

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

UWRA AGM

MAY 18, 2016

The conclusion of my second term as UWRA President has arrived with amazing speed and we find ourselves, once again, at our Annual General Meeting. This year, we are holding it at the University Club, where we have also held our monthly Board meetings. Our thanks go to Gary Molson and Leslie Schaefer for their excellent hospitality over this past year.

During my run as President, it has become increasingly obvious to me that the success of our organization has come as a result of the diligent work and inventiveness of our Board members, as opposed to what I contribute. Their dedication and willingness to work under time limitations and other constraints is truly marvelous! They are the ones that keep this ship afloat and I thank them for it!

Some of the areas in which we have been working this past year are:

Constitution: Our UWRA Constitution has been in need of updating for some time, as the UWRA has evolved over the years and our methods of operation have gradually crept beyond the boundaries as described in the document. The task of bringing the Constitution more in line with the needs of the Board was given to Alan George and he immediately formed a committee to deal with the challenge. The results of their work were published in the Spring 2016 WATtimes, to afford our members the opportunity to review the changes, before voting approval today. Excellent job, Alan!

“ticketfi”: Since the founding of the UWRA, we have been asking our members to pay by cheque or cash when acquiring our services such as memberships, luncheons, tours, etc. This has been inconvenient for many, and now, a solution has arrived in the form of “ticketfi”, a local company located in the Tannery building in downtown Kitchener. They provide a booking service for events and we have begun using their service to allow our members to book and pay for events and memberships online, using a credit card on the ticketfi secure web site. UWRA is charged a small fee for each transaction, but our members save on postal and cheque charges. Members without computers will still be able to conduct business using cheques and the mail. Soon, we expect that all our services will be available on ticketfi. Incidentally, UW is an enthusiastic user of ticketfi. Thanks to Hazel Kennedy, our web master, for setting up this new service.

Pension & Benefits Committee: Earlier this year, the UW administration presented a proposal to change the way our pension assets would be managed. This change would transfer the responsibility of investment decisions from the P&B Committee to the Finance & Investment Committee, thereby eliminating input from the employee groups, as well as retirees. In response, representatives from the employee groups and retirees (the stakeholders), organized a meeting with the UW President and Provost to express our concerns with this proposal. From the meeting, President Hamdullahpur has

given us his assurance that the administration will not take any recommendations regarding pension plan governance to the Board of Governors without support from both the stakeholders and the administration. At the time, we sent out a communication to our members via email, reflecting this outcome. At this time of writing, we have had no further communications from the administration.

Board Members: Over the past two years, we have said and are saying, goodbye to a number of our longer-standing Board members. Although there is a tinge of sadness to see old friends leave us, there is also the happiness in welcoming new folks on board. In recent months, we have been fortunate to have Paul Eagles and Jim Marshall join us as mid-term appointments. And now, we have Mary Thompson and Ken McLaughlin added to the list of nominees for our 2016-17 Board. All four of these people have long associations with UW and their contributions to our association will be most valued and appreciated!

Looking ahead: Considering our Board member turnover this year, our greatest need at the moment is to find a new editor for WATtimes and a new coordinator for coach tours. These positions are actually less daunting than they may seem! If you are interested in either of these positions, please let us know. We are an easy-going and pleasant group to work with and welcome your interest! In the meantime, we will be busy orienting our new Board members and offering our usual social events and outings for your enjoyment! Please join us!

To finish off, I would like to thank all our Board members for their never-ending contributions and you, our members, for keeping UWRA as a part of your retirement! It has been an enjoyable journey for me and I look forward to spending more time on the Board(in a more relaxed manner), as Past-President.

Have a safe and happy summer, everyone!

Terry Weldon

President, UWRA