State of the Union: 
The President’s Report

It is interesting that, despite the seemingly unending winter, the second semester always seems to fly by. This year is no exception. The Association Executive and Committees have been hard at work assuring that the current Collective Agreement is upheld and preparing to negotiate a new one.

On December 22 the Association filed a major grievance in response to an occurrence at the Atlantic Veterinary College the previous week. On December 17 the Dean of AVC distributed a deeply flawed “Equity and Succession Planning Distribution of Effort” document. This document (which was released without prior consultation with the Association), would require Members in that Faculty to self-report, in handy “work effort (WE) units”, effort in teaching, service, and scholarly activity, thus equating teaching and clinical service workload with research “effort.” The result would be an overall WE rating for each Faculty Member, to be used as part of their formative (!) annual review, and to help the College with succession planning.

The grievance identified a whopping 11 Collective Agreement violations (surely a record) beginning with the failure to respect the Association’s role as “sole and exclusive bargaining agent”, and including violations of academic freedom and the processes around faculty review, tenure and promotion. Perhaps most egregious to me was the suggestion that all of this is somehow required by the Collective Agreement, and the misappropriation of the concept of Equity to justify a process that is decidedly not equitable. Our grievance team has been working diligently with the Employer to resolve this situation and to ensure that our Collective Agreement rights are upheld.

In November you, the Membership, approved a set of bargaining positions that will guide the Executive and the Bargaining Team throughout negotiations. The team and the Executive have been busy writing and approving language to help us achieve those positions.
As we reported to the Membership, on January 7 the Employer served notice to the Association of their intent to open negotiations, and informed us that they had engaged, as Chief Negotiator, a lawyer from off-island who is well known for his aggressive tactics. This individual has served as chief negotiator for the Employer at a number of other Universities including Mount Allison University, where Faculty were pushed into a strike that did not lead to a settlement, and where a settlement has only now been reached following a long arbitration process. Estimates of legal fees paid by the Employer for those negotiations have now reached close to a million dollars!

As we have suggested, it is highly unusual in the Canadian academic context (and unprecedented at UPEI) for the Employer to open negotiations. However, our team is experienced and will represent us well at the table. Our Chief Negotiator reports that the meetings of the teams have been productive and constructive. The teams have agreed to protocols for negotiations, have exchanged a request for information and a response to that request, and both the Board and the Association have opened the Articles to be negotiated and have offered initial proposals. The teams have set a number of dates through to the end of April for negotiations for both bargaining units of the Association. It is expected that negotiations of Pension will take place simultaneously at a separate table with all four campus unions, as has become accepted practice at UPEI.

As we enter negotiations, I have heard stories of fear-mongering in certain faculties, in particular around the status of the pension plan. Let me assure you that while the Association is committed to negotiating at the table, and not in public, we will certainly keep members informed as we progress towards a negotiated settlement.

You can look forward to a Negotiations Bulletin, intended for Members only, in March. As this busy winter term transitions into what is likely to be an even busier spring, I am hopeful that we will be able to report to you that we have made significant progress towards our goal of a fair and equitable workplace for all of our Members.

With all this seriousness going on, it is more important than ever that we come together in a more social environment. At the FA time on March 11, we honoured special guests FA Gold Medal winner, Megan George, Silver Medal winner, Christiana Tweedy, and Bronze Medal winner, Hannah Dawson and the recipients of the FA Entrance Scholarships -- Kylee Wallace from Westisle Composite High School and Holly Studzinski from Morell Regional High School.

Make sure you have in your calendar the next FA Coffee Time on March 30 and the AGM on April 21, where we will update on Association activities, including negotiations, and elect Members to serve for the coming year on Executive and our various Committees. And, if you are fortunate enough to receive a phone call from one of us in the next few weeks, please consider accepting a nomination to serve on one of our committees – it is only with the involvement of Members like you that we can do the work that keeps the Association active and effective. Better yet – consider nominating yourself or a colleague.

Plan also to attend the annual Faculty Recognition Night in May, where we will be honouring the recipients of the Hessian Teaching Awards, the Scholarly Achievement Award, and the brand-new Merit Award for Outstanding Service.

Nola Etkin, President
**UPEI and the Canada Revenue Agency**

As Faculties and Departments face yet another round of budget cuts, as programs that have been have been hallmarks of the University feel the pinch yet again, and as we prepare to enter a new round of contract negotiations, why not take a minute to check out UPEI’s financial situation?

As a registered charity, the University’s tax returns are publicly available through the Canada Revenue Agency’s website. Search for the “University of Prince Edward Island” under the “Charities Search” at http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/menu-eng.html and a lot of it!—in order to bring all of us the best contract they can. And so, I hope I speak for all of us in the FA when I express my unconditional support and appreciation to the FA negotiating team, and my unwavering belief in you all. I, we, know what you’re doing for us, and we’ve got your back!

Thank you!

Ann Braithwaite,
Professor and Coordinator, DSJS

---

**Letter to the editor**

**Support for our negotiating team**

As we all know, our negotiating team has begun its work, having been contacted by the employer’s team in January to open up this round of bargaining for a new Collective Agreement. We also all know, or should know, how many hours this process will take: the work that goes into preparing positions, meeting with the other team, caucusing with our own team, handling questions and queries from the FA Executive—oh, and continuing their other jobs, the ones they were hired to do, of teaching and researching (and all members of our negotiating team are teaching a full load this semester). I’m sure they have other things they could be doing with this time—other projects to work on, students to advise and mentor and work with, organizations and committees to contribute to, families and friends and animals to spend time with. The members of our team are not professional negotiators or expensive lawyers (paid for out of University funds/public monies) to do the work of negotiating for the rest of us; they are our Faculty colleagues and friends, volunteering their time—

---

**An Interview with UPEIIFA**

**Past President, Betty Jeffery**

by Malcolm Murray

Betty Jeffery was first elected to the Executive Committee as a Member-at-Large in 2005. She served in that role for three years. Next, Betty was elected as Vice-President and she kept that position for a further three years. She was then elected President in 2011, a responsibility she held for four years. While a Member-at-Large, she became Chair of the Communications Committee and maintained that role during her terms as Vice-President and President. Apart from all that, she was our Chief Grievance Officer from 2011 to 2015. Currently serving as Past President, Betty is in her eleventh year on the Executive Committee.

I briefly stole Betty away from her work to ask a few questions about her time with the FA.

**MM:** Why did you first get involved in the Faculty Association?

**BJ:** I’ve always believed in actively contributing to any group of which I am a member. I was involved with the union at Acadia University before coming to UPEI. A few years after my arrival here, our Association certified, and I began to be involved in the UPEIFA. I decided to run for a position on the Executive when I witnessed and experienced some unfair actions (and inactions) of the Employer which negatively affected individuals and hurt the University. I wanted to try to do my bit to help.
MM: Thank you. We are fortunate to have a lot of very active members, yet many more people out there would also be excellent contributors. How do you think we can get them involved in FA business?

BJ: Many of our Members are involved in some way. For some, that translates into attending general meetings and social activities. That is great—it shows interest in the Association. For many others, the involvement is through serving on one of our committees, ad hoc working groups, or as a communication rep or as a grievance officer. Perhaps encouraging people to turn out for general meetings and social activities can be a first step to some of those individuals taking the next step in FA involvement. Before I played any formal role in the Association, I certainly attended every general meeting. I will say that the position of FA President was never one that I had aspired to or even thought I would find myself in, and probably the majority of Members feel the same way about themselves. However, it was a wonderful, rewarding experience—one which I never regretted taking on. Besides being in a position to make a difference, it was an opportunity to work with, and get to know, many great individuals, certainly within the UPEIFA Membership, but also leaders from the other on-campus unions, leaders from other post-secondary unions across the country, CAUT staff, and even some UPEI administrators. I would encourage individuals to become involved in the Association, including running for elected positions, to become as knowledgeable as possible about issues affecting the Membership of the Faculty Association. I might put a plug in here. As Past President, I chair the Nominating Committee. When the call for nominations is issued next month, please consider stepping up to run for a position on the Executive Committee or one of the other five standing committees. Or actively persuade one of your colleagues to do so.

MM: What traits do you think are most needed to govern the FA?

BJ: I’ve served on the Executive with three other UPEIFA Presidents, and have also come to know other FA Presidents elsewhere in the Atlantic Provinces and, indeed, across the country. I think that the very best of those FA Presidents embody the following: listening skills, communication and interpersonal skills, organizational skills, time management skills, prioritization skills, analytical skills, and counseling skills. The person must demonstrate empathy, respect, perseverance, and commitment, and be honest, trustworthy, and patient. S/he must possess integrity, a sound sense of judgment, and a sense of fairness, and have the ability to get people to work together. I would mention that the work in which the FA engages is very much dependent on team efforts, and I was very fortunate to work with some great individuals. I also believe that humour and common sense are invaluable assets.

MM: Which do you think the FA represents most: persons or principles?

BJ: The Union obviously has to protect the working conditions of Members and has to uphold and protect the collective agreements and certification orders.

MM: I see diplomacy is also a good trait to have. What’s the weirdest scenario you faced as FA President?

BJ: Several examples come to mind—many of which can’t be put in print. One that Members will recall is what I came to refer to as the “Maple Leaf Lounge arbitration.” This was the situation a couple of years ago where a Member had been recommended for tenure at every step of the collegial decision-making process but after a bizarre series of events was eventually denied tenure by the Board of Governors. We had to go to arbitration on that, and, no surprise, we won. What caps off the weirdness is that the whole series of events began with a chance conversation in a Maple Leaf Lounge in Ontario. Another weird scenario relates to that same arbitration. The University’s lawyer asked me if I did not consider it a conflict of interest for an individual to put together their own tenure file!

MM: It’s nice to know where the University’s money is going. When you were FA President, what made you the most proud?
BJ: I’m most proud of being able to help individual Members with issues that were directly affecting them. For many Members, it is only when they are faced with a specific issue (such as denial of tenure or disciplinary charges) that they come to realize the importance and value of having a union to help them.

MM: What are some of the most noteworthy things that happened while you were President?

BJ: When the history of the UPEIFA is written I think there will be several things to include from these years. 1. The Employer finally agreed to abandon and discontinue the lengthy and costly court proceedings in relation to mandatory retirement. 2. There were several noteworthy arbitration decisions, including that ruling which confirmed the collegial decision-making process in terms of tenure and promotion—a ruling that has importance far beyond our campus. 3. We conducted our first, and very successful, MLA outreach and education campaign. 4. The first CAUT investigation on this campus took place. 5. We concluded three rounds of collective bargaining (two for Bargaining Unit #2 and one for Bargaining Unit #1). The collective agreements we reached in 2012 were regarded as fair by both Parties. While the salary settlements were modest, we did make some gains in other areas, including that long-sought tuition waiver. 6. We had continued to work collaboratively with the other on-campus unions on the pension front, and the 2012 negotiations were noteworthy in that we ensured that the same salary/pension offer made to us was also made to the other unions.

MM: What research are you doing now?

BJ: My present research was inspired by the experience of my first cousin three times removed who came to Canada as a lady’s maid to the wife of the Chief Factor of the Hudson’s Bay Company in 1830. This led me to researching the role of European women of a lower social position in early 19th-century Rupert’s Land. In the course of my research I have made some fascinating discoveries which have led me off in some other directions.

MM: You recently stayed in a B&B on the Isle of Man, or someplace, that turned out to be your ancestral home. How was that experience?

BJ: It was a wonderful experience and opportunity. But it wasn’t a B&B and it wasn’t on the Isle of Man. It was my ancestral home on the Isle of Wight. Although my ten-year-old cousin wasn’t too impressed, saying, “Everyone else has a castle in England—we have a cottage,” I was very pleased with a “cottage.” Very few people are able to identify the dwelling where their ancestors lived prior to emigrating. Even fewer are able to visit and stay at
At stake were issues with an all-too-familiar ring: fair compensation, maintaining faculty complement, and meaningful participation in University governance. But in many ways, the strike encapsulated the tension all-too-real in modern Canadian universities between Administrators—hired guns keen to use the University to build their resumes before they go on to their next, presumably bigger opportunity—and Faculty who care about the institution and its students, and have a vested interest in its future. As one of the placards being waved on the line made clear: the average commitment of an Administrator to Nipissing University was 7 years; the average commitment of a Faculty member was 17.

Despite the fact that Faculty had pledged their careers to the institution and to generations of students at Nipissing, Administrators were keen to exclude them from a meaningful role in University governance. A manufactured financial “crisis” was cited in 2014 as justification to terminate 22 full-time contract Faculty, thereby limiting student course options and leaving a number of programs straining to offer enough courses for students to complete their degrees. The same “crisis” was now being used to terminate the contracts of all Faculty at Nipissing’s two satellite campuses, thereby effectively closing them, bypassing the University’s Senate.

Yet a third-party audit conducted by Pricewaterhouse Coopers on behalf of the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities—made available to the Association only after filing a bad-faith bargaining complaint against the Employer—made clear that the Administration’s financial practices were poor, and that there were large sums of revenue that had been excluded from the financial statements given to the Association.

Once the strike deadline passed, the Administration opened the same mean-spirited bag of tricks we have seen trotted out during actions across the country in recent years. At a minute past midnight on November 2, the University blocked the email accounts of all of all professors, ensuring that they could not be reached by...
students seeking letters of recommendation or by research partners across the world. The Administration took over the University’s website, treating it as their own property, and using it to disseminate its particular view of events. And, predictably, the Administration tried to bargain in public, posting details of their final pre-strike offer online in an attempt to turn the public, students, and their parents against the Faculty.

Again and again, the Association called the Administration back to the bargaining table but it was not until November 25—some 23 days after the start of the strike—that negotiations finally began again. And when they did begin again, everything was wrapped up in a single 22-hour session. Issues such as money, faculty complement, and governance, which had proved sticking points in negotiations—lines in the sand for the Administration—were apparently negotiable after all.

Whether there are lessons here for us as we go forward into a new round of negotiations is not clear yet. But CAUT suspects that the Canadian Association of Business Officers is encouraging administrators at smaller universities to take an increasingly hard line in negotiations, looking to win concessions that might be used as precedents in negotiations elsewhere in the country.

Let’s hope they’re wrong. Let’s hope that both parties enter into negotiations in a spirit of mutual respect, determined to make a deal for the long-term good of the University. But if that’s not the case and we find ourselves in a situation that mirrors Nipissing, we can be sure that CAUT will stand with us—with a cheque for $1 million and a promise of more if necessary—and that we’ll be joined on the line by Faculty from across the country.

New Members—Spring 2016

Jeffrey Collins, Political Science
Robert Deziel, Biology
Craig Dodge, Music
Jason Ellsworth, Religious Studies
Frederic Fovet, Education
Eileen Higginbotham, Education
Adam Johnston, Applied Human Sciences
Assaf Lerer, Companion Animals
Darlene Lund, Education
Kristopher MacPhee, Applied Human Sciences
Stephanie Palmer, Biology
Guy Perry, Biology
Ryan Pineau, Business
Adam Proud, Chemistry
Andrew Swingler, Engineering
Hillary Thompson, Nursing
Cindy Wood, Applied Human Sciences
Announcing SCENT events for this semester!

The Senate Committee on the Enhancement of Teaching (SCENT) announces its events for the winter 2016 semester! Our theme for the semester is “Academic Freedom, Pedagogy, and Curriculum: what do they mean for you?” Through a series of events taking place over the next few months, SCENT aims to engage the campus community in a series of conversations about academic freedom and its relation to pedagogy and curriculum—that is, to what we say and do in the classroom, and with students. While academic freedom is more commonly invoked when faculty talk about research and scholarship, it is also a central idea to the profession as a whole, and clearly impacts our work as teachers, too. What do we do in the classroom, and with and for students? Are there limitations or boundaries around what we do or can do or even should do? If so, who or what sets those? What does academic freedom in our teaching mean to different Faculties and Schools, and in different subject areas? How does academic freedom affect students? And how would we (or do we) negotiate what are, no doubt, differences in how we all answer these questions?

In addressing these and other questions, with the goal of generating much discussion on campus about what we teach addressing these and how we teach, SCENT is pleased to organize three major events for this semester:

1. an ongoing blog and discussion forum, to which we will post short articles about this theme every few weeks over the semester, and invite colleagues to respond to them;

2. a “faculty rants and raves” event on Wednesday, March 9 (4:00-5:00 p.m.), where faculty are invited to volunteer to rant and rave about academic freedom, in a variety of formats—rants, poems, skits, songs, raps, musings, etc., that can take a variety of tones—funny, angry, sad, thoughtful… (cash bar, nachos provided);

3. a guest speaker, Dr. Len Findlay, University of Saskatchewan, on Wednesday, April 27, who will give a public talk and hold a workshop on this theme.

Check out our new SCENT website at projects.upei.ca/scent (still under construction)—where you’ll find information about SCENT and the blog mentioned above. And lots more information will be coming your way throughout the semester about all of these events! Book the key dates now—and stay tuned for much more from us as we get going on this provocative theme, around which we all surely have much to say!

For more information, contact Ann Braithwaite, Chair of SCENT, abraithwaite@upei.ca, or Gerald Wandio, Faculty Development Office, fdo@upei.ca.

Call for Nominations …

Merit Awards for Scholarly Achievement

The UPEI Faculty Association invites the nomination of candidates for the University’s 2015-2016 Merit Awards for Scholarly Achievement. These prestigious awards consist of a cash prize of $500 and a plaque. There are three awards, one in each of the following categories:

i. Arts, Business, and Education

ii. Science

iii. Atlantic Veterinary College and Nursing

Nominations may be made by any member of the university faculty, including the nominee. The deadline for receipt of complete files is Monday, March 15, 2016. Files should be sent to the Faculty Association Office, Room #315, SDU Main Building.

For information on the nomination procedures, follow the links at http://www.upeifa.org
Strange Gifts

Dr. Richard Lemm (English) One of my oldest and dearest friends, Lance Foreman, has spent most of his adult life sailing wooden boats around the mid-and south Pacific Ocean. After serving in the U.S. Navy off the coast of North Vietnam, he has devoted his nomadic life to helping other people in a variety of ways, most recently the residents of Pacific islands threatened by rising sea levels. Years ago, he gave me a sack of American pennies, which he had carried with him on his boats. It was his father’s penny collection. Growing up with Lance, I knew his father, a stroke victim who was trapped in depression and regret, while Lance’s mother took charge of the family’s livelihood. Those pennies were a rare sign of life in Mr. Foreman beyond crippling depression. Handing me the sack, Lance said that he needed every inch of storage space on his boat, and that he was never going to try to make any money with them. I gratefully accepted this gift, knowing that Lance was doing more than clearing room for more rice or deck varnish. Also, Lance has relied a good deal on bartering to survive, but he wouldn’t trade these coins. He gave them to me. Whenever I move from one home to another, I find those pennies, and I ponder, again, what Lance was really clearing away and making room for. Someday I’ll pass them along to a grandchild, one more intrigued with the story of their origin than their monetary value.

Dr. Wambui J. Gichuru (Education) I have given and received many gifts over the years. Of all of those gifts, one stands out: a beautiful dark maple kitchen table.

About 10 years ago, a woman I had met at work was unhappy with a kitchen table she had inherited from her parents, being the last piece left after her siblings had collected the best pieces without her knowledge. She invited me to take the table away and use it somewhere in my house.

Strange Gifts

I already had enough furniture, but taking the gift was going to relieve the woman of perceived injustice from her family. Seeing the little table in one corner of my basement reminded me of the woman’s story.

Four years later, a new family arrived to Canada and were looking for furniture. I passed on the beautiful table without the story behind it. I call it an unusual gift because it was a carrier of another family’s story which was not my responsibility to keep. I gave the table away without telling the story to a family who needed a table, not the story. What is unusual is the memory of both the table and the story live with me!

Thomy Nilsson

This Christmas I received a magnetic cannon manufactured by Abong Inc., Geulph, Ontario. If you have seen the kinetic energy model of 6 steel balls swinging from a rack, you have the general idea of how it works. Now add three stages with a magnet between each. See Figure 1. Wondering whether the stages were just for show or really provided acceleration, we took it apart to test with one, two, or three stages - the independent variable. These were tested in counterbalanced, pseudo-randomized order to minimize effects of magnet or observer fatigue. The dependent variable, acceleration, was operationally defined by the distance that the launched ball would move a small box placed on a hardwood floor 20 cm from the end of the canon. We observed that the box was moved increasingly further as the number of stages increased.

\[ D = N \cdot f^\tau \]

where: 
D equals distance, 
N equals the number of stages 
f is a variable factor to make the numbers look right

Conclusion: The successive magnetic stages provide increasing acceleration. Recent research has demonstrated that the principle can achieve velocities up to at least Mach 7 (Freedberg, 2014). Further research is needed to determine how many Abong stages are needed to put a ball in orbit. However, at $32 each, we may need another Canada Space Agency grant to proceed. This promising research program could lead to Canada developing its own space launch capabilities independent of the USA, Russia or foreign corporations. Persons interested in a University-Public-Private Partnership may avail themselves of the opportunity to join at the ground-floor level by contacting UPEI’s Office of Research & Development.

Figure 1. The magnetic cannon.

Reference
The FA Parties ...

The FA held its annual holiday party on 4 December. And by the look of these pictures, a thoroughly good time was had by all.

Ed Hansen (Psychology), Shannon Murray (English)

Susan Brown (History), Carlo Lavoie (Modern Languages), Kevin Yarr

Laurie Brinklow (Island Studies), Kevin Yarr, Julia Purcell, Doug Dahn (Physics)

Marva Sweeney-Nixon (Biology), Kevin Yarr
Ann Braithwaite (DSJS), Richard Raiswell (History)

Lori Mayne (English), Susan Brown (History)

Nia Phillips (Psychology), Marieke Hutchinson (Chemistry)

Nola Etkin (Chemistry), Andrew Carrothers (Business), Don Wagner (Business), Brenton Dickeson (Inquiry Studies)
We want your input

Feedback, comments, articles, letters, images, etc. for future issues are always welcome! Contact the Newsletter Editor, Richard Raiswell, if you are interested in contributing a piece to the FAbric, raiswell@upei.ca, 566-0504. The Newsletter Editor would like to thank all those who contributed to this edition of the FAbric.

the FAbric Editorial Policy

The FAbric is the newsletter of the University of Prince Edward Island Faculty Association. The primary intent of the FAbric is to keep all members of the UPEI Faculty Association up-to-date and informed. It is also the intent of the FAbric to communicate UPEI Faculty Association activities and perspectives on issues to a wider community. The FAbric is published three times per year: September, January, and April, and serves the following purposes:

• to provide a means for the exchange of ideas, views, and issues relevant to the Association and its members;

• and to provide the Association’s membership with information relevant to the operations of the Association;

• and to provide documentary records of matters pertaining to the Association; and to serve all the functions of a newsletter.

Contributions (letters, articles, article summaries, and other pertinent information) are encouraged, but anonymous material will not be considered for publication. However, under special circumstances, the FAbric may agree to withhold the author’s name. The UPEI Faculty Association Executive retains the right to accept, edit, and/or reject contributed material. The opinions expressed in authored articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the UPEI Faculty Association.

UPEIFA Executive

President:
Nola Etkin (Chemistry)

Past President:
Betty Jeffery (Robertson Library)

Vice-President:
Malcolm Murray (Philosophy)

Treasurer:
Debra Good (School of Business)

Members-at-Large:
Cezar Campeanu (Computer Science)
Carlo Lavoie (Modern Languages)
Philip Smith (Psychology)
Charlene Vanleeuwen (Applied Human Sciences)

UPEIFA Office Manager:
Susan Gallant