

MAFA NEWSLETTER

Mount Allison Faculty Association

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November 2011

On Friday October 28th over 50 MAFA members and administrators attended MAFA's 2nd Annual Research and Creative Activity Fair, as part of MAFA's observance of Fair Employment Week. Eleven full- and part-time contract academic staff members displayed their work, including Rob Cupido, Louise Edwards, Jenny Ellison, Leslie Kern, Geoff Martin, Marianne Parsons, Lori Ann Roness, Vicki Simpson, and Michael Thorpe. MAFA Photo.

PLAN TO ATTEND HAPPY HOUR ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6TH

To celebrate the conclusion of another successful term, MAFA is sponsoring the University Club's final Happy Hour for 2011. The event will start at 4:30 pm on Tuesday, December 6th and should run until 6 pm. MAFA will be providing snack food and beverages for those who attend. Hope to see you there!

Did you know

The inflation rate in New Brunswick in the year ended in October 2011 was 4%. This exceeded our increase in the salary scale as of July 1st, which ranged from 2.5% to 2.69% depending on rank.

Source: Statscan, *The Daily*, October 2011, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/subjects-sujets/cpi-ipc/cpi-ipc-eng.htm>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Canada: <http://www.savelibraryarchives.ca/>

Mount Allison University is fortunate this year to have some senior administrators who want to follow the provisions of our Collective Agreement more closely than was typical in previous years. This does not mean that all their administrative decisions have exactly reflected what all of you, our members, would have chosen: the Collective Agreement (CA) is an imperfect document littered with compromises born of expediency and subject to interpretation. Some new grievances have arisen this year which are discussed in the report of our Grievance Officer and some grievances from previous years are still under arbitration. Nonetheless, we would like to acknowledge the good intentions of those in the administration who have been trying not to violate the terms which we have negotiated, to encourage the efforts made to follow the CA, and to express our support for this newer problem-solving approach which has produced more peace than conflict. It is more efficient, after all (and it is hard to receive a better endorsement from an economist). It is our hope, simple perhaps, that this desire to follow the terms of the CA will come to be shared more widely, and by future administrators.

The last few weeks have been filled with interesting events. The MAFA BBQ was a great success – many members came out to mingle and meet some of our new members. The Contract Academic Staff Poster Session, held as part of Fair Employment Week, brought out many to celebrate the achievements of our Unit 2 members. The search for a new P-VPAR began and concluded. We hope that those currently holding administrative posts are beginning to consider how they might best mentor our newest administrator.

Beyond Mount Allison the horizon has been less peaceful. At the CAUT Council, representatives from your Association learned of assaults on academic freedom occurring right here in Canada. We also heard of the resolute actions taken by people such as David Naylor, the President of the University of Toronto, to affirm their adherence to upholding the principles of academic freedom and respect for the articles of collective agreements which help to protect this freedom:

<http://www.president.utoronto.ca/presidents-comment-on-aucc-statement-on-academic-freedom.htm>

We will suggest to the President of Mount Allison University that he take whatever actions he can to strengthen the flagging resolve of the AUCC - and other similar organizations involved with academic issues - to greater commitment to preserving academic freedom.

There is a new campaign to save Library and Archives

The end-of-Fall weather is reminding us of the imminent arrival of winter and the Winter Term. I hope all of you are able to take hold of whatever opportunities become available to you to unfold your teaching and research & creative interests as the Fall term winds down and the next term rushes toward us.

Our current Collective Agreement (CA) contains some procedures that are new to Mount Allison. As the year unfolds, the Association is watching to see that these measures are followed by the Employer. Some improvements were made to the process for evaluations and to hiring procedures. Members should consult the new CA, especially Articles 14 and 16 or 19, to see what has changed. Soon, academic units will be putting together teaching plans for the next academic year (2012-2013). Departments and programs are reminded that part-time members are members of their academic units and that teaching assignments should be discussed in a meeting of your academic unit.

Your MAFA Executive has been learning about increasing problems among students whose financial circumstances make it difficult for them to continue their studies at Mount Allison. The Executive is considering the establishment of a MAFA Bursary Fund to help address this issue. Discussion of this proposal for a Fund will be added to the agenda of our next General Meeting.

“Thank you!” to **all** of you who have served as MAFA reps and on MAFA committees so far this year, particularly: Terry Craig; Andrew Hamilton-Wright and Rhiân Stewart; Erin Steuter and Jennifer Tomes.

I wish to remind you of MAFA events this coming Tuesday: in the morning, our General Meeting, and in the afternoon, another heart-warming MAFA social event! I look forward to seeing you all on Tuesday.

Stephen Law, MAFA President

GRIEVANCE REPORT

MAFA has been working through several grievance procedures this fall. The first one involved arbitration hearings for a grievance regarding hiring in an academic department (Grievance filed in April 2011).

The arbitration was scheduled for Sept. 27 and ran for one full day, but was not completed. It was to have been continued in November, but because of changes in the hiring of a lawyer for one individual, the hearing has been postponed yet again, this time to February 2012. At this time the hearing will

continue, with some examinations done via video teleconferencing.

In October MAFA filed a Union grievance regarding late evaluations, particularly in one of the academic units. After a meeting with the Employer's Grievance Officer, David Stewart, MAFA received a letter from him affirming that the Employer will complete evaluations on time in the future. He did not agree with the request that a new procedure be developed for instances where a Deanship changes hands over the summer months.

Also in October, MAFA received word regarding the arbitration hearing in the case of the Ron Joyce Centre for Business Studies. (Grievance re: hiring a faculty member into a "Dean-like position" filed in 2009 and subsequent Union grievance filed in Sept. 2010; arbitration held in Dec. 2010.) After this round of collective bargaining, MAFA made a formal request that the arbitrator issue a decision on this issue. The Employer counsel has suggested the issue is now moot and has been settled in its entirety.

MAFA has asked our lawyer, David Mombourquette, to pursue the issue as we would like to see a decision made. The new collective agreement does deal specifically with the position of Director of the RJCBS. But there is no language to define what should happen if another new Director position not specifically excluded by the collective agreement were to be created by the Employer. So the same situation could conceivably happen again, in which case MAFA would need to file a new grievance over the same issue.

No remedy has been settled as yet.

Helen Pridmore
MAFA Grievance Officer

MOUNT ALLISON POSTS BIG BUDGET SURPLUS

Mount Allison University financial statements for the 2010-11 year fiscal year (ended April 30, 2011) have recently been released and show that revenues exceeded expenses by over \$6 million..

Revenue in the General, Ancillary and Special Program Operating funds amounted to \$58.89 million,

and after expenses of \$52.5 million the surplus was almost \$6.3 million. If other funds are added in (such as Research, Special Purpose and Endowment Expendable funds), the surplus is \$6.4 million based on \$69.2 million in revenue. At the same time, only \$22.433 million is allocated to academic departments, with \$2.371 million to the libraries.

Of the surplus, \$1.11 million was transferred to revenue for the current fiscal year (2011-12), and \$1,041,020 is allocated to the Fine and Performing Arts Centre and Hammond House.

"There are some institutions in the region that are actually in deficit at the moment", says MAFA President Stephen Law. "Mount Allison has more than enough funding to meet its obligations and our task is to try to shift spending toward the academic priorities that are supposed to be at the center of the institution's mission."

The full financial statements are available at: <http://www.mta.ca/administration/financial/Financial_Statements_10-11.pdf> and are accessible from the "Financial Services" page.

CAUT DEFENCE FUND REPORT

The CAUT Defence Fund is the national strike fund for university faculty and librarians. It provides coverage for almost all unionized faculty in English Canada with assets of over \$23M. The Defence Fund provides tax-free strike benefits (currently \$80 per member per day) to striking Associations. It has paid benefits of close to \$5M in the past four years.

MAFA has been a member of the Fund since certification in 1984. MAFA pays dues of \$5 per month per member to the Defence Fund - a rate which has not increased since 1992.

The Defence Fund is governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by its member unions. The Trustees meet in person once annually in mid-October. Trustees also meet by conference call to approve benefits in advance of a strike or lockout, and participate in solidarity visits to striking member unions.

At this year's annual meeting the Trustees were very happy to welcome the Laval faculty union back to the Fund. Laval was a founding member of the Fund, but was disqualified when its association left CAUT in

the 1990's. The Trustees heard reports about negotiations across Canada. It is clear that university employers have decided on aggressive bargaining tactics, including attempts to overturn collegial governance.

Nowhere was this more acute than at Brandon University where our 240 colleagues in the Brandon University Faculty Association (BUFA) were on picket lines from October 12 to November 26th. There were supported by several flying picket visits and nearly \$1 million in strike benefits.

MAFA supported BUFA with three \$1000 donations to their strike fund.

Robert Rosebrugh
Trustee

PART-TIME MEMBERS AWARDED RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY STIPENDS

MAFA would like to advise its members that Geoff Martin (Politics and International Relations), Marianne Parsons (Continuous Learning--Sociology), and Vicky Simpson (English) have been awarded the 2011-12 Mount Allison Part-Time Research and Creativity Stipends.

Martin won the award for a project entitled "The Place of Assassination in Contemporary US policy," while Parsons' project was entitled "Fat Phobia and the Politics of Gender." Vicky Simpson received her award for her postdoctoral project, entitled "Ellen Wood's *Johnny Ludlow* Stories: From 'Muff' to Man."

The stipend, valued at \$5656, is salary support for research and creative activity. Under Article 29.02 of the part-time collective agreement, applications submitted by part-time members are considered by the Senate Research and Creative Activity Committee.

"I am very pleased not only that we have negotiated these awards, but that we increased the number to three in this contract," says MAFA President Stephen Law. "It really does help these members undertake the full range of activities that we expect in academia."

FNBFA REPORT

The FNBFA Board, consisting of the Executive and representatives from the six faculty associations, held a meeting in Moncton on November 5. The new Executive Director, Elisabeth Hans, was presented to the Board. Christina Ionescu represented MAFA (Steve Law was unavailable for the meeting). The Board discussed many

issues including conciliation boards. ABPPUM (Moncton) reported on their communication with the minister on the use of these boards, which most FNBFA Board members see as government interference in the collective bargaining process.

The FNBFA was also present at CAUT Council. Rick Hudson, FNBFA VP, and Elisabeth Hans reported on New Brunswick activities at the meeting of the Provincial associations. They also attended a special meeting of the "big four" provincials. On November 27, the FNBFA held a breakfast at the Westin, in Ottawa, for its members attending the CAUT Council. Members from Mount Allison, Saint Thomas, UNB, Moncton, and Moncton-Shippagan were present. Also attending were Jon Thompson from UNB, who had reported to Council on his academic freedom work, Max Roy of the FQPPU, and Wayne Peters, the CAUT President.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS, 2011-12

Please mark these dates on your calendar:

Fall General Meeting, Tuesday, December 6th, 10 am, Avarad Dixon G12

MAFA-Sponsored Happy Hour, December 6th, 4:30 pm, University Club

Annual General Meeting, Thursday, April 5th, 2012, 3:30 pm, Flemington Auditorium (Rm 116)

Retiring Members' Party, April 5th, 4:30 pm, University Club

MAFA 2011-2012 EXECUTIVE

Stephen Law - President (Economics)

David Thomas - Vice-President (Politics and International Relations)

Richard Hudson - Past President (Commerce)

Leah Garnett - Collective Bargaining (Fine Arts)

Christina Ionescu - Membership (Modern Languages and Literatures)

Helen Pridmore - Grievance (Music)

Lori Ann Roness - Part-time/Unit 2 (Geography and Environment)

Robert Rosebrugh - Treasurer (Math and CS)