

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2005

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The year 2004 ended with a bang and 2005 is looking busier than ever.

Both the Windsor and Thames Christmas parties were very successful. The Windsor group hit a record 120 participants while the Thames was at its largest ever. Both featured archival displays which proved to be very popular.

You will notice with this newsletter, 6 pages of health benefits information. They include some very important travel medical information re Sun Life and some new information re alternative dental and health coverage being negotiated by the academic and support staff bargaining units. It is expected that these plans will also be available for administrative retirees. Although still in development and not available until July 2005, it is important to examine the information ahead of time. These plans were developed at the request of Retiree Association lobby efforts (we were among the most prominent) and OCRA, our provincial association. The



RTO, the Retired Teachers of Ontario. Elementary and secondary teachers in Ontario have developed their own dental and health plan which is administered by Johnson Insurance. They have stated that we would be eligible to participate in their plan. Details are being worked out to have a presentation by them in June.

On the social front, a labour dispute at Windsor Raceway is forcing us to wait before organizing our annual outing there. Jack Costello is monitoring this situation for us. Carol Pratt is organizing a trip to Quebec for the spring; a tour of the River Rouge Assembly Plant is in the works; Elizabeth Barr is working on a June Walpole Island tour. This year's Stratford trip is scheduled for May 9.

Jim Chambers, as an outgrowth of the November Hobby Show, has organized a bridge group, woodcarving presentation and an investment group meeting. He is also working on a series of lunch lectures. Like the Thames effort, these would involve lunch and a lecture/presentation by a person of interest. Stay tuned. He is also involved in organizing an informal golf league.

The year 2005 is definitely looking busier than ever!

purpose of these plans is to offer adequate but less costly health coverage.

Gary Docherty has also been in communication with

President, Pat Hallahan

BOARD OF GOVERNORS REPORT NOVEMBER 2004

A Board of Governors meeting was held on November 30, 2004. The highlight of the meeting was the approval of four new programs.

Work Preparation: Future Links is a certificate program designed for high risk high school leavers, many of whom will either have not passed the literacy test, completed the work placement/community service component or who do not possess minimum academic college entrance requirements. The program will contain a significant work placement component.

A Pre-Business stand-alone certificate program will replace the current Business option in the GAS Program;

A Mechanical Engineering Technology-Plastics

option will also be offered. This is in addition to three other options available to Mechanical Engineering Technology students. It is a unique program in the province and will prepare graduates for jobs as Design, Operations and Research Project Engineers as well as Plastics/Polymer Technologists.

An Entertainment Technology Program was also approved. This program is for students interested in careers in stage management, set production, properties, sound and lighting.

As of November 1, 2004 the College had 6,185 students. It expects its budget to be marginally positive by March 2005.

OCRA™ REPORT

The Ontario Colleges Retirees' Association (OCRA™) continues to grow. Of the approximately 1200 members in OCRA™, 183 are St. Clair College retirees, second only to Mohawk college with 240. This reflects the fact that the membership year coincides with the calendar year - January to December. In past years, the St. Clair College Retirees' Association collected \$20 in annual fees - \$10 of which was forward to the OCRA™, making all registered St. Clair College Retirees' Association members also members of OCRA™. In 2004, Dr. John Strasser has agreed to pay the St. Clair College Retiree membership fee. As a result, we must now individually take the initiative to renew our OCRA™ memberships by submitting the \$10 OCRA™ fee. Anita Blair has agreed to collect and submit this fee on our behalf. This fee can be sent to Anita at 1762

Malden Road, R.R. #1, Essex, ON N8M 2X5. You may also register with OCRA™ by completing the membership form contained in the OCRA™ newsletter.

The St. Clair College Retirees' Association has become a model for new Retiree Associations. A group of Durham College retirees interested in establishing an association in Oshawa, asked Bill Totten to make a presentation to a group of 18 Durham College retirees on how to start up an association. This presentation is based upon the successes and failures experienced by the St. Clair College Retirees' Association, and was very well received.

OCRA™ continues to work toward a working arrangement with the CAAT Pension Plan, with little success.

Shoppers' Delight !!!

I was in the express lane at the store quietly fuming.

Completely ignoring the sign, the woman ahead of me had slipped into the check-out line pushing a cart piled high with groceries.

Imagine my delight when the cashier beckoned the woman to come forward, looked into the cart and asked sweetly, "So which six items would you like to buy?"

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON 2004

The Christmas Luncheon held at the Other Place Catering Centre was an unqualified success. 120 retirees and spouses/friends were in attendance. The food was excellent and the venue warm and lovely. At \$20 per person, it is excellent value.

Highlights of this year's event included a brief explanation of the Association's Archives Project by Bill Totten. Also available, at the back of the hall, were samples of archival material. They provided lots of entertainment and were also accompanied by forms to help project volunteers

to identify some staff. If you have any pictures or other forms of memorabilia you would like to donate, please contact Bill Totten.

The event was also used to thank friends who help with Association activities and to collect dues for OCRA, our provincial association. Anita Blair was presented with a gift from OCRA for assisting them with dues collection.

Finally, John Charlesworth and Carol Pratt, event organizers, conducted the poinsettia and gift raffles. Thanks to both for a lovely afternoon.



THAMES CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Thames Christmas Party was held on Wednesday, December 8, 2004 at the Countryview Golf Club in Chatham. 30 people attended and enjoyed an excellent buffet dinner. Eunice Robinson and Elizabeth Barr arranged the gift exchange and door prizes. People enjoyed their social time especially with presentations being made by Santas Eunice and Jim Robinson.

Bill Totten presented an overview of the Archives Project and invited retirees to review the archival material which was on display and to help identify the

people and past events.

Trish McFarlane gave an update on the Campus plans for programs and facilities and invited the retirees to join the staff for a Christmas pot-luck luncheon at the Campus on December 21st.

Eunice Robinson and Elizabeth Barr were thanked for organizing another successful Christmas Party.

Additional pictures are posted on the College web site: www.stclaircollege.ca/people/retirees



A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Donna and I (Bill Hockey) have spent seven of the last ten years overseas. With England as our base, we have lived in and visited many countries during that period, learning, amongst other things, survival Arabic along the way, but returned two years ago to reside full time in Canada. We are still peripatetic, moving back and forth between at our home of 14 acres in Kamloops, B.C. and our family duplex near the sea in Victoria. It confuses the grandchildren but otherwise is good for all concerned.

By the way our old colleague Fran Lacey was just exiting Muscat, Oman in the fall of 1998 when we were arriving, although unfortunately I didn't get to speak to her. Her successor there as Registrar and his wife (both back in Canada now) became our good friends as things turned out.

I do enjoy keeping up with old colleagues through the Association's newsletter and very much appreciate the time and effort which everyone puts into it.

Bill Hockey

St. CLAIR COLLEGE HOLIDAY BRUNCH

The Retirees Association thanks Dr. Strasser most sincerely for his invitation to the Holiday Brunch.

A good time was had by all.

It added in a most positive way to the festive mood of Christmas.



Gary Docherty Santa Tom Kilpatrick

BIOGRAPHY: MARY ANN BUGLER

Many of you know her as the charming, effervescent Health Centre nurse with the mile-wide smile, who was always cheery, warm, welcoming and a very skilled health practitioner. Those closer to her, know her as the spouse of a skilled tradesman, mother of two and grandmother of four, who lives in a lovely but unpretentious home in South Windsor. What most of you don't know, however, is that this comfortable and familiar lifestyle belies a life of privilege, power and social standing which, but for World War II, would have surely been hers.



Mary Ann is an immigrant. She was born Annamaria Elizabeth Babanes in Hungary. Her father was the Undersecretary of State for the Department of Treasury and the General Director of the Hungarian Tobacco Monopoly. In the 1940's Hungary's agriculture accounted for 50% of the country's gross domestic product; tobacco was a significant portion of that.

At age 35 and while on a Ministry tour, Frank Babanes spotted a strikingly beautiful and athletic 18 year old gymnast, who, four years earlier, had won a national gymnastic competition, and, but for her youth, was an obvious candidate for the Hungarian Olympic team. He decided she would become Mrs. Frank Babanes. What was an 18 year old girl to do? With his powerful position, strong personality, Humphrey Bogart good looks, not to mention the home in the mountains, with the ornate gate leading up to a large villa with an Audi and Harley-Davidson parked in front, he was most difficult to resist.

Of course, there was her father who was just a little uncomfortable with his daughter dating a man 17 years her senior. And he was not easily ignored. He was a Director in the Hungarian government's Ministry of Finance. However, Frank Babanes was not to be denied. He courted Eva for two years, they married and a few years after that Mary Ann was born.

However, Mary Ann was not born in Budapest. There was a war going on. Russia, of the Allied Forces, helped Hungary set up a provisional government in Debrecen, 120 miles to the east, near the Romanian border. This is where Mary Ann was born...the proximity to Transylvania is purely coincidental! Frank Babanes worked briefly with the Russians but decided he did not want to be involved with a communist government.

His work with the Tobacco Monopoly had brought him to

Canada where he had learned the flue-cured tobacco system. He decided he would leave his country and move to Tillsonburg, Ontario where he bought two tobacco farms. Eva Babanes' dreams for her daughter of finishing school in Switzerland and life in the upper echelons of Hungarian society would never materialize.

And so, Mary Ann grew up in Tillsonburg in a stately Georgian manor with large columns in front and even a secret passageway! Life in rural Ontario was pleasant and safe. Mary Ann pranced and flirted her way through high school. She was active in student government and on the

basketball and track and field teams. She got decent grades, especially from the male teachers, but academics always took a back seat to the social agenda. And although there were others to be sure, her social life always revolved around a guy named Dave.

Upon graduation, career decisions had to be made. Mary Ann's family had an extensive background in medicine. Even her father had studied medicine for three years. And so, Mary Ann opted for nursing at Victoria Hospital in London. Given the length of the program, three years, and the distance from home, Mary Ann and Dave broke up.

Nurse training was intense and interesting, but still left time for a robust social life. However, the comfort and security of Tillsonburg beckoned, not to mention a Ricky Nelson lookalike named Dave. Shortly after graduation from nurse training, Mary Ann and Dave were married. Dave got a job at the Ford Plant in Oakville and Mary Ann worked in the ER at the local hospital. But then, Dave got an opportunity to apprentice as a printer at the Windsor Star. It was a six year apprenticeship which resulted in work as a photoengraver and eventually in electronic pre-press. They moved to Windsor where Mary Ann worked in the ER at Met Hospital.

Mary Ann stayed at home for 11 years while raising Michelle and David. She then went to work part time at the Nurse's Registry in public relations and supervision.

One day she got a call from St.Clair College for a temporary nurse replacement. Since there was no one available with ER experience, she sent herself. After a year and a half of contract work at the College, the job was finally posted but, inexplicably, she didn't get it. However, she taught medical terminology for Con Ed, worked part time in the Health Centre and eventually got the full time job.

After 13 years at the College, with lots of first aid work, personal and health counseling, and some life-saving heroics, doing occasional flu clinic work and tending to the grandchildren is looking pretty good.

The College has lost one of its most lovable personalities!

We wish her well in her retirement and we look forward to seeing her at the retiree's social events.

IN MEMORIAM: STAN MARCHINI



The following is a summary of the eulogy given by Dr. Stan Bah at Stan Marchini's funeral service.

We have gathered here today to say farewell to Stan, who was called home by the Lord of Life. As we mourn his passing, we also celebrate his life.

I first met Stan in 1968 at the old College campus on Mercer Street. In the early days there wasn't much opportunity to get to know staff because departments were scattered throughout the city. Once the South Campus opened in 1970 it was much easier to get to know each other.

It was during that time that our daughter Mary came to me and asked if I knew Mr. Marchini. She

proceeded to tell me that she was going on a date with his son Peter. Following her graduation they were married in 1974. That is how Stan and I became related

Recently I came across a poem dealing with death. The poet talks about death being the beginning of new life, not just the end of the present one. He points out that we will be remembered by our good deeds and not by material things we acquired during our lifetime.

Stan will be remembered as an outstanding educator who devoted a lot of his time to motivating and guiding his students to succeed in their studies. He found that many of his students were also university material. In order that they might continue their studies, Stan approached the School of Business at the University of Windsor to discuss the possibility of developing an academic transfer agreement. Stan often complained that he encountered many administrative obstacles as well as a conservative mentality on the part of some of the university faculty. Eventually, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities saw the benefit of such transfer agreements. Today, many colleges have similar agreements with universities. In this regard, Stan was way ahead of his time.

Majda and I enjoyed Barbara and Stan's hospitality during many winter holidays when we stayed with them in Florida and we have many happy memories of those years.

Stan suffered a lot this past year, but his suffering is over now and he has found his peace. There will be an empty place at our family gatherings now. We will all miss him, but he will not be forgotten.

I would like to convey the deepest sympathy from our family to Stan's wife Barbara, their sons Peter and Paul and to their families, to Stan's brother Aldo and to all the relatives who are present here today.

IN MEMORIAM

Hazel Braun

Dewey Grant

Arthur Kestell

Lynn Hogan's father

Bill Lukachuk's father

Carol Pratt's father Boyd Valleau

KATHLEEN'S KAPERS!!

Allison'S Travel Lt.
167 Tecumseh Road West
Windsor, ON N8X 1E8

**If you are interested in cruises or bus trips, you may contact
Kathleen at Allison Travel at**

www.allisonstravel.om.ca

CONGRATULATIONS!

Our congratulations to

John & Marilyn Charlesworth
on their 50th Anniversary

They are celebrating this occasion by cruising the Panama Canal

GOLF

Starting Monday, April 25, 2005 a number of College retirees will be playing golf on Mondays starting around 8:00 a.m. at the Willow Creek Golf Course

Join us for some fun.

STRATFORD 2005

The 2005 outing to Stratford is scheduled for May 9. This year's musical production is Hello Dolly. The cost this year is \$109 per person and this includes ticket, bus, dinner at the Elmhurst Inn and the tip for the bus driver.

The first date available to put down a deposit on this trip is February 22, 2005. Kathleen Warren of Allison's Travel at 167 Tecumseh Road West will accept deposits for both retirees and non-retirees. The deposit required is \$50 per person, with the

balance due on or before April 8. Non-retirees will have a two week waiting period, until March 8, before their names will be put on the "regular" list Kathleen can be reached at 258-5404.

The bus will make only one stop to and from Stratford and that will be in Chatham. Except for a few select seats for the disabled, all seats will be centrally located in the balcony. This trip usually fills up fast, so don't procrastinate.

WELCOME NEW RETIREES

Tommy Squire

ST. CLAIR COLLEGE ARCHIVES

The St. Clair College Retirees' Association has undertaken a project to identify, catalogue and preserve items that provide a record of the history of St. Clair College.

An active committee has been working diligently to collect, identify and inventory a large assortment of photographs, slides, documents, publications and physical items which go back to the days of the Western Ontario Institute of Technology. The college has provided a large room in the basement of the new Student Centre (room 45J). We have been meeting on a weekly basis to sort material and to coordinate the work of the group. Rick Erwin is investigating possible

computer applications to be used to inventory items.

HOW CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROJECT? There are two ways - you can clean out that box of St. Clair stuff you have stored away and donate any items of historical significance. Also, if you want to help with the ongoing process of identifying photos and other items you would be welcome on the working group. You can call the Retiree Association voice mail and leave a message at 972-2727 ext. 4439, or, e-mail Bill Totten at wtotten@sympatico.ca Lea Simms at lgarber@cogeco.ca or Art Rae at m.rae@sympatico.ca



Anita Blair, Lea Simms, Richard St.John, Pat Hallahan, Hanno Barten, Horst Meysick, Art Rae

STAY! STAY!

I pulled into a crowded parking lot and rolled down the car windows to make sure my Labrador Retriever had fresh air. She was stretched out on the back seat, and I wanted to impress upon her that she must remain there.

I walked to the curb backward, pointing my finger at the car and saying emphatically, "Now you stay. Do you hear me? Stay! Stay!"

The driver of a nearby car, perhaps noting that I am a blonde (?), gave me a strange look and said, "Why don't you just put it in park?"

HOW I CAME TO ST. CLAIR COLLEGE

Art Rae, Sr. Technologist, Media Services (Ret.)



As a student I attended the Western Ontario Institute of Technology in the Electronics Technology program. In my second year I had as one of my instructors, a Mr. S.

Stannard. My first impression was that Mr. Stannard was quite the imposing sort who ran his labs with a firm hand.

But over the course of the term I felt that there was a bit of hocus-pocus about what he was professing. It culminated in an assignment he gave us that from a photocopy of a twenty-page section from the Encyclopedia Britannica we were to extract a ten-page summary. Not seeing any value in performing this exercise some of us students refused to do it. Mr. Stannard insisted that if we didn't complete it we could not return to his class.

Well that rubbed my Scottish stubbornness the wrong way. No way was I going to be held at ransom for a seat in his lab. Besides, what had I to lose? I wasn't doing so hot in the course anyway and if this ended my term at W.O.I.T then so be it. The next day he called me into his office to remind me of what I was doing and how I'd lose my year. We parted company on a sour note. That summer I was hired for a vacation replacement job at the CKLW radio station that launched my career in the radio/television field.

About four years later I had taken a job at the Windsor Board of Education Resource Centre as an Audio-Visual Technician specializing in video recording. One of my side jobs was providing technical support in the faculty media workshop where Board of Ed. teachers could come in and prepare audio-visual aids like 35mm slides, poster signs, overhead transparencies and audio tapes. The Resource Centre was open on Thursday nights

for the teachers and I took my turn being the duty technician for that.

One Thursday afternoon my supervisor came to tell me there was a tour coming in this night. It would be a group of faculty from St. Clair College, as part of their in-service training, to see how we provided our teachers with A-V support. I was to see them around and demonstrate some of the things we did here.

Well the appointed time arrived with a bustle of people coming in with someone leading up rear telling them all about this place. I recognized that voice. I recognized the voice of my old nemesis, Mr. Stannard!

He was telling his faculty that we had this and we did that, but he was all wrong. Before he got too far into it I introduced myself and commenced, with some diplomacy, to give them the tour and get things straight. When he saw me he came right over and shook my hand, "My good man, Mr. Rae, a pleasure to see you!" and told the audience I was one of his former students and glowed about me like a long lost friend. What a shock this was to me hearing this from the dreaded Mr. Stannard!

Well the tour went fine and the College faculty went away happy with what they had seen and heard. And Mr. Stannard again came over to thank me and shake my hand for showing them around. After they left I sat down there for a minute amazed at what had just transpired.

The next morning promptly after startup the phone rang. It was Mr. Stannard calling. Oh-oh! Now I was now going to hear about it for stealing his show! On the contrary, he was all charm and thanked me once again for the tour and that I seemed to know what I was doing, etc. Then he said, "How would you like to come out here to St. Clair College and start the Media Centre here? There's much more opportunity out here for you. It will be a much better chance for improvement."

I thought about it, the better opportunity of working for a College instead of a Board of Education, of starting in a new facility with state-of-the-art equipment and better working conditions, then promptly applied for the job. I

went for the interview and was quite excited to find I was selected for the position, College Audio-Visual Technician.

Gary Docherty, then Personnel Manager, signed me up as a College employee in his office in the old "Temporary Building" and I started work here on October 5, 1970 in the only part of the main building that was then complete, A-Block.

The rest is history. I moved from A-V Technician to Television Technologist, building up the Audio-Visual Media Centre services then the TV Studio in black and white, then colour, then

eventually digital television. When I finally left on September 30th, 2003 after thirty-three years with the College I was happy to finish my last project of overseeing the installation into twenty classrooms of the fitting of all the necessary multi-media support equipment needed by faculty and students, a project we had pushed for all the years I had been there. A fitting end was this last project to my work at St. Clair College. But to think that this all came about by a chance meeting with the instructor who threw me out of class!
Art Rae, Sr. Technologist Media Services, Ret.

PARTICIPATION -for "**FUN**" & "**PROFIT**'

Over the next couple of months, through **Workshops** and **Luncheon Meetings**, you will have a chance to:

- 1] Learn How To & To Play **Bridge**
- 2] Learn about **Investing**
- 3] Learn How To **Carve**
- 4] Learn How To be **A Savy Consumer**
- 5] Learn about **Fire Safety for Seniors**
- 6] Learn about Alternative **Health Benefits**

NEW STAFF APPOINTMENT

PERFORMANCE PREPARATION PROGRAM/MUSIC THEATRE PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

St/Clair College has introduced a new focus in arts and cultural programming at Thames Campus. Trish MacFarlane, Principal, Thames Campus, recently announced the appointment of Katherine Kaszas as Artistic Director to provide the leadership in the development of arts and culture programming at St. Clair College with particular responsibility for a one year Performance Preparation program and a three

year Music Theatre Performance program.

She has served as the Artistic Director for the Blyth Festival and as the Associate Artistic Director of Canadian Stage. She has taught at the University of Toronto and in the Sheridan College Music Theatre program.

This appointment heralds a very exciting direction for St. Clair College.

Chatham Capitol Theatre Tour

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Chatham, ON

The Chatham Capitol Theatre rejuvenation and reconstruction is targeted to be completed by late 2005. The completed Chatham Capitol Theatre will be a highly attractive, technologically advanced, 1200 seat theatre with the capacity to host world standard performances. The Chatham Capitol Theatre will be the only live performance theatre of its size and sophistication in this region of south-western Ontario.

www.chathamcapitoltheatre.com

Itinerary

10.15 am	Car Pool - Lot T, St. Clair College
10:30 am	Departure for Chatham
11:30 am	Lunch with Thames Retirees Group Papa Luigi's Restaurant, 231 King St. W., Chatham
1:00 pm	Chatham Capitol Theatre Tour (approx. 1 hr) 238 King St. W., Chatham
2:00 pm	Return to Windsor

Cost at \$ 7.95 each for buffet lunch (plus taxes and gratuity)

We need to know numbers to make lunch and tour reservations. Please confirm with:

John Charlesworth tel. (519) 966-3168 e-mail: daturrah@hotmail.com

Or Eunice Robinson tel. (519) 351-3670 e-mail: robsan@mnsi.net

Walpole Island and Heritage Centre Visit and Tour

Wednesday, June 8, 2005

The St. Clair Retirees are planning a tour of Walpole Island and the Heritage Centre. We will have the opportunity for an informational session on the eco-systems, history of the area, view native sites, see the flora and fauna, enjoy a Native lunch and visit the Souvenir shop. David White, the curator of the Heritage Centre will be our guide. David is a graduate of WOIT. He's one of us!!

Itinerary

8:15 am - Car Pool – Lot T, St. Clair College

8:30 am - Departure for Walpole Island

10:00 am - Arrive at the Heritage Centre
for the information session

11:30 am - Native Lunch

1:00 pm - Tour Native Sites and view Flora and Fauna

2:30 pm - Return to Windsor

The Native lunch will possibly consist of soup, main entrée of wild duck or moosemeat, a wild rice casserole **or** Indian tacos (Mexican/Walpole Island style) and fried breads. The cost of the lunch is approximately \$12.00 per person.

Please confirm with Elizabeth Barr at 519-354-3274 or ebarr000@sympatico.ca or

John Charlesworth at 519-966-3168 or daturrah@hotmail.com if you plan to attend.

If you have any food allergies or food restrictions, please notify us.

Celebrating the Legacy - Story of Chatham Black History

Wednesday, March 30, 2005

Chatham, ON

The Chatham-Kent Black Historical Society's collection of local artifacts, genealogical information and general research materials is located in the Heritage Room at the W.I.S.H. Centre. The Heritage Room provides visitors with the history of Chatham's Black Community after escaping slavery.

www.mnsi.net/~wishc/heritageroom/

Itinerary

10.15 am	Car Pool - Lot T, St. Clair College
10:30 am	Departure for Chatham
11:30 am	Lunch with Thames Retirees Group William Street Café, 28 William St., Chatham
1:00 pm	W.I.S.H. Centre Presentation (approx. 1 hr) The Heritage Room - "John Brown Depot" 177 King St. E., Chatham
2:00 pm	Return to Windsor

Cost: \$ 3.00 each for W.I.S.H Centre Presentation plus lunch at own expense.

We need to know numbers to make lunch and tour reservations. Please confirm **by Friday, March, 25th** with:

Or John Charlesworth tel. (519) 966-3168 e-mail: daturrah@hotmail.com
 Eunice Robinson tel .(519) 351-3670 e-mail: robsan@mnsi.net

Hola! - from Sunny Mexico.

Could you imagine yourself enjoying temperatures in the mid to high 80's every day in the middle of January? This is what fourteen of your fellow retirees enjoyed between January 20 and January 27, 2005 on the wonderful trip to the Mayan Riviera. Morning temperatures were in the mid 60's (F) and rose each day to between 85F and 90F and there wasn't a drop of rain for the entire week. We stayed at the beautiful Copacabana Resort, located about 1 hour south of Cancun on the Yucatan Peninsula, where we were waited upon hand and foot for the whole week.

We left from Windsor on January 20 and we were instructed to be at the Windsor Airport for our direct flight to Cancun, at least 2 hours before departure, which was scheduled for 6:45 am. Bill and Ida Totten opened the building at 4:30 am, and Anita and Mansel Blair were ALREADY there. We suspect that the Blair's had stayed all night! EL Presidente, Pat Hallahan and his wife Elsi sauntered in around 6:00 am, as did Nicki Forcellini and her cousin, Rachel. This was to be the pattern throughout the trip - Totten's and Blair's arriving first (usually before anything even opened), and each day the late sleepers were the Hallahan's, and Nicki and Rachel.

The early departure from Windsor meant that we were able to check in to the Copacabana Hotel, on the Mayan Riviera, and get settled in our rooms before our first lunch. Lunch each day was a buffet "fit for a king" - soups, salads, hot food, cold food, desserts, and drinks, and drinks, and drinks! And the dinners were the same, except MORE of the same. The highlight of each and every dinner, aside from the outstanding menu, was the fashion show by the Zangari's. We were constantly amazed at the variety of attire which Del was able to present. Even more impressive was how John was able to pack and carry that extensive wardrobe in their luggage.

We spent many enjoyable hours just relaxing on the beach in the many available lounges. Between 'rests' we swam and snorkeled in the beautiful Carribean. Ken Grondin took advantage of the comfortable hammocks which were available at the beach. In fact,

he enjoyed them so much that, unknown to Florence, he purchased one from a street vendor and hid it from Flo until departure. It is our understanding that Ken had to promise that when the nice weather arrives he will cut the grass before settling into his new acquisition.

This was the first trip for recent retiree Dan Loncke and his wife Mary, and little did we know that we were in the presence of a renowned 'expert'. Dan's expertise in birdwatching soon resulted in the moniker "Bird Man of the Yucatan" - identifying Green Herons, Yucatan Jays, Pelicans, Warblers, and many more. And, on top of all that, we were presented with lectures on the care and feeding on the 'common' house cat!

There are many opportunities for excursions on the Yucatan, most of which involve the Mayan history and culture. One all day trip took us to the Chichen Itza archeological site, which is spectacular. Guides described the mathematical, cultural and astronomical background to the amazing pyramids and structures built centuries ago. The Yucatan includes 80,000 pyramids (there are 80 in Egypt), several of which are larger than any others in the world. Only John, Nicki, Rachel, Elsi and Dan were courageous enough to make the steep climb up the 91 steps of the pyramid at Chichen Itza. This excursion also included a visit to a "Cenote" - an huge sink hole, at the bottom of which was a small lake, 155 feet deep. Bill, Pat, Elsi, Dan and Mary all braved the 90 steps down into the underground cave, to the lake where they swam in the beautiful, clear water. From the water you could look up about 80 feet to a cave-like ceiling in which was a small opening to the sky above - an awesome sight!

This was the second annual winter trip organized by the Retirees' Association. All participants feel that travelling as a group has definite advantages while, at the same time, not being limited in any way. We are already making plans for next year. If you have any ideas or suggestions please pass them on and consider joining us next year.

Submitted by Bill Totten



St. Clair Retirees' Winter Trip



COMING EVENTS

1. Quebec Bus Trip - this spring - tentative June 1-4 or June 19-24
2. Tour of River Rouge Assembly Plant
3. Celebrating the Legacy - Story of Chatham Black History - March 30th
4. Informal Golf League - Monday, April 25th - 8:00 am Willow Creek
5. Chatham Capital Theatre Tour - April 27
6. Stratford Trip - "Hello Dolly" - May 9th
7. Walpole Island Tour - June 8th

COOL SITES FROM HEATHER

Many who have a computer and access to the internet may not know of Kim Komando. Kim is a young computer guru who lives and works in Phoenix, Arizona. She maintains a web site <http://www.komando.com> and is a very busy lady. Mother of a toddler, Kim writes computer books that she sells from her site and has a 3-hour weekly call-in radio show during which she answers callers' question about all things computer.

Through her home page, you can subscribe to Kim's weekly Newsletter, received on Saturday, the content of which comes from her radio show. You can also subscribe to three daily offerings: the Tip of the Day; the Cool Site of the Day, and the News (technical) of the Day. And guess what, Seniors and Retirees? All her subscriptions are absolutely FREE and are absolutely Spam-free. Kim does not release her subscribers' info to any other person or site!

And why am I telling you all this? Recently, I have been sharing the occasional "Cool Site of the Day" with a few friends. One, our president, Pat, urged me to put an article together for our members to partake if interested.

Here are a few COOL Sites from the past couple of weeks:

Radio days Cool Site

Back in the day, families huddled around a crackling radio to listen to shows. The only tube then was inside the radio! Bring back those simple times with Radiolovers. Pick from hundreds of old radio shows organized under eight different genres. Shows include: The Avenger, Flash Gordon and Radio City Playhouse."Return with us to the Golden Age of Radio" by eavesdropping on Radio lovers.

TO VISIT THIS SITE, GO HERE: <http://www.radiolovers.com>

Do you like to play games on your computer?

It's not cheating, it's 1-up

If you've ever tried to get to that next level and cannot figure it out, today's site may help. It's for serious computer gamers. The Cheats 1-up site takes no prisoners in revealing tips and tricks to hip your opponent. Get hot tips on new games, join message boards and find other gamers to play.

TO VISIT THIS SITE, GO HERE: <http://www.cheats.1up.com>

Chicken soup for the soul -- and tummy

I love soup, especially on a chilly January day. About twice a month, all year round, I spend the better part of a Sunday making soup for dinner. And best of all, there is always enough left over to put in the freezer for those nights you just don't feel like making dinner.

At the Epicurious Web site, you can choose from over 700 soup recipes. Search filters like "Fork Rating" and "Quick" help you decide which brew to stew. And since recipes are pulled from Bon Appetit and Gourmet magazines, you know they're tasty.

TO VISIT THIS SITE, GO HERE:

<http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/find/results?search=3Dsoup&x=3D18&y=3D8=>

The descriptions of these COOL Sites are quotes from Kim Komando's FREE "Cool Site of the Day", www.komando.com. Sites cover every subject imaginable. Some may be appropriate for you and you, too, may want to share with cyber buddies. Others may not be of interest, so just delete 'em.

Submitted by Heather Dube