



Courier

Queen's University Staff Association

Est'd 1972

VOLUME: 5/08 – DECEMBER 2008



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2008/2009 EXECUTIVE Committee

(Term: July 1/08 – June 30/09)

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QUSA – Working for YOU!

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QUSA Standing Committee Updates

Salary and Benefits

The current three-year Salary and Benefits Agreement between QUSA and the University expires in June 2009. The QUSA Salary and Benefits Committee has been meeting bi-weekly since early August to prepare for upcoming discussions with Human Resources in relation to a new Agreement. Watch for our monthly updates through the QUSA ListServ.

Lori Rand, Chair

Grievance

The QUSA Grievance Committee met with the University Dispute Resolution Coordinator in mid-November to continue work on the draft document for an "internal Workplace Dispute Resolution" policy. The Committee agreed upon some updates and changes to the working document, and we hope to have another draft available for review before the end of the calendar year. Once a penultimate draft has been prepared, we will submit the document to Human Resources for discussion.

Peg Hauschildt, Chair

Membership

The QUSA Membership Committee met in November. We reviewed our membership base and found that, although this has changed, the numbers remain relatively the same. There have been some resignations but, at the same time, a number of new members have joined QUSA. The Committee agreed to review the various communications that are sent to members, and to review the member recruitment process with Human Resources.

Jane Dauncey and Tracy Elliott, Co-Chairs

Education

The Education Committee, in association with the KFL&A Health Unit, is excited to present a new program **Motiv8** over five Wednesday lunch hours (January 14 - February 11). Provided by health professionals, **Motiv8** covers physical activity, nutrition and behaviour change. The program is open to all QUSA members, up to a maximum of 20 participants. Watch the QUSA ListServ for sign-up information.

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Nominating

QUSA organized an election for the General Staff Member-at-Large position on the 2008-2009 Executive Committee that became vacant this fall. There were three candidates, and we are pleased that over 50% of our membership returned sealed ballots. Patti George was elected and you can read more about her on page 6. Thank you to our scrutineers Wanda Kay, Joan Knox and Judy Sakell.

Tracy Elliott, Chair



President's Report

by Spring Forsberg



A couple of weeks ago, while driving to work, I heard my first Christmas carol of the season. I love to sing along to the carols and have so many memories of singing in childhood choirs, especially standing beside the cute boy in high school and attempting to wow him with my ability to sing harmony. As a young mother I remember rocking my sons to sleep while singing "Away in the Manger" to them over and over again. One of my favourite Christmas carols is "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day". There were so many Sunday mornings when I sang that beautiful carol, standing beside my sisters and my mom and dad. It doesn't seem to matter how often I hear it – this carol always brings a tear to my eye. As a song of despair followed by hope, it has brought me comfort time and time again.

At this time, with an economic downturn nipping at our heels and disheartening news about budget deficits and cutbacks, I fear that many of us will be feeling the despair of this Christmas carol – but I am forever an optimist, and I know that there is hope. There is desire within the Administration to do things better and to look closely at areas that can be improved without cost to staff or faculty; there is an understanding that now is the time to review past practice and procedures to ensure that they continue to meet the objectives and goals of the University; and there is a desire for Queen's to continue to be an employer of excellence and provide competitive salary and benefits packages to its personnel.

I urge you to make yourself aware of the current discussions on campus. This is a time to get involved: to make suggestions about cost-savings; to remain up-to-date on issues that relate to staff such as the current union drive; to complete the Salary and Benefits Survey which you will be asked to complete in the new year; and to stay abreast of issues such as pension and the job evaluation system. All of these important issues are being addressed by the well-informed and experienced members of QUSA and the QUSA Executive.

Finally, a word of appreciation and congratulations to all those who are recipients of the 2008 Staff Awards! All staff members are honoured by your excellence and benefit from your exceptional reputations.

May you enjoy the holiday season that is upon us, and may 2009 bring much health, happiness and peace.

(Education Update *continued from page 2)*

This fall we hosted a session on Workplace Bullying presented by Dr. Jana Raver from the School of Business, and we organized two tours of the Agnes Etherington Art Gallery. Monthly book club meetings continue. Details of upcoming education sessions will be sent to members through the ListServ and will be posted on the QUSA website <http://www.queensu.ca/qusa/events.html>.



From Principal Williams December 2008

I would like to take this opportunity to offer Season's Greetings to all members of the Queen's community. Please accept my best wishes to you and your families for a happy and safe holiday season and a happy New Year.

The Queen's Pension Plan: Defining and Addressing Current Issues by Peg Hauschildt

As employees of Queen's University, we have one of the best privately-held registered pension plans (RPPs) in Canada. This is primarily due to the fact that, when we retire, we will have one of two monthly pension income options to choose from as follows:

Defined Contribution Option: This is often referred to as the "Money Purchase" option. At retirement, the University converts the contributions that were made into your plan by you and the University into a money purchase account, and calculates your monthly pension income using the assumptions that these contributions will earn 6% interest per annum and that you will live as long as the typical Queen's employee/retiree.

Defined Benefit Option: This is often referred to as the "Minimum Guarantee" option. At retirement, the University calculates your monthly pension income by taking the average of your best four years of earnings, multiplying that figure by your number of years of employment at Queen's, and then multiplying by 1.35% up to the Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings (YMPE) of the Canada Pension Plan and 1.80% for earnings in excess of the YMPE.

Depending upon your individual circumstances, you will choose the option that provides you with the higher monthly pension income. Generally, if you have worked at Queen's for more than 23 years, you will choose option A; if you have worked at Queen's for less than 23 years, you will choose option B. Option B enables employees who have not had an opportunity to work long-term at Queen's to retire with a guaranteed monthly pension income.

Over the last few decades the Queen's pension plan had maintained a healthy balance, due primarily to prudent investment strategies, strong workforce contributions, and modest interest rates. In recent years however, we have been hearing more and more about the mounting "unfunded liability" and wondering what this means for active plan members such as you and me. An unfunded liability occurs when the present assets in a pension plan cannot meet the plan's total obligations. In other words, the total obligations are the amounts of money the plan must have in it to pay every member (all retirees and active plan members) the amount they have in their money purchase accounts or their minimum guarantee (whichever is larger).

So, what has led to the rapidly increasing unfunded liability? Well, there isn't just one reason – in fact, there are a myriad of reasons that have been/are contributing to this problem, including the following:

We are living longer

Our average life spans have increased over the last few decades. Longer life spans mean that current retirees, whose monthly pension incomes were calculated using a shorter life span assumption, will outlive the length of time that their own contributed money (plus accumulations) will last. Hence, the pension plan will pay out more money for most of its current retirees than it received in employee and employer contributions (plus earnings on these contributions) during their years of service. This factor alone accounts for about 80% of the pension plan's current deficit.

Mid-1990's "contribution holiday"

In the 1990s, excellent investment returns resulted in a large surplus in our pension plan; hence, the decision was made to waive a small portion of the Queen's pension plan contributions for a period of

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(Pension Plan *continued from page 4)*

time and use the money saved from the “contribution holiday” to reduce the cuts that would otherwise have been made to Queen’s departmental budgets. To put this in perspective, our pension actuary has calculated that the \$15 million contribution holiday in the mid-1990s meant that the plan had approximately \$30 million less in it in 2006.

Lower investment returns/less growth

Interest rates have decreased significantly over the last five years, resulting in both (a) lower returns on our pension plan investments and less growth in our pension plan’s assets, and (b) a higher present value calculation for future retiree pension payment obligations. Essentially, this creates a “double whammy” as far as the pension plan’s deficit is concerned.

Lower interest rates

Employees who currently retire will have their monthly pension income calculated based on the assumption that their contributions will earn 6% interest per annum. In current economic times, this is harder to achieve.

“Non-reduction clause”

Our pension plan includes a “non-reduction clause” for any pensions that are currently being paid out. What this means is, if our investments do well and exceed the plan’s 6% benchmark (on a rolling four-year compound average basis), current pensioners will benefit from annual raises in their monthly pension income; however, if our investments do poorly, monthly pension incomes do not decrease for the current pensioners – the plan has to cover the difference. The recent global collapse in investments has caused the value of the plan’s assets to plummet beyond anything we could have ever anticipated, placing additional pressures on it. Parenthetically, only if the plan’s assets had been totally invested in Government of Canada bonds would this not have happened, but such an ultra-conservative, undiversified investment policy would not have allowed the plan to earn the high returns that it did in earlier years.

More may choose minimum guarantee option

As the investment returns on our pension contributions decrease, and our average life span increases, more employees will choose to retire with the minimum guarantee option (since the compound growth in the money purchase account assets from pension contributions will be less, yet have to cover a longer span of time). Minimum guarantees generally require monetary top-ups from the plan in order to provide the guaranteed minimum monthly income.

So, what can we do to improve the financial health of our pension plan and reduce the unfunded liability? Well, the University has stated that it will not make us, the current/active employees, responsible for the costs of financing the pensions of those who are already retired. But there still will not be enough money contributed to fund the pensions of future retirees. Since the University will at the very least still have to pay your minimum guarantee pension (indeed, it would even be paid if Queen’s University went bankrupt, although future pension increases would not be factored in), the money to do so will have to come out of future compensation packages, departmental budgets, and program funding.

Hence, we need to work out some revisions to our current plan to ensure that it will be sustainable on its own into the future. No group cares about a pension plan more than the stakeholders who are its direct beneficiaries, and over the past four years regular discussions have been held with the University Administration and the three main employee groups on campus (QUFA, QUSA, and CUPE) to understand the problems and propose some revisions. The proposals include: (a) increasing the contribution rates; (b) changing the assumptions that are used to calculate future monthly retirement

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(Pension Plan continued from page 5)

incomes; (c) including mortality adjustments in the calculation of annual pension increases; (d) capping the salary at which a minimum guarantee option is offered; (e) changing the pension packages for future employees to remove some of the volatility in our current plan; and (f) lobbying the federal government to allow us to make up our unfunded liability obligations over a longer period of time.

Understanding the issues and proposing changes take time, but I'm confident that the employee groups and the Administration will work together to ensure that all of us will have a healthy retirement income to look forward to in the future.

Peg Hauschildt is Departmental Manager of Physics, Engineering Physics and Astronomy; Vice-President of QUSA; and the staff representative on the Queen's Board of Trustees Pension Committee

Announcing ... Our New Member-at-Large

QUSA is pleased to welcome
Patti George
back to the Executive.



Patti works for the Department of Strategic Procurement Services. Since 1990 she has successfully juggled family, career, education and volunteer activities, and she is now in the final stages of completing the Certified Professional Purchaser accreditation program (C.P.P.). As the University's Senior Buyer, Patti has developed a reputation for managing and consulting on wide-ranging procurement strategies that may cover anything from the office environment, to teaching, to research-intensive laboratories. In her spare time she works as a volunteer with the Ontario Institute of Purchasing Management Association of Canada (OIPMAC). Patti has previously served on the QUSA Executive Committee (2005 - spring 2008), and she has found QUSA to be an effective voice in representing all staff with the Queen's Administration. With help and input from our members, Patti will make every effort to ensure that QUSA continues in its active campaign to improve the working environment for staff and to bring concerns to the Administration.

2008 Staff Awards

Tuesday, December 2 was designated "Staff Appreciation Day". Staff were treated to complimentary morning coffee and a Holiday Reception in Grant Hall hosted by the Principal. In commending all staff, Principal Williams characterized them as the "backbone" of the University. Congratulations to the 2008 Special Recognition for Staff Award Winners who received their awards on this occasion:

- ◆ **Christine Berga** – Office of the Principal
- ◆ **Heather Brennan** – Residences
- ◆ **Cathy Hitchins** – Medicine
- ◆ **Richard Hunt** – Anatomy/Cell Biology
- ◆ **Anne Richards** – Medicine
- ◆ **Peggy Watkin** – University Secretariat
- ◆ **Maureen Yearsley** – Libraries
- ◆ Geography Team:
John Bond, Joan Knox, Kathy Hoover, Sheila MacDonald, Sharon Mohammed, Mark Publicover



One of the 2008 Staff Award Winners **Peggy Watkin** (University Secretariat) with her twin daughters Kelly Watkin (left) and Kerri-Anne Garrah (right). Photo by Greg Black



The *Office Next Door* presents the ...

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering by Tom Harper

The Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) awarded its first Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering more than 100 years ago. In fact, as early as 1894 the University offered electrical engineering courses:

“A special series of experiments will be conducted for study of electricity, voltaic-electricity, magneto-electricity and magnetism and illustrations will be given, by means of various models and small machines, of this wonderful form of energy to telegraphy, telephony, electric lighting and the driving of machinery.”

(Course Description from the 1894-1895 Calendar)

Today, the ECE Department is housed in Walter Light Hall and currently has a complement of 26 faculty, ten cross-appointed faculty, ten support staff, 130 graduate students, and 200 undergraduate students.

ECE offers undergraduate degrees in both B.Sc. (Electrical Engineering) and B.Sc. (Computer Engineering). Both the **Electrical Engineering Program** and the **Computer Engineering Program** at Queen's University provide an excellent opportunity for undergraduate students wishing to pursue their



Photo of a typical ECE Departmental Social Event

technical studies and to earn a degree from a top-tier institution in order to prepare for exciting future careers in industry or academia. Students can benefit from unique and outstanding features in the ECE undergraduate programs, such as extended coverage of communications, signal processing, digital systems, and software, as well as superb laboratory equipment and experiences in courses that cover microwave and optical communication, robotics, electric machines, and power electronics.

In Graduate Studies our Department has excellent facilities for conducting state-of-the-art research in Communications; Microwave & Photonics;

Biomedical, Robotics & Control Engineering; Power Electronics; Software Engineering; and Computer Architecture. We offer graduate programs leading to degrees of Master of Engineering (M.Eng.), Master of Science (M.Sc.), Master of Science (Engineering) (M.Sc. (Eng.)) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.).

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Job Stats by Kelly Petrunka

Each year the Department of Human Resources presents the employment statistics to QUSA. Below is a synopsis of the 2007 statistics:

- ◆ 230 positions were posted: 87 (38%) were continuing and 143 (62%) were term.
- ◆ 86 (37%) positions were filled internally, 111 (48%) were filled externally and the 33 (15%) remaining positions were either in progress or withdrawn.
- ◆ There were 149 (65%) postings that received fewer than three internal applicants.
- ◆ 45% of the positions posted were between Salary Grades 3 and 6; 44% between Salary Grades 7 to 9; and 11% were between Salary Grades 10 to 14.
- ◆ Between 2001 and 2007, the overall number of postings has more than doubled from 105 to 230. This increase is largely due to reclassification of contract positions to term positions.
- ◆ Between 2001 and 2007, the percentage ratio between continuing and term positions has changed slightly. For example, in 2001, 53% of job postings were term, compared with 62% in 2007.

Our appreciation is extended to the Employment and Employee Relations Group, Human Resources for the provision of the above statistics.

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Research expenditures in the last fiscal year exceeded \$7.4 million. Our M.Sc., M.Sc. (Eng), and Ph.D. graduate students are fully funded by a combination of scholarships (external and internal), teaching assistantships and research assistantships.

ECE has frequently remained at the top of its field, spearheading new technology and top-of-the-line research. Faculty members have won numerous awards for their research, and the professors, drawn from across the globe, have gained international recognition.

The hard-working staff members of ECE keep the Department running smoothly. Our staff consists of Debie Fraser - Graduate Secretary, Tom Harper - Web Assistant, Bernice Ison - Graduate Assistant, Patty Jordan - Undergraduate Assistant, Anne McCormick - Senior Secretary, and Grier Owen - Research Administrator – all under the supervision of our Administrative Assistant, Kendra Pople-Easton.

Many things have changed over the years, but today's generation of faculty, staff, and students still strive to meet the challenges of today's "wired-world".

For more information and news stories on Queen's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering please visit our website at <http://www.ece.queensu.ca>.

Union Drive Information Reminder

A reminder that links to information on issues relating to the current staff union drive can be accessed from the "Other Links" page on the QUSA website:

<http://www.queensu.ca/qusa/other>

Fall QUSA General Meeting Report **by Sharon David**

The fall QUSA General Meeting was held on Tuesday, October 29, in Dupuis Auditorium. President Spring Forsberg opened the meeting and noted the similar theme between last year's talk on workplace security and this year's talk on financial security. Spring thanked Mark Publicover for his work as Vice-President and welcomed Peg Hauschildt as the new VP. Spring continued on to update us on QUSA's many current projects, such as the re-ignition of the job evaluation project. QUSA is moving forward with its goals, and we can soon expect a member survey to determine top issues of the members. On behalf of the Treasurer, Spring reviewed QUSA's financial report.

Our guest speaker was Dr. Tom Williams, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, who gave us a "Principal's Update". Principal Williams started by noting that he was asked to take on the Principal's job six months ago. Some of the adjectives he used to describe his experience with his position include exciting, exhausting, frustrating, and satisfying.

Principal Williams' five main priorities are:

- ◆ Stabilize the Queen's community
- ◆ Develop strategies for the operating budget
- ◆ Develop strategies for problems with the capital budget
- ◆ Strengthen relationships with the community
- ◆ Build relationships with stakeholders

With respect to stabilizing the Queen's community, Principal Williams feels we are back on track, and he is actively building relationships with the students. With respect to the budget problems, he stated that these have been an unexpected and challenging part of his job. Much of the reason for the current financial state of the University has been published in the Principal's report to the community on the financial challenges facing Queen's (<http://www.queensu.ca/principal/news/reportfiles.html>).

To summarize, the main problem is that we are spending more money than we are receiving. Principal Williams feels the current problems are **all problems that can be dealt with** and that, since it took longer than one year to get into this mess, it will take more than a year to get out of it. If we were to try and fix the problems within one year it would severely hurt the University. Therefore, he believes that thinking in terms of a three-year plan is best. While there will be budget cuts, a priority will be to protect people first and programs second. Principal Williams' three-year strategy will not affect the various units equally – some units will have bigger cuts than others. We also need University-wide approaches to save money or create income (i.e., rather than every PI making his/her own travel arrangements, we can decrease travel costs by enlisting a central company that gives us the best prices; or we can take advantage of a general supply company to handle all of the photocopying needs of the University).

Principal Williams concluded by asking us to give thought to ways that we can save money, and to email him at Principal@QueensU.ca if we have any ideas. He then answered questions from the floor. One question was asked about the possibility of salary cuts (i.e., taking a 1% cut) which he thought was plausible if a bargaining group offered to do so. Another question was raised about the pension plan and if there was going to be a plan for those of us who will be retiring down the road. He commented on how much the plan is costing the university right now because of the unfunded liability (currently at \$40 million), but he also assured us that there were no plans to discontinue the pension plan.

Thank you for your presentation, Principal Williams, and for answering our questions so openly.

The Lighter Side of Christmas **by Barbara Quesnel and Sharon David**

The holidays are a wonderful time to get together with loved ones near and far. It's a time for sharing and caring and eating and giving. But it can be a season of high financial costs, stress and weight gain for some, so we hope the following can help you enjoy the holiday season with ways to lighten some of the holiday burdens.

Reducing Costs

Once the gifts are all opened and the festive meals have been shared, many people are left worrying about how much they have spent on this very special, but remarkably short season. The many TV commercials about big-ticket items being ideal gifts can raise people's expectations and put incredible pressure on budgets. How can we cope with it all?

Planning ahead and taking advantage of sales can really help. It's helpful to make lists before going shopping, and the same lists can also help you to track spending and remember whom you've already bought for.

Speak up – chances are you are not the only one trying desperately to keep up with the Jones's. Mutually agree not to exchange with certain friends – they will probably be relieved. Explain to overly generous relatives and friends not to expect to receive their level of gifting in return. It's important to talk with kids about budgets and limits, and how every family budgets differently. Gift pools are great for families – drawing one relative each to buy for, or each person contributing towards a larger, more generous gift for someone from all of you.

Receiving an unexpected gift from someone seems to happen to everyone at some point. What you can do is have small gifts ready, such as a toy, a coffee gift basket or chocolates, or bath or candle items. You may end up not giving your "emergency" gifts to anyone. If you purchased them from stores with a good return policy you can return them after the holidays, or you can save them for other occasions.

Dollar stores, thrift stores and discount/liquidation stores are really great places to find Christmas ornaments, trims, dishes and baskets. Homemade baking, candies, crafts, decorations, and framed photos of loved ones really mean a lot, especially when given by children. Visit these websites for ideas:

Baking: <http://allrecipies.com/Recipes/Holidays-and-Events/Christmas/Baking/Main.aspx>

Candies: <http://www.joyofbaking.com/candy/candy.html>

Crafts: <http://www.allfreecrafts.com/christmas/index.shtml>

Budget: http://www.savvy-discounts.com/christmas_budget/contents_christmas_budget.htm#TOC_Section_7.2

and: http://greenliving.suite101.com/article.cfm/how_to_make_christmas_affordable

Holiday meals can cost a lot if you pay for everything yourself. Large parts of any festive meal are the side dishes, sauces and desserts. A suggestion is to make the meal a potluck affair. Most guests enjoy contributing a side dish or dessert, and it can make your get-together more festive and plentiful.

The great thing about turkey and ham is that you can make more meals out of the leftovers. Leftover meat can be used in casseroles, meat and vegetable pies, and many variations of sandwiches. Bones and skin make delicious stock for soups and stews. The following sites give recipe ideas:

http://www.cooks.com/rec/search/0,1-00,leftover_turkey,FF.html

<http://allrecipies.com/Recipes/Meat-and-Poultry/Turkey/Leftovers/Main.aspx>

<http://www.cooks.com/rec/search?q=leftover+ham>

<http://southernfood.about.com/cs/hamrecipes/a/hamrecipes.htm>

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General Staff Tuition Support Plan Update

by Spring Forsberg

Many of you will have noticed that, if you successfully applied for the fall Tuition Support payment, you received those funds early this year and they were included in your November pay. Thanks to those in Human Resources and Financial Services for ensuring that staff received this benefit prior to Christmas. Many staff members were grateful for this.

Once again this benefit has been extremely popular and available funds have been fully utilized with the fall payouts. Some subsidies from the Childcare Fund were transferred to the Tuition Support Plan, in order to ensure that each applicant received the publicized fall maximum \$2,000 amount.

At this time, as you financially plan for your dependent's winter term education costs, it is important that you be aware of the fact that, most likely, there will be insufficient funds to support a winter term General Staff Tuition Support payment. QUSA will be lobbying the Administration for additional funds to be injected into this plan for winter term. Further, based on the feedback provided in our upcoming survey, the Salary and Benefits Committee may be requesting that additional funds be available in future years. Please watch the QUSA ListServ notices for further updates.

(Lighter Side of Christmas continued from page 10)

Reducing Calories

Christmas can be an especially difficult time of year for those of us watching our waistlines. With all the holiday parties, dinners and endless goodies, how can we reduce the calories we eat during Christmas?

At holiday parties and dinners, remember portion size, eat slowly, and eat until slightly full. Choose the veggie and fruit platters over cake and cookies or spanakopita and quiche. Making people the focal point of social events instead of the food will help reduce overindulging. If you do overindulge, any weight gain can be lost by exercising and eating right. If you need some help to maintain your weight over the holidays why not participate in the KFL&A's Motiv8 Holiday Challenge (<http://www.kflapublichealth.ca/motiv8?HolidayChallenge.aspx>)? Or, catch the Motiv8 program in January and February in JDUC, presented by the QUSA Education Committee (see pages 2-3).

The January 2008 *Canadian Living* outlined some holiday cooking substitutions: instead of mashing potatoes with cream and butter, make them with low-fat or fat-free sour cream and 1% or skim milk (save 100 calories and 12 grams of fat); choose white turkey meat over dark and don't eat the skin (save 75 calories and 9 grams of fat); instead of white rolls with butter, serve small whole-wheat rolls without butter (save 200 calories); instead of regular eggnog, choose a low-fat variety, or add skim milk to lighten the regular eggnog; skip the whipping cream on dessert and choose a smaller portion. Visit the following websites for low-fat and healthy Christmas treat ideas:

<http://www.healthy-eating-made-easy.com/healthy-christmas-recipes.html>

http://www.eatingwell.com/recipes/collections/classic_christmas.html

<http://lowfatcooking.about.com/od/christmas/Christmas.htm>

<http://www.allfreecrafts.com/ebooks/HealthyChristmasEbook1.pdf>

<http://www.healthy-eating-made-easy.com/healthy-cake-recipes.html>

Reducing Stress

The holiday season can be very stressful with family gatherings and all those bills. The December 2007 *Courier* discussed family ways of surviving the holidays. To reduce stress, take time for you during the

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**Welcome
New
Members!**



- Cal Bowry** – Education
- Caroline Burke** – Surgery
- Nancy Chase** – Business
- Nancy Churchman** – ECE
- Marnie Girard** – Business
- Melissa Gunton** – Residences
- Katie Legere** – Human Resources
- James Medd** – Anesthesiology
- Kelly Shoemaker** – VP (Research)



*Congratulations and best wishes to **Bernice Ison** who is retiring after 34 years of dedicated service to Queen's, most recently as Graduate Assistant in the Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering.*

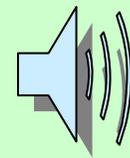
**Let's Hear
From You**

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.

**Contributors
Wanted for:**



- ◆ Announcements
- ◆ Bouquets
- ◆ Compassion in Action
- ◆ Sound-Offs
- ◆ Office Next Door
- ◆ Any other topic

(Lighter Side of Christmas continued from page 11)

holidays, exercise at the gym or go for a walk, laugh at some jokes, talk to a friend or a counsellor. Here are some relevant websites:

- Jokes: http://www.ahajokes.com/christmas_jokes.html
- Stress relief: <http://www.homemakers.com/homemakers/client/en/Home/DetailNews.asp?idNews=239571&bSearch=True>
- Counselling: <http://www.queensu.ca/eap>

Christmas is only one day of the year, and it is not wise to go into long-term debt for that one day. You want only fond memories of the holidays ... not financial remorse, high stress or excess weight as the memories.

Happy Holidays from the Courier Editors!

Holiday Help/March Break Camp

Let Queen's Athletics and Recreation look after your children while you holiday-shop! On offer is a day full of fun – swimming and games for children age 5 and up – on two Saturdays: December 13 OR December 20 – full days or half days. Registration is also open for the 2009 March Break Camp. For more details, and to register, visit the Athletics and Recreation website at www.gogaelsgo.com.



Announcements for staff members other than yourself require permission from the staff member concerned.

Submissions must be signed so information can be clarified with the writer, if necessary.