



"The Voice for Ontario CAAT Retirees"

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

OCRA™ 8TH GENERAL MEETING MOHAWK COLLEGE, HAMILTON OCTOBER 28, 2010

Since OCRA's last general meeting at Fleming College in 2009, your Association has been active in several areas. Today I want to talk briefly about three of them. They are advocacy, benefits and pensions.

Advocacy

OCRA continues to develop, establish and maintain liaison with those who are responsible for matters that affect retirees.

In January 2010, the **Committee of College Presidents** received OCRA's brief recommending true retiree representation on advisory committees such as those pertaining to retiree health benefits and pension. Currently, active employees of OPSEU and OCASA appoint retirees to committees of the Pension Plan and to the retirees' health committee of the Council. You and I as retirees have no required input as to who is nominated or appointed. A separate advisory committee, like we recommended in our brief to the Committee of Presidents, would give retirees an opportunity to provide formal input to committees of the Pension Plan and the Council. This paper was the result of work by OCRA directors Anita Blair, Jim Martin and Bill Totten from the St. Clair Retirees' Association in Windsor. They drafted the initial brief and OCRA Board directors provided additional input to the final document. OCRA will keep you posted as this unfolds.

Advocacy results in an increase to OCRA's profile, and more awareness of what we do for community college retirees. I want to mention three recent meetings that I believe increased understanding of OCRA. On May 10, the **Durham College Retirees' Association** invited me to speak at their annual general meeting. I talked about inflation protection and the CAAT Pension, retiree representation and advisory committees and building membership. It was a pleasure to speak to such an attentive and welcoming group.

On May 19, I was invited to make a presentation at the **CURAC** Conference (the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada) held at York University this year. I talked about the issues OCRA is dealing with including the pension indexing concerns we are monitoring closely. It was very worthwhile to make contact with retirees from across Canada to hear about their issues and their solutions. I am grateful to Joan Cunningham, OCRA's Communications Officer, who coordinated OCRA's participation in the CURAC Conference.

On August 24 I met with Executive Director Diane Posterski of **OCASA** (Ontario Colleges Administrative Staff Association) to discuss ways in which OCRA and OCASA can work together. We had a good discussion and I look forward to continuing to build rapport with OCASA.

OCRA has created a **PowerPoint presentation** thanks to the talents of director Bill Totten. The presentation explains what OCRA stands for, what it has already accomplished and what we are trying to do in the future. If you would like someone from OCRA to speak to your local association or to your college administrators about OCRA, please let me know. OCRA also offers assistance to college retirees who would like help in establishing an association.

Benefits

The former College Compensation and Appointments Council has been renamed and is now the College Employer Council. OCRA is in regular communication with the Council regarding health benefits. It is the policyholder for the colleges' group insurance health plans currently with Sun Life. As I mentioned earlier the Council has an advisory committee for retirees' group insurance appointed by OPSEU and OCASA. However, OCRA has established a good rapport with Council and continues to alert them to issues of concern to CAAT retirees. OCRA newsletters provide updates on health related issues with information that has been verified by the Council.

Those of you who did not keep your health benefit coverage with the college when you retired, will be interested in the recent **comparison of health benefit plans** written by Joan Cunningham, OCRA Communications Officer. You can request a copy from Joan by email. Her email address is communications@ocraretirees.ca

Pensions

The pension indexing issue has been a major issue for OCRA this year. The CAAT Pension plan's Funding Review Committee is considering ending indexing after 2014 for pre-1992 years of service.

OCRA expressed our concern to Derek Dobson, CEO of the CAAT Pension Plan and alerted our members via a bulletin in June. The response from retirees has been impressive. There have been many phone calls and emails from retirees with personal comments on how the ending of indexing for pre-1992 service could affect them. Derek Dobson said he would share their comments with the Funding Review Committee.

OCRA has contacted local retiree associations, OPSEU, OCASA, the sponsors and trustees of the CAAT Pension Plan and college presidents telling them how this potential loss of income would affect the oldest group of retirees with the smallest pensions. Local retiree associations have been supportive in forwarding our message to all their retirees including those who may not be members of OCRA.

This afternoon Derek Dobson will be making a presentation about the CAAT Pension Plan and we are looking forward to his remarks.

Website

I would urge you to keep up-to-date with CAAT retiree news by visiting the **OCRA website** at www.ocraretirees.ca There is a wealth of very useful information on the site. For example – if you need contact names, phone numbers or email IDs for a CAAT retiree related issue, you will find that information on the OCRA website. Scroll down to Contact Information and Definitions. Derrick May, OCRA Past President regularly updates this document, and welcomes input from members.

The reports and presentations you heard today will be posted on the OCRA website after today's meeting.

I am personally grateful for the outstanding work of OCRA Board members. They have volunteered their time, expertise and commitment to ensure OCRA does its best on behalf of CAAT retirees. With your support we will continue to move forward.

Linda Choptiany
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