board of Trustees - 4-year term until 2009**

**Eligible -** All employees of the University who work more than 14 hours per week and who are not members of faculty are eligible to nominate, to be nominated, and to vote.

Nominations close February 22nd, 4:30 pm. Voting takes place ON LINE March 1st - 31st. Polls close March 31st; results will be announced on the University Secretariat website by April 8th. Nomination forms are available from the University Secretariat at B-400 Mackintosh-Corry Hall or via the Secretariat website: [www.queensu.ca/secretariat/election](http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/election).

## ***Retreats: More than a Vacation***

**by Bonita Summers**



*On the last weekend of my August break, I took a drive with my daughter, Charise, to the little town of Picton, Ontario. We were spending the weekend at a yoga retreat at Still Point. I relished the idea of a vacation that would leave me somewhat changed after a few days – better rested, but hopefully having grown a bit as a person.*

*A retreat offers the opportunity to engage in activities that stretch the mind and the body, and the chance to meet new people and be exposed to fresh ideas. I knew that Still Point offered the right mix of social activity and solitary time, and that the approach to the itinerary was laissez-faire. One could participate in all events or none, as the attendee wished.*

*Charise and I dumped our duffle bags with yoga gear and other comfortable clothes and headed out to explore the property. A uniquely designed, open-concept house with inspiring artwork and attractive but comfortable furnishings opened out to an immaculate waterfront. A separate building for yoga featured floor-to-ceiling windows looking out on the water. A deck was available for those who wanted to practice yogic postures at the water's edge.*

*The weekend's activities involved early morning meditation sessions, several yoga classes per day, fabulous meals, silent walks afterward, and rousing satsangs in the evening, during which participants could share inspirational and entertaining readings and conversation. A stroll with a herbologist taught us of the many healing plants living on our lawns. We made a tea out of some of the samples we brought back from our walk.*

*Coming home from our weekend, Charise and I felt refreshed, content with the good food and good company we'd enjoyed, and a little broader for the mental and physical stretch we'd undertaken.*

*There are many types of retreats available in the vicinity of Kingston. Whether you are looking for a physical or mental workout or a place to unwind or get in touch with your spiritual life, there's a retreat for you. Many facilitators run programs year round. Following is a list of locations and what they offer:*

**<http://www.retreatonline.com/canada/ontario/default.htm>**

**<http://www.resortcountry.com/ontariospas.html>**

**<http://www.spasontario.com>**

Listings of retreats in Ontario with links to individual sites.

**<http://www.4trust.net/>**

A program for developing self-confidence, based in Gananoque

**<http://www.theranchretreat.ca/>**

Offers workshops and intensives for healing of body, mind, and spirit

**<http://www.sahayoga.com/index.html>**

Newly established yoga retreat in Picton area

**<http://www.shantiretreat.ca/index.html>**

Another yoga retreat in the Picton area

**<http://www.angelfire.com/on/stillpoint>**

And another... what is it about Picton?

**<http://www.spaatthemill.com/>**

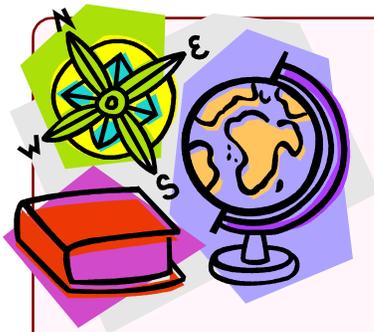
For the indulgence of a few hours or a day for those who can't get away

**<http://www.completehealthmag.com/>**

A complete list of alternative health providers and retreats in the Kingston area

*However you do it, retreats are a great way to unwind, change your mind, and replenish the energy we all lose in our workaday lives. Make the time, take the time, and enjoy!*





# Queen's School of English: A School Unlike Any Other

by Dr Andy Curtis

*For more than 60 years, the School of English has been welcoming and working with international students and other visitors from around the world, helping them develop their knowledge and experience of Canadian English language and culture.*

## **Three Academic Years Every 12 Months**

The School of English at Queen's, also known as QSoE, is located at 96 Lower Albert Street. Only recently were we allowed to have a sign that shows where we are, and as a relatively small, free-standing, historically listed building, people have come to us looking for everything from Student Health to a whole range of different departments. Yet, one of the few things the School is not, is a department.

Since 1942, the School of English at Queen's has been welcoming international students from around the world. From a small summer program in 1942, the School has grown to a year-round program, working with up to 1,000 international students each year from more than 30 nations. One of the many ways in which the School is unique is the fact that we have at least three academic years every twelve months. Three times each year – September, January, and May – we meet, greet and orient, test, assess and place between 150 and 200 international students. In spite of Queen's dubious claims to be an international and diverse campus, it has a very long way to go in this regard, making the School of English something of a multicultural and multilingual oasis in an otherwise deserted landscape.

## **Princess Towers**

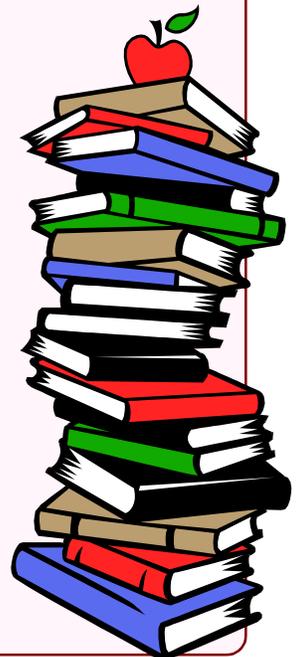
Another unique aspect of the School is its degree of femaleness. The School has a total part-time and full-time teaching, administrative, and sociocultural program staff of between 35 (in the winter) and 50 (in the summer) – almost entirely female. This semester, Winter 05, we have reached the heights of maleness at the School, with a total of 6 male staff out of 35. In the summer, we had fewer than 5 in 50. Some time after I started at the School, some of the female staff here confided in

me that the building used to be known as “The Ovary Tower”. An appropriately witty play on words for a group of people who, every day, work with language as their raw material.

Although the School has students and teachers, courses and curricula, orientation and graduation days, we come under the general heading of “Research, Grant and Contract”, so all staff at the School, myself included, are in the category of administrative support staff. Though this has its limitations, it is in many ways appropriate, as the main purpose of the School is to provide linguistic and cultural support to all international members of the Queen's community: students, faculty and administrative staff.

## **Strength Through Diversity**

The School may be “unbalanced” in its gender, but it more than makes up for it in its generational diversity, with staff in their teens, 20's, 30's, 40's, 50's, and 60's supporting each other side-by-side, enabling us to draw on an unusually large range of experience. Last year, QSoE carried out its first Workplace Satisfaction Survey, which showed that almost everyone at the School believes that this is a great place to work. For me, having worked with language schools, colleges, and universities in Europe, Asia, North, South and Central America, I can honestly say – with my hand on my heart – that this is one of the most hard-working, dedicated, and committed group of English language education professionals I have ever had the pleasure and privilege of working with, managing, and leading.





## BOUQUET

Thank you to all the administrative and teaching staff at Queen's School of English (QSoE) for all that you do for the School, the Faculty and the University. Thank you for making the School such a positive and professional place to work.

**Dr Andy Curtis, Executive Director, QSoE**

### Condolences

*to Kathie Granger, Registrar's Office on the death of her Mother, Eileen Sillett who passed away on Friday, January 7, 2005*



*to Laurie Vaughan-Evans, NCIC Clinical Trials, on the recent death of her Father, David Vaughan-Evans who passed away on Monday, January 10, 2005*

## 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.

- REMINDERS:**
- Deadline for Tuition Assistance & Child Care Benefit is February 28<sup>th</sup>
  - QUSA Membership Fees are tax deductible and appear on your T4

## 2004/2005 QUSA EXECUTIVE

**President:** Spring Forsberg, Cont.Distant St. 78560  
**Vice-President:** Gail MacAllister, Psychology 36406  
**Secretary:** Sandra Jeffers, International Ctre 32604  
**Treasurer:** Lisa Neumann, Arts & Science 74722  
**RG&C:** Pamela Bandy-Dafoe, Chemistry 32630  
**RG&C:** Ellen Hawman, Disraeli Project 32764

### Members-at-Large

Annette Brick, Cont.Distance Studies 77190  
Andy Curtis, School of English 77192  
Sheri Foster, Pharmacology & Toxicology 36112  
Kim Jesse, Neuroscience Studies 36360  
Jessica Maskell, Fac. of Education 74286  
Carolyn Morrison, Life Sciences 36527

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