



# Courier

Queen's University Staff Association

Est'd 1972

## VOLUME 3/09 – NOVEMBER 2009



This time it's "YES"  
to new S&B Agreement  
More on Page 4

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### QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY STAFF ASSOCIATION

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## From the Principal



Let me begin by saying that I am very pleased to be asked to contribute a short text to the *Courier*. We are in a period when communication among members of our community will be crucial. We face some significant challenges ahead. Some of these are financial -

and I would be remiss if I didn't publicly thank QUSA members for the leadership they have shown in helping us begin to get our budget under control - but some are more general. It is to deal with these more general issues that we will shortly be embarking on an Academic Planning exercise.

The starting point for this exercise will be a **Vision Statement** that I will circulate in January, and the process will end in December 2010. I should be clear though that Academic Planning is not just about courses and curriculum. It is about our values as a University and the choices we face: how big we should be, what should be the composition of our student body, what should be the role of research and teaching. Beyond this, the Academic Plan will form the backbone for all of our planning in areas like capital development, fundraising, staffing and operations. It will be crucial that QUSA members participate fully in these discussions and I look forward to hearing from you in the months ahead.

One of the mechanisms for this interaction will be a **Principal's Advisory Committee** which will shortly be announced. Composed of faculty, staff and students, its goal is to provide me with frank advice on a variety of issues. Another mechanism is more informal: as I walk around campus on my way to meetings or to a class, please do not hesitate to step up and introduce yourself and talk to me about what's on your mind. Unless I am in a desperate rush, I will stop to have these conversations.

You may have seen that Queen's was recently selected as one of Canada's 100 top employers.

This is a great honour, but - even more - it's a great responsibility. It sets a bar we must continue to strive for in providing a workplace environment that is both challenging and rewarding to every member of the Queen's community. Please be assured that I take that responsibility seriously.

Finally, let me invite everyone to the **Principal's Holiday Reception** to be held this year on **December 1 from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm**. This annual event is one small way of saying thank you for everything you do for us. It is also an opportunity for presentation of the **Staff Recognition Awards** to a small number of employees who have consistently gone above and beyond in their contributions to Queen's. I look forward to the event, and hope to see you there.

*Daniel Woolf*  
*Principal and Vice-Chancellor*

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## Staff Success Story Faculty of Health Sciences



*Congratulations to*  
***Cheryl Power, Cathy Hitchins, Val Dorion, Christine Mandy, Krista Knight, and Annalee Bounds***

*for successfully completing the*  
***Administrative Professional @ Queen's Certificate.***

## President's Report

The time change has come and gone, with longer nights upon us and cold weather and winter nipping at our heels. The seasons change but the cycle continues, as does our cycle at Queen's. Students are back in full swing now, and we have been reminded once again why we are here and how vibrant our community is with students all around us. Recently I participated in a recruitment event in Toronto and attended an information session led by a very talented presenter from the University Registrar's Office. His presentation helped me to remember why I work at Queen's, and why I choose to thrive in an environment where youth surrounds us - young people who have such hope for a bright future.



For the past year plus, the cycle of QUSA has been shaken, causing many members of QUSA and non-members alike to consider their representation on campus. Stirring things up, and presenting ideas for change and discussion, is just what a learning environment should be engaged in. The QUSA Executive and I have been wrapped up for many months in trying to meet the challenges of an "engaged" environment and in attempting to represent all parties and opinions in a fair and consistent manner. This has not been easy, and some of you may believe that we have fallen short of that responsibility. I can assure you, however, that it is the sincere goal of myself and the Executive to continue to represent all members, and to strive towards fairness and equity in this current climate.

We have accepted our challenges throughout the year, and we believe that we have found a way to meet the needs of all our members of varying opinions by remaining neutral in regard to the union drive, while we continue to push for improvements for staff. These improvements include developing a draft of a new **Grievance Policy**, encouraging Human Resources to resume the work of a new **Job Evaluation System**, offering valuable **lunch-hour Education Sessions**,

and actively participating on the **Ad-Hoc Employee Groups Pension Committee**. Further, we negotiated what was eventually an acceptable **Salary and Benefits package**. That process demonstrated that QUSA is a legitimate bargaining unit, able to take an offer to our membership, have it rejected, and then return to the discussion table and bring back a better offer to our members.

As the year continues, I am sure there will be more challenges that will face us, but the QUSA Executive will continue to represent you and be a leader in finding solutions to those challenges. As always, we will welcome your input.

A special thank you to all those on the Salary and Benefits Committee of 2008-09 and the current 2009-10 Committee for all their hard work in bringing to our membership a Salary and Benefits Memorandum of Agreement that was both supported by the Executive and by you, our members.

*Spring Forsberg*

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## Nominating Committee Update

Welcome to **Susanne Cliff-Jungling** (eQUIP Task Force), who was acclaimed to the QUSA Executive as a Member-at-Large (General Support Staff).

Welcome also to **Stéphanie Goffin-Boyd** (Residences) who has been appointed to the QUSA Salary & Benefits Committee.

Thank you to previous incumbents Kelly McGarry and Bob Burge for their service to QUSA. We wish Kelly all the best for her upcoming maternity leave.

*Tracy Elliott  
Chair*

## Salary & Benefits Committee Update

The new 2009-10 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) has now been formally signed in time for its provisions to be implemented on the November payroll. Increases will be backdated to July. Thank you to all QUSA members who participated in this process by communicating comments, suggestions and concerns.

### S&B VOTE RESULTS October 2009

#### THE QUESTION

Do you support the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement presented on October 1 and October 7, 2009?

#### THE ANSWER

**YES - 244**  
**NO - 132**

#### PARTICIPATION

376 of 642 eligible QUSA members-in-good-standing (59% of the membership)

Your Salary & Benefits Committee is now preparing for **Spring 2010 discussions** in respect of the next MOA which will take effect from July 1, 2010. Over the upcoming months

we will be seeking your input and guidance to ensure that we have a clear picture from you, our members, as to what areas of our agreement you feel should be improved or changed.

Sincere thanks to the dedicated members of the Salary and Benefits team from this year and last: Pam Bandy-Dafoe, Bob Burge, Carla Ferreira, Melissa Gunton, Michelle Knapp-Hermer, Dean McKeown, Lori Rand (Chair, 2008-09), and Teresa Pires.

*Davin Carlson*  
**Chair**

## Education Committee Update

The QUSA Education Committee met in September to review topics suggested by members. To date we have presented an **H1N1 Pandemic Information Session**, with speaker Dan Langham, Director of Queen's Environmental Health & Safety (October 28), and a session on **Dispute Resolution - The Role of a Divorce Mediator**, with speaker Linda Crush from the Faculty of Law (November 12).

Remaining fall-term sessions include an **Alzheimer Coffee Break and Information Session** co-hosted by the Ambassador Conference Centre on **Tuesday November 17**. The Ambassador is generously providing coffee/tea and sweets for us to enjoy during a presentation by Sara Jones of the Alzheimer Society.

On **Tuesday December 2** we have the opportunity to learn more about two exciting student initiatives on campus: **VIDA** (Queen's Chapter) which offers medical, dental and veterinary volunteer experiences abroad, and **Best Buddies-Vrais Copains** Canada which promotes friendships between students and people with intellectual disabilities.

Moving on to the winter term, Jeff Downie and Lisa Ayles will present an information session on **March Break and Summer Camps**, together with HR Benefits Administrator A.J. Gould, on **Wednesday January 20**. On **Monday January 25** a Human Resources team will discuss **Redeployment - how it works** - and will be pleased to answer your questions.

All sessions take place from 12 noon - 1 pm in JDUC 241 (McLaughlin Room). Bring your lunch and bring your non-member friends who are also welcome to attend. Donations of non-perishable food items for the AMS Food Bank are gratefully received. Full details of the sessions are posted on the QUSA Events web page:

[www.queensu.ca/qusa/events.html](http://www.queensu.ca/qusa/events.html).

Watch for additional sessions.

Thanks to Committee members Carla Ferreira and Sandra Jeffers for their work in putting together our roster of events. And - QUSA members - keep your suggestions coming!

*Gillian Berry*  
**Chair**

## 2009-10 General Staff Salary Grids

GENERAL STAFF SALARY GRID - GRADES 1 TO 9  
EFFECTIVE - JULY 1, 2009

GRADE	MINIMUM	STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5	STEP 6	STEP 7	STEP 8	STEP 9	STEP 10	STEP 11	STEP 12
2	29,833	30,629	31,451	32,290	33,155								
3	33,239	34,124	35,034	35,970	36,933								
4	34,974	35,935	36,924	37,937	38,977	40,047	41,146						
5	36,661	37,580	38,524	39,492	40,483	41,498	42,538	43,606	44,702	45,827			
6	41,574	42,615	43,688	44,783	45,909	47,061	48,241	49,453	50,694	51,967			
7	47,143	48,327	49,541	50,785	52,059	53,365	54,706	56,075	57,489	58,929			
8	53,460	54,804	56,180	57,587	59,032	60,515	62,036	63,592	65,186	66,827			
9	58,836	58,214	59,827	61,073	62,554	64,072	65,628	67,219	68,849	70,521	72,233	73,984	75,781

SALARY RANGES - GRADES 10 TO 14  
EFFECTIVE - JULY 1, 2009

GRADE	MINIMUM	MID-POINT	MAXIMUM
10	65,359	76,253	87,147
11	75,165	87,692	100,218
12	86,440	100,847	115,253
13	99,407	115,975	132,542
14	114,315	133,370	152,424

### General Staff Job Evaluation Project Update

Human Resources continues to make steps forward with the development of the new Job Evaluation System for positions falling within the General Staff group, salary grades 2 through 9. Detailed job family documents will be reviewed by the JE Committee in December.

In order to ensure resources are dedicated to the project, new requests for position re-evaluations will not be received at this time. For additional updates on this comprehensive project, visit the Compensation and Benefits section of the HR Department web page:

<http://www.hr.queensu.ca/compben/jescope.php>

**Laurie Gee**  
*Director of Compensation  
Department of Human Resources*

### Agreement Signing Ceremony Queen's HR and QUSA



**Lorna Baxter**, Director of Employment and Employee Relations, and **Spring Forsberg**, QUSA President, were first up to sign the accepted 2009-10 Memorandum of Agreement on support staff compensation. Davin Carlson and Melissa Gunton from QUSA and Laurie Gee and Patti Evaristo from Human Resources are also signatories. The Agreement signing took place at the University Club on November 9.

*Photo by Jeff Drake*

## Pension Committee Update

The QUSA Pension Committee has been very active during the last few months. In mid-August, members of the Ad-Hoc Pension Committee - employee groups (QUFA, CUPE, and QUSA) - met to examine some of the *proposed* modifications to our current pension in more detail:

- Change the way pensions are indexed by:
  - Using a 6-year rather than a 4-year fund return average. This helps smooth out the fund returns in years where it is extremely poor or extremely high.
  - Using a geometric or compound average for fund returns rather than an arithmetic average. This is a more standardised actuarial approach.
  - Eliminating the double-counting that is inherent in our current plan by calculating the 6-year average return using a standard percentage rather than using the actual fund returns for the years prior to retirement. This mitigates some of the volatility associated with new pensions during the first 6 years of implementation.
  - Adjusting the mortality experience annually using a 6- or 10-year rolling average - pensions will be based on the average length of life of previous Queen's retirees (we tend to live longer than the average Canadian AND the average Canadian university employee). This ensures that the amortization of the money purchase component of our pensions accurately reflects the expected life expectancy of a Queen's employee.
- Make additional contributions to our pensions, with Queen's shouldering a larger proportion of these increases. (*We are investigating the feasibility of an overall 2% increase, with the University contributing an additional 1.12% and employees contributing an additional 0.88%.*)
- Agree that the University assume full responsibility for covering the unfunded

liability associated with existing pensioners (this eliminates approximately 90 - 95% of the unfunded liability according to the University actuaries).

- Increase the percentage used in the minimum guarantee formula for salaries under the Yearly Maximum Pensionable Earnings (YMPE) and decrease the percentage used for salaries over the YMPE to ensure that the overall cost to the plan remains neutral. This slight adjustment ensures that lower-income employees see a better pension return on their contributions.

In September and October, members of the Ad-Hoc Pension Committee spoke and met with an actuary from Mercer (the University's pension actuarial company) to request that some modelling be performed using the various proposed changes listed above. The outcomes of these scenarios will give us better insight into how the proposed changes will play out, both for pension plan members and the University.

The governance document is still under development. Both our incoming and outgoing Principals met with the Chair of the Board of Trustees in Toronto in late August to begin the process of bringing Principal Woolf up to speed. This issue will continue to be reviewed in tandem with the proposed pension plan changes.

In early October, the fund return rates for our previous plan year (which ended August 31) were released. Fund returns rebounded from historical lows earlier this year; the year-end final return rate was -7.8877. Because our pension plan has a non-reduction clause, current retirees' pensions will not decrease; however, pensioners will also not see an increase in their monthly pension payments. Pension adjustments take effect every September 1 after a member has been retired for at least 12 months, and annually thereafter. Currently, the calculation is based on the fund returns over the most recent four-year period minus the 6% interest benchmark, which is included in the original pension calculation.

**Peg Hauschildt**  
Chair

## Greening Up the Office!

### QUSA members spearhead an OUR environmental initiative

The **Office of the University Registrar** has been making strides towards a more sustainable operation. Because of our concern about the impact of office activities on our environment, we decided to make some changes and address our environmental footprint. There began a truly collaborative program, to which every OUR staff member continues to contribute.



In the fall of 2007, the Office of the University Registrar began implementing new procedures and tips for daily operations. The efforts to date have concentrated on routine activities. These may seem insignificant beyond the walls of the office, but without proper management can have negative environmental impacts.

Before addressing the environmental impacts of our operations, the Office of the University Registrar - like other busy units - was relying heavily on paper to keep activities running. Many thousands of pieces of paper were being used each year, carrying with them a carbon footprint from the loss of trees from harvesting, from the use of chemicals from production and recycling processes, and from their eventual addition to landfill mass. Recognizing the environmental impact of paper in terms of both its production and disposal, OUR decided to maximize the efficient and responsible use of this high-volume resource. We developed and implemented a program for the handling of paper that goes beyond recycling and accounts for paper production, use and re-use.

Highlights of the paper reduction program include:

- Sourcing FSC-approved paper products (<http://www.fscscanada.org/>);
- Using e-filing systems for thousands of letters and proficiency certifications for the admissions process;
- Discouraging unnecessary printing of emails;
- Reusing of old binders and folders;
- Creating notepads using scrap pieces of paper;
- Creating a manual outlining the above procedures and other paper conservation strategies that is kept next to photocopiers for easy reference.



The paper-saving program has been very well

received, and feedback has been extremely positive. This is a program that can easily be implemented by other offices, as it requires only minimal changes to daily routines and comes with a negligible cost increase. It may, in fact, save money.

The Office of the University Registrar has also taken other steps to green up its operations, including:

- The distribution of plants throughout the office;
- A "lights out" policy for washrooms and lounges;
- A switch from CRT monitors to more energy efficient LCD screens;
- Discouragement of the use of space heaters;
- Sharing of home cutlery and dishes, to avoid using the disposable variety;
- Recycling of printer cartridges, and use of refurbished ones.

*Rebecca Coupland, Irene High  
and Carla Place  
Photos by Aaron Ball*

## Correspondence

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### Staff Unionization? Some QUSA members say "No"

In response to the petitioned special August meeting at which the QUSW made a presentation, we would like to submit the following letter to our fellow QUSA members:

We are eight QUSA members who do not support the union drive. We believe that for a modest \$78 annual membership fee, we have received very good salary and benefit packages over the years which has contributed to Queen's earning the honour of being one of Canada's Top 100 Employers for 2010! Through a collegial and respectful discussion process with the Queen's Administration, QUSA has provided salary increases, childcare benefits and tuition benefits, as well as dental and health insurances comparable to those provided to our unionized colleagues - and all with no work stoppage.

If we unionize, our costs will be markedly higher. Even if the USW were to get a "better" settlement from Queen's, would we actually be in a better position than we are in today? To figure this out, we decided to do some simple math.

USW dues are 1.55% plus 2 cents for each hour worked. For these purposes, let's take an employee who makes \$45,000 per year and works full-time (1,810 hrs annually). This employee's union dues would be...

**\$733.70 per year!**

In the first year of a union contract, if the USW were to negotiate a 3% raise but charge 1.63% in dues, this leaves not much more than the 1.25% offered this year.

For a \$45,000 p.a. salary, this translates in dollars and cents to:

$\$45,000 + \$1,350 (3\%) = \$46,350 - \$755$   
union dues (1.63% of \$46,350)  
= \$595 net gain

**That's only a 1.32% increase!**

Then, just for fun, add the worry of a strike vote or lock-out at some point during the union's tenure. As an example, use the situation of the staff at the Drive Test Centres in Ontario who are represented by the USW and who are embroiled in a lengthy strike. Then do a bit more simple math:

$\$45,000 / \text{year} = \$3,750 / \text{month} \times 2 \text{ months}$   
on strike = \$7,500

We believe that we would NEVER make this back, under any circumstances.

### *Are the eight of us part of a silent majority?*

We ask QUSA members who are not in support of unionization to **please speak up!** Let your QUSA Executive know how you feel about this very important issue.

***Audrey Hunt, Bev Howes, Bonnie  
McCalpin, Caroline Burke, Deborah  
Emerton, Gail Knutson, Nancy Koen  
and Valerie Bartlett***

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### Steps should be non-negotiable

I think QUSA and Queen's Staff have been duped.

Look at the staff at other universities in Ontario. Career progression provisions (our steps) are built in - non-negotiable (as salary) - they just happen.

For instance, at the University of Guelph you would begin at the entry level in your grade and after 6 months move to level 2 and six months later to level 3 and 12 months later to level 4, and so on until you reach your maximum at 150% of the entry level salary. Compare our maximum levels which vary from 111% of entry level in Grades 2 and 3, to 117% for grade 4, to 125% for grades 5 through 8, and 133% for grade 9.

*(Steps- continued on page 9)*

*(Steps - continued from page 8)*

At Guelph, progression happens on the anniversary of an appointment - it is not dependent upon salary discussions. Staff reach a higher maximum sooner (150% after six years).

Queen's has fostered here the idea that career steps can be added or taken away at its discretion. The Administration has successfully used this tactic to fool many staff members into thinking they are receiving a 3.75% raise, when really they are receiving what should be their normal career progression plus 1.25%.

People I talk to elsewhere find it flabbergasting that Queen's would withhold, or threaten to withhold, career progression as a negotiating tactic, as well as withdraw monies already offered to bring parity to the Tuition Support Plan. But that is our Queen's.

Guelph Staff got a 3% scale increase this year.

**Mark Publicover**

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**New QUSA Representative on University Food Committee**

**Jean Jeffrey** (School of Graduate Studies) has been appointed to represent QUSA on the University Food Committee. Thanks to outgoing QUSA representative Roger Boyes for his service.

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**QUAQE 2009-10 Events**

QUAQE is the primary social networking association for current and former LGBT Queen's staff.



We are delighted to announce our roster of monthly Signature events for 2009-10. Our aim is to provide you with classy yet inexpensive opportunities to network and socialize with LGBT colleagues. In true QUAQE fashion, we're blending frivolity with learning and just a touch of flair! See our calendar of events at <http://www.queensu.ca/qaqe/events.htm>.

**QUSA membership tops 650!**

QUSA membership has reached an all-time high of over 650 members. A warm welcome to the 36 new members who have joined since the last (August) issue of the Courier:

- |                       |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| April Wallace         | Arts & Science            |
| Brad Hannah           | ITS                       |
| Brian Forbes Colgate  | Env. Health/Safety        |
| Carly Napier          | Career Services           |
| Carole Morrison       | Education                 |
| Dianna Bristol        | Undergraduate Admissions  |
| Erika Becker          | Policy Studies            |
| Gail Mann             | Health/Counselling/Disab. |
| Heather Salsbury      | Policy Studies            |
| Julie Wimmer          | Obstetrics/Gynaecology    |
| Kathy Grant           | Rehabilitation Therapy    |
| Kirsty Milne          | Alumni Relations          |
| Krista Veenstra       | HDCS                      |
| Laurie Phillips       | Chemical Engineering      |
| Lindsay Hawkins       | VP Research Office        |
| Lisa Menard           | Advancement               |
| Lisa Webb             | Ban Righ Centre           |
| Mara Jones            | Business                  |
| Marianne Ferris       | VP Research Office        |
| Mary Senior           | Business                  |
| Megan George          | Student Awards            |
| Michelle Gallant      | Arts & Science            |
| Nancy Koen            | Medicine                  |
| Nilani Loganathan     | International Centre      |
| Paule Turnbull        | Family Medicine           |
| Ruth Wannemacher      | Development               |
| Sonja Verbeek         | VP Research Office        |
| Stéphanie Goffin-Boyd | Residences                |
| Susan Cole            | Business                  |
| Susan Downey          | Ophthalmology             |
| Susan Fleury          | Medicine                  |
| Tabitha Docteur       | Clinical Trials Group     |
| Terri Flindall        | Advancement               |
| Valerie Bartlett      | Medicine                  |
| Victor Pascoal        | Residences                |
| Yingjian Su           | Business                  |
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## About QUSA

The Queen's University Staff Association (QUSA) has been representing the interests of Queen's University non-unionized staff for 37 years. Membership is voluntary and new members are always welcome. Visit the website for an enrolment form.

### 2009-10 Executive Committee

<b>President:</b> Spring Forsberg, Arts & Science	78560
<b>Vice-President:</b> Peg Hauschildt, Physics	32169
<b>Secretary:</b> Melissa Gunton, Student Affairs	33332
<b>Treasurer:</b> Tracy Elliott, University Secretariat	77225

### Members-at-Large

<b>General Support Staff:</b>	
Davin Carlson, Psychology	32867
Gillian Berry, University Registrar's Office	74058
Pamela Bandy-Dafoe, Chemistry	32630
Patti George, Strategic Procurement	32136
Susanne Cliff-Jungling, eQUIP Task Force	78507
<b>Research, Grant &amp; Contract Staff:</b>	
Kelly Petrunka, Better Beginnings	74952
Susan Kemp, School of English	75530
<b>West Campus Staff:</b>	
Jessica Maskell, Education	77295

<b>QUSA Business Administrator:</b> Sarah Pugh	32215
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## Volunteer Appreciation

Thank you to all QUSA members who assisted the QUSA Executive and Business Administrator by volunteering time to help with the September "Union Access Motion" voting and with the October Salary & Benefits Agreement voting. We couldn't have done it without you!

Thanks to: Anne Mitchell-Ste.Marie, Barb Gertridge, Caroline Burke, Cheryl Power, Debbie Sneddon, Gord Campbell, Irene Lafleche, Joan Knox, Karen Leveque, Kim Jesse, Lee Atkinson, Linda Cameron, Maria Cardoso, Marlo Whitehead, Paul Carl, Rebecca Coupland, Roger Healey, Sandra Murray, Sharon Weiler, and Susan Anderson.

A special thank you to former QUSA Business Administrator **Betty Pollard** who both volunteered and visited with us after returning from her travels.

### It's a girl!

*Congratulations to **Rowena Selby** and **Nicolas Houde** on the birth of their new baby girl **Gabrielle Selby-Houde**, a brother for **Zachary**. Gabrielle was born on October 23, weighing 8 lb 1 oz. Rowena is on leave from her position of Education Abroad Advisor at the Queen's International Centre.*

## About the Courier

The Courier is the on-line Newsletter of the Queen's University Staff Association, and is published three times a year. Spring Forsberg, Peg Hauschildt and Sarah Pugh form the current Editorial Committee.

The Courier belongs to you, our QUSA members, and we welcome your submissions. We encourage you to share your news of milestones in your life and career (births, marriages, promotions, retirements, volunteer service, etc.). Before each issue we will advise, via our ListServ, the deadline for receipt of such information.

Longer articles and letters on topics of interest to the Queen's University staff community, or in response to Courier content, are also welcome. We ask you to contact the Business Administrator at the QUSA Office, so that a word limit can be agreed and space can be allocated.

Submissions must be original and signed. Opinions expressed are those of the writer. Please include your name, affiliation and phone number, and submit by email to: [qusa@queensu.ca](mailto:qusa@queensu.ca)

We reserve the right to edit submissions to address style, length and legal considerations. We also reserve the right to edit or reject any submission that does not comply with policy.