

ARC News

ARC's Bi-monthly Newsletter • Volume 2, Issue 2 • February 2011

Fridays at the ARC – with Doug

by Doug Creelman

Friday mornings at the Academic Retiree Centre are a special time to hang out, to have a cup of coffee, to enjoy the art – currently paintings by Scarborough English Department retiree Pat Vicari. Come to meet others, or chat with Doug Creelman, Past President of RALUT; it's his volunteer time at the ARC.



Have you been to the Academic Retiree Centre yet? Come check it out; come and use one of the computers in the carrel room. Enjoy coffee and cookies in the lounge. It may be inexpensive, but it's free. The Retiree Centre is easy to get to – just a block from the College subway station, only two doors down McCaul Street from the College streetcar. If you drive, and are lucky, you might find street parking on McCaul, or on the main UofT campus – off-street parking is available nearby.

It's at 256 McCaul, fourth floor, just follow the signs to 412. If you get lost just call – 416-978-7553.

Honours, Awards, and Significant Achievements

The Academic Retiree Centre is now calling for you to share your activities and achievements of the past year (January 1 through December 31, 2010) for inclusion in the *Senior Scholars Annual 2010*.

Formerly entitled *RALUT Publications and Honours*, the document is a compendium of publications, honours, awards, and other significant accomplishments of retired faculty and librarians of the University of Toronto. It is published jointly by Senior College and RALUT with assistance from the Academic Retiree Centre. The Annual is published as a PDF on the ARC website, and hard copies are forwarded to Principals, Deans, Directors and Chairs, and members of Governing Council.

Please send items for inclusion to retiree.honours@gmail.com.

ARC Work-Study

Appreciation Day: Friday,
March 4, 2:30-4pm

All are welcome to attend an informal reception to thank our seven Work-Study students (Tina, Madeha and Stephanie at ARC; Lakshi, Bavi, Naseem and Chen at Senior College) for their contributions, their hard work and their willing attitudes! Come and show your appreciation and convey your good wishes for their future success. Please RSVP to academic.retiree@utoronto.ca.

The Greening of ARC: A Call for Plants

by Madeha Batool, Work-Study Student

The Centre has room for up to ten small and six larger plants on its premises. Do you have surplus houseplants? All plants will receive regular watering and loving care. Please drop them off at the Centre during office hours.

Research tells us that office plants provide a healthy and likeable indoor environment. They filter toxins from and humidify the air; recommended density is one potted plant per 100 square feet of floor space. Many indoor tropical plants that are good at purifying the air originated in tropical climates. These plants live under the thick canopy in the tropical rainforest, and they are very good at processing the gases they need to survive. This makes them good candidates for cleaning indoor air.

Why Go Green?

- Green is life. Abundant in nature, green signifies **growth, renewal, health, and environment**.
- Green is a **restful** colour with some of the same **calming** attributes of blue.
- Researchers have also found that green can **improve reading ability**. Some students may find that laying a transparent sheet of green paper over reading material increases reading speed and comprehension.
- Green is a cool color that symbolizes **nature** and the **natural world**.

- Green is thought to **relieve stress** and **help heal**. Those who have a green work environment experience fewer stomachaches.

Dr Bill Wolverton, a former NASA scientist who conducted 25 years of research on indoor plants and their ability to purify air in enclosed environments, wrote the book *How to Grow Fresh Air* (Penguin, 1997) which describes 50 plants that clean office air.



These plants include:

- Corn plant (*Dracaena Massangeana*)
- English Ivy (*Hedera helix*)
- Gerbera daisies (*Gerbera jamesonii*)
- Golden pothos (*Epipremnum aureum*)
- Madagascar Dragon Tree (*Dracaena*)
- Peace Lily (*Spathiphyllum*)
- Rubber plant (*Ficus elastica*)
- Spider plant (*Chlorophytum comosum*)
- Sword or Boston fern (*Nephrolepis exaltata*)
- Weeping fig (*Ficus benjamina*)

Consider donating a low-maintenance plant to ARC: help keep the retiree centre air healthy for everyone, and the environment green and growing.

An Open Letter to Retired Professors from a Venue of the ARC Speakers Bureau

Dear Professors,

Re: Lectures by Retired Professors at Deer Park Library

My name is Anna Tharyan and I put together programmes for older adults at the library.

Deer Park library would truly appreciate a series of lectures and seminars given by retired professors a few times a year in the Arts and Sciences.

The Deer Park branch of the Toronto Public Library is situated close to the corner of Yonge and St. Clair, an area with a large ageing population of well educated people who wish to be part of an intellectually challenging community and so look to their local library for ongoing stimulating programmes.

The programmes that we offer at the library are truly appreciated and well attended. We have unique programmes like the Classics Books Club where we read aloud Virgil, Homer, Shakespeare and the Classics Book Discussion groups and the Novella groups. These are run by librarians but to keep the public constantly engaged we would like to offer a regular series of lectures by retired university professors.

Recent studies have shown the importance of keeping the ageing mind active and engaged by pursuing knowledge and attending intellectually motivating courses. The readers in the

Deer Park community often live alone on a pension and would like to connect with others in the area through active learning.

The library provides the ideal opportunity to connect professors with expertise with those who have a passion for learning. Professors can thus share their knowledge with older appreciative students who are rediscovering the joys of unfettered learning. The grateful student is exposed to high calibre lectures on a broad range of topics to which they would not otherwise have access.



Therefore if at all possible, it would be greatly appreciated if professors could volunteer one and a half hours of their time once a year to give a lecture at the library. It would make many older adults very happy.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Thank you.

*Anna Tharyan
Adult Librarian
Deer Park Library
40 St. Clair Ave E.
Toronto M4T 1M9
Ph: 416-393-7658
Email: atharyan@torontopubliclibrary.ca*

ARC Speakers Bureau

➔ If you are willing to be a member of the ARC Speakers Bureau, please email academic.retiree@utoronto.ca, indicating (1) Your name and phone number(s) (2) A brief description (keywords) of your fields of interest, indicating some of the topics on which you wish to speak (3) Any restrictions regarding your availability—such as days of the week or times during the year.



Point of Prevention

J.D. Stewart MD HonBSc DECH CCFP MACOEM

Toward a Context for Understanding Vitamins

The full name is “essential Vitamins” as they are essential for life, our continued existence. You may easily recall the so-called disease, scurvy, classically remembered as commonly affecting the early sailors on long journeys. Few will recall that it is a fatal condition, not just a nuisance. Even fewer will recall the symptoms that were well described by ship’s doctors with one of the most dramatic being the breakdown of old healed wounds that taught us that scar tissue requires a constant supply of vitamin C to remain intact. Almost everyone knows that it is the result of a complete dietary absence of vitamin C.

Pellagra, another fatal disease the result of dietary absence primarily of vitamin B3, niacin, is another example that is recalled by almost no one in this century, it was known as the disease of the three Ds: dementia, diarrhea and death. The poor were the exclusive victims as it was found later to be a complete dependence on corn as a ‘grain’. Poor farmers would sell the higher profit grains, such as wheat and oats, subsisting on corn that was missing bio-available vitamin B3, indigenous peoples did not have the disorder as they treated their corn with lime juice that overcame the problem, but the purpose of this preparation was lost on new settlers.

There were special “Pellagra Hospitals” to isolate the ill as it was first believed this was an infectious disease. These hospitals to save money continued unknowingly to serve corn as the exclusive grain to the patients. The mystery at the time was how come none of the hospital staff ever contracted this infectious disease, until a Physician in New England noted the marked dietary differences between hospital staff and the patients. It was first thought that there was “something protective” in the other grains, so they began feeding wheat and oats to the patients who all recovered. It was many years before the reality was understood.

The other reason for calling them “essential” is that human bodies do not have the molecular machinery to make even small amounts. Now a word about the so-called vitamin D that is more accurately hormone D as we make it in our skin with the help of a particular wavelength of

sunlight.

In many instances vitamins act as catalysts that markedly speed up the rate of a reaction or reactions that is their presence at the molecular level allows the conversion of one molecule to another at a significantly faster rate. Some, if not all of these rates must be maintained at a given level for a tissue to be maintained. Without the presence of sufficient amounts of the vitamin the rate of conversion one molecule to another drops below the critical level required to sustain that tissue or tissues, resulting in dysfunction/disease and at times death.

What is the ingested amount that will prevent disease in a particular individual is currently not definable with precision and further, what is the level that will contribute to optimal health/performance is even less definable. The US and Canada took years to change healthy food/vitamin guides from levels that would just prevent disease to guides that were in the direction of optimal health.

In truth there is a real problem with food guides in that there is an unstated assumption that all of the vitamins contained in the food will be 100% absorbed. This is clearly not true even if the food is prepared in the same way for everyone. We all vary from one individual to another in our capacity to absorb vitamins and other nutrients that depend in part on how a food is prepared and on a myriad of known and yet to be discovered factors that can act alone or in conjunction with others. Iron is an important nutrient in point. The presence of other compounds particularly vitamin C in the gut at the same time as the iron is known to affect the amount absorbed.

A critical point in understanding vitamin absorption, it is, as with many other nutrients not a passive process but involves complex cell membrane and intracellular mechanisms. As I said in a previous article it is more useful to think of vitamin preparations as “nutritional insurance,” not “supplements.” The argument being that if you provide a little more vitamin than is in your food while assuming that one’s daily consumption contains vitamin amounts at least close to optimal levels then, as we do not expect 100% absorption from the food, it follows that the added vitamins will boost the total absorption to more healthy/optimal levels. A further point is that you are also not likely to absorb all of the vitamins in the tablets.

Finally, the primary or essential difference between studies done at the level of the whole

organism, as compared with studies done at the molecular level is that populations of people represent a very large number of what are called confounding variables, that as most of you know results in studies at this level often result in contradictory results. This is certainly manifest in the studies of vitamin/hormone D that show clear effects on the repair of our DNA and the speed of antibody replication at the molecular level, while so far population studies have been interpreted as equivocal.

More detailed examination of each of the vitamin groups will follow now that a background context has been presented.

The Linda Hutcheon Graduate Scholarship Fund

The Department of English and the Centre for Comparative Literature recently honoured University Professor Emeritus Linda Hutcheon's dedication to excellence in scholarship and teaching with the creation of the Linda Hutcheon Graduate Scholarship Fund. Set up as a surprise for Linda by both the Department of English and the Centre for Comparative Literature in October 2010, its announcement to coincide with the presentation to Linda of the prestigious Canada Council Molson Prize, the Department and the Centre examined several options before choosing a scholarship for graduate students as the most fitting [tribute](#) to Linda's distinguished contributions to literary theory and comparative studies.

Donations are being requested on both the Department of English and the Centre for Comparative Literature's web sites, as the scholarship has not yet been fully funded. To date, many donations, small and large, have been received, from a variety of sources including faculty, staff, alumni, and former students of Linda's. The response has been very enthusiastic, reflecting the high regard in which Linda is held.

The scholarship is to be awarded to an incoming PhD student in English or Comparative Literature working in the areas of contemporary literature, theory, or interdisciplinary approaches to literature. The student recipient will alternate between units annually.

If you would like to donate to the Linda Hutcheon Graduate Scholarship fund, it is possible to make an on-line contribution at either: <https://donate.utoronto.ca/english> or <https://donate.utoronto.ca/give/show/76>.

ARC Volunteer Profile: Ke Kiana Xu

by Tina Baoukian, Work-Study Student

Ke Kiana Xu was born and raised in Shanghai, China but has lived in Toronto for the past three years. During her younger school days she lived with her grandparents in downtown Shanghai to attain a better education than she would have had access to if she had lived in the suburbs with her parents. Kiana's grandparents are both retired professors at Donghua University in Shanghai; her grandfather taught electronic engineering, while her grandmother taught mechanical engineering.

As a young child, Kiana would visit her grandparents at their place of work every afternoon after school. Once they retired, however, she began visiting them at the centre for retired professors and other university alumni where they continued their research and work in engineering while maintaining relations with their colleagues and friends.

This was what initially sparked her interest in volunteering at ARC here in Toronto, upon finding ARC through the U of T Career Centre website.

Kiana is currently in her third year of university and is enrolled in Rotman's Bachelor of Commerce program, specializing in finance and economics.

She enjoys volunteering at ARC every Wednesday afternoon. She is reliable and hardworking, and always ready with a friendly smile.

Thanks Kiana!

Meet The Artist: Patricia Vicari



ARC hosted a Meet The Artist reception for Patricia on the afternoon of Friday, January 14.

It was a warm and friendly, diverse gathering of connections ranging from academics to colleagues from the world of art, as well as personal friends and generally interested art lovers.

Peter Russell, Co-Chair of ARC's Board of Management, spoke briefly, thanking Patricia for her contribution and welcoming all to the Centre. Patricia responded graciously, sharing a memorable anecdote about the watercolour painting "Sweet Spot."

Patricia Vicari's exhibit, *Visual Forays 2000-2010*, continues at ARC until March 31, 2011. The show includes ten original works. Media include watercolour, acrylic, and glass beads.



*Rain Dance by Patricia Vicari
Acrylic and Glass Beads*

All are invited to drop in and view the exhibit. Comments in the guest book are most appreciated! The works are all for sale through the artist directly; prices range from \$125 to \$450. We hope to see you here soon!



ART WANTED!



- Submissions can be made by email and will be approved on an ongoing basis throughout the year for showing periods of one to four months
- To apply for an exhibit, email a maximum of seven jpg image(s) of your work to academic.retiree@utoronto.ca with the subject heading *ARC Art Submissions*
- Include your name, phone number, short biography, titles of works, dimensions, and media.

Senior College

The University of Toronto's Senior College supports and fosters the scholarly, professional and creative activities of retired faculty, librarians and senior administrators. Its mission is to serve as a beacon for intellectual exchange, academic and cultural activities for collegial interaction among members of the university's retiree community.

Senior College currently has 85 Fellows and is enjoying its second year of weekly programs. Please check the websites for more details:

<http://www.faculty.utoronto.ca/arc/college.htm>.

OR

<http://sites.google.com/site/seniorcollegecommunications/>

Senior College accepts membership applications in two categories: (1) Fellow or (2) Registered Member. The membership year begins in January.

For more information, contact Senior College at (416) 978-7553 or senior.college@utoronto.ca.

Why Become a Fellow of Senior College?

- ✓ Add a new dimension to your retirement
- ✓ Meet a variety of people you wouldn't otherwise encounter
- ✓ Open your eyes to new scholarly perspectives

Senior College's Coming Programs at the Faculty Club, 41 Willcocks St.

Wednesday, February 16, 3-5pm

Peter Russell

"Getting Ready for Another Hung Parliament"

Wednesday, March 2, 3-5pm

Timothy McGee

"Music and Ceremony in Florence at the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent"
(Chair, David Beach)

Wednesday, March 9, 3-5pm

Peter Hajnal, Don Brean

"Outlook for G20/G8:
Past, Present, Possible Future"

Wednesday, March 16, 3-5pm

Germaine Warkentin

"Letters, Glyphs and Wampum:
Reading *What* in the Brain?"
(Chair, Suzanne Hidi)

Wednesday, March 23, 3-5pm

Janice Stein

"Analysis of Israel-Palestine Peace Process"
(Chair, Peter Russell)

Wednesday, March 30, 3-5pm

Suzanne Hidi

"Rewards, Competition and Cooperation: Linking
Psychological Research of Motivation with
Neuroscientific Investigations of the Brain"

Please RSVP Online for all Senior College Programs:

<http://www.faculty.utoronto.ca/arc/college/RSVP.htm>

**RSVP NOW
FOR THE 6TH ANNUAL
SENIOR COLLEGE
SYMPOSIUM:**

Tuesday, April 5, 9:30am-3:30pm

"Immigration and Multiculturalism"

\$30 per person includes lunch.

RSVP online by March 31.

On The ARC Shelves?

Do you have a spare copy of a recent publication? Consider donating it to ARC for the Retiree Publications Shelves. Please sign your donation first!

<http://www.faculty.utoronto.ca/arc/Shelves.htm>

Credit Due

ARC operates with much community effort and support, and gratefully acknowledges with thanks:

- ✓ **Doug Creelman** and **John David Stewart** for assistance in hanging Patricia Vicari's art exhibit.
- ✓ **Tina Baoukian, Stephanie Friel** and **Madeha Batool** for extraordinary assistance at January 14th's Meet The Artist reception.
- ✓ **Rick Hayward** for lending his technical expertise to printer setup.
- ✓ **RALUT** for a 10' extension cord.
- ✓ **RALUT** for stocking the kitchen with coffee, tea, sugar and milk on an ongoing basis.

The Academic Retiree Centre (ARC)

ARC has comfortable study carrels, secure lockers, and a kitchenette. It's a friendly and comfortable space. Keep in touch by *subscribing to our listserv*: email academic.retiree@utoronto.ca.



ARC Board of Management

Chair: Edith Hillan, Vice-Provost, Faculty & Academic Life

Co-Chair: Peter Russell, University Professor Emeritus, Political Science

David Cook, Principal, Victoria College

John Dirks, President and Scientific Director, The Gairdner Foundation; Professor Emeritus of Medicine

Sara-Jane Finlay, Director, Faculty & Academic Life

Esme Fuller-Thomson, Associate Professor, cross-appointed to faculties of Social Work, Medicine and Nursing

George Luste, President, University of Toronto Faculty Association

Marian Press, Academic Librarian, OISE Library

Jack Stevenson, President, RALUT

TBA, Retired Librarian, University of Toronto Library

Staff

Pat Doherty, Administrator

Work-Study Students

Stephanie Friel, Tina Baoukian, Madeha Batool

Volunteers

Douglas Creelman, Rick Hayward, Alexander Ma, John David Stewart, Mary Vohryzek, Ke Kiana Xu.

ARCNews Submissions

To submit items for publication in ARCNews, forward to Pat Doherty, editor, at academic.retiree@utoronto.ca.

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- October
- December
- February
- April
- June
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All issues of ARCNews are available online at <http://www.faculty.utoronto.ca/arc>.

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