

EG



Exempt
Group

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

EXEMPT EXPRESS

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Joan Knox

For The Unsung Heroes That Walk Among Us

Allow me the opportunity to have a little bit of a rant if I may. I have a slight issue with events such as the most recent one that called for nominations for the event Hidden Heroes within the University community. My previous employer of 14 plus years is responsible for The Women of Distinction Awards that occur every year, is also an event I have a slight issue with.

Allow me to state very clearly, my issue is not the fact those nominated are not worthy of being recognized. They most certainly are.

My issue is that often the people who are nominated are those who already have a high profile, and as a result are already recognized. Secondly, the very structure and nature of these kinds of events are exclusive and not inclusive.

The Women of Distinction excludes the complete other half of the human race. Maybe it should be Person's of Distinction as it is sponsored by The YMCA-YWCA which is inclusive. *I did raise this with my Administration when I was an employee, and it remains The Women of Distinction.

Our own most recent Hidden Heroes event I initially was quite excited about, as there were several people I know personally and was considering nominating. Upon taking a closer look at what was being asked for I thought hmmmmmm, once again those people who need a GOOD dose of public recognition don't fall into the prescribed categories.

Collins English Dictionary defines HERO as a person distinguished by exceptional courage, nobility and fortitude. There are several people that I know personally who I would say are HEROES based on the above definition and yet, will probably never be publicly recognized for their contributions. Do these people that I know do all they do to be recognized, the answer is no. As a matter of fact I did approach one of these people to see if I could put their name forward and it was a resounding ABSOLUTELY NOT!!!!!!

For you HEROES out there, who will not likely receive public recognition, and for those that don't want public recognition, this letter from the editor is for you.

May 2009

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Julie Hutchins

We have moved to a new office. We had to vacate the Federal Building in March due to the space needed for other things by the University. We actually prefer our new digs located in the MacKinnon Building room 125A-across from the coffee shop. It is more central for members to access and easier for off-campus members to find parking if they need to come in. Plus you can grab a coffee on the way in for a meeting!

A short time ago we asked all Exempt employees to fill out a very short survey asking whether you thought the Exempt Group should check into unionization at this time, 77% were considering a union. These are great odds for pursuing this but may not be an economically wise decision at this time. There are several bargaining groups negotiating in 2009. We have decided to follow the majority of comments with a “wait and see” approach. Some staff were 100% for joining. Others were dead against a union. Some thought we have been doing a super job for a lot less costs of a big union.

One thing I would like to point out is if we do decide to check into unionizing we would invite a few unions to give the executive a presentation. The executive would narrow it down to 2 or 3 and then have the membership decide after hearing their presentations. We will keep you informed as we follow the other bargaining group’s progress with their negotiations.

To Pay or Not to Pay...that is the Question!

As you may recall, the Exempt Group get a pay increase of 3% as of May 1, 2009! If you work at the research stations or at the regional campuses this is a nice bonus. If you work on the main campus and drive your car into work each day, your pay increase will probably not be noticeable after you pay the increase for your parking permit. In fact you may be making less! As happens every year parking is going up and will continue to increase their fees for the next few years (what else is new).

You could always get a City of Guelph bus pass for university employees as there is a savings to you for doing this. Also you can claim the bus passes on your income tax as a way to be environmentally friendly while saving money. With the bus schedule every 20 minutes, as well as perimeter routes this might be an option for you to help save money and the environment at the same time.

For those with busy lives that cannot manage without having your vehicle on campus maybe you can consider car pooling with others to cut costs. Or if you live close to the campus maybe this is your opportunity to start walking to work. You will save on parking costs, get fit, and maybe lose some weight too. This would save getting a gym membership!

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED....

By Mike Hollingshead

Lots of issues of a serious nature have been on the minds of University employees this year. The downturn in the economy is making things tough. Those of us who are looking at the pension situation find little optimism. It worries me that the Pension Benefits Guarantee Fund (PBGF) will only provide \$1000 per month should the UoG plan fail. The thought of a run on PBGF reserves is even scarier, as I don't believe that there are options planned should PBGF fail. It is becoming increasingly important that employees ask questions about their pension entitlement. It is important that you understand how your pension is calculated and what other benefits you can access when retired. Following discussions at the Pension Committee regarding the lack of transparency and information delivery to employees, Human Resources will apparently be changing the method of reporting to employees their total compensation packages. While some may choose to call your compensation package a "Reward", I prefer to call it "compensation for work". I will keep you informed of developments as I learn of them and as I get permission to report them.

Sometimes you have to think outside the box. I was recently at a fundraiser for Michael House (www.michaelhouse.ca). I am a born-again atheist and supportive of freedom of choice for women, so it may seem a bit incongruous to see me at that function. But, I felt that the members of this group were very dedicated and sincere in their beliefs and were willing to work very hard for their cause, so I was looking over their silent-bid auction table for some items I might buy to add to their revenue. Two items caught my eye, one of which was a \$25 gift certificate for the Diana Restaurant. The bids so far were \$10 and \$15, so I wrote \$50 as my bid. A woman looked at my bid and asked if I realized the item had a value of \$25, to which I responded, "Yes. And...?". She stated that it was pretty silly to pay \$50 for a \$25 gift certificate.

I explained that the Diana Restaurant was one of my favourite places to eat in Guelph and that not only was the food great and the service fast and friendly, but the owners were very progressive and supportive of many causes in Guelph – Michael House just one example of many. I asked if she knew that when she donated money to charity she got about 30% back in tax credits and she said she understood that. I then suggested that by paying \$50 for a \$25 gift certificate I was helping out the charity to the same extent as a cash donation of \$50, but I was getting back 50%, not 30% and if I'm not mistaken, Michael House would be able to issue a tax receipt to the restaurant for the \$50 they received which means Diana nearly recouped their entire donation! So, an action that on the surface looks pretty silly can actually be a "Win-Win-Win".

Enrichment Funds Available

Please see our website **at:** <http://www.uoguelph.ca/~exempt/> for the criteria and application forms to apply for the enrichment fund

INTRODUCING NEW MEMBERS!

On - campus Employees

Phyllis Rato-Hatch	Human Resources
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Off - campus Employees

David Boughner	Research Station Operations-Simcoe
Keith Brohman	OMAF Research Station
Christiane Gareau Vallee	Alfred College
Manon Meloche	Alfred College
Dennis Peddie	New Liskeard
Connie Reynolds	Ridgetown College
Keith VanDyk	Arkell Swine

Welcome Aboard!

The Stress Management and High Performance Clinic Presents the Following Programs !

hot flashes disturbing sleep?

Better Sleep Program

for peri-menopausal women

A 5 session program
begins May 7

meeting from 12:30 – 1:30 pm

Call the Stress Management Clinic
at 519 824-4120, ext. 52662 or visit
www.uoguelph.ca/~ksomers

Relaxation Skills Training

Learn how to decrease headaches,
insomnia, and anxiety.

A 12 session evening program
begins May 19.

Call the Stress Management Clinic
at 519 824-4120, ext. 52662 or visit

BETTER SLEEP

For

peri-menopausal women

begins May 7

The Stress Management & High Performance Clinic offers group and private instruction in the mind / body approaches most effective at improving sleep and energy.

TOPICS in this special Better Sleep Program include :

- the relationship between stress, breathing, and hot flashes
- how to fall back to sleep more easily after awakening in the night
- enhancing energy during the day
- lifestyle factors influencing sleep architecture
- the sleep behaviours most highly recommended by sleep researchers
- clearing the mind of worry and mental chatter
- the bedtime relaxation skills used by Harvard Medical School, the armed forces, NASA, and the Mayo Clinic to release tension from body and mind, and promote better sleep

A 5 SESSION group meets **Thursdays, 12:30 - 1:30 pm,**
on May 7, 14, 21, 28, and June 4, 2009 in Room 1708 OVC
(by the cafeteria in the OVC Lifetime Learning Centre)
A minimum of 6 women required to run this program.

\$20.00 for University of Guelph students (due to U of G Student Health Services subsidy), \$25.00 for members of United Steelworkers Local 4120 (due to Local 4120 subsidy), \$50.00 for all other

For more information or to register, e-mail Kathy at ksomers@uoguelph.ca
or leave a message at the Stress Management Clinic 519 824-4120 ext. 52662.

Dates to Remember

Sunday June 21st -Father's Day and First Day of Summer

Wednesday July 1st - Canada Day 

Week of July 20th -24th is "Make Someone Smile Week"



Sunday July 26th - Parents Day

Sunday August 2nd - Friendship Day

Monday August 3rd - Civic Holiday

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EXEMPT EXPRESS

Exempt Office

MacKinnon Building Room 125A
(by the coffee shop)

Ext. 52982
mail: exempt@uoguelph.ca

NEXT EXECUTIVE MEETING

Friday June 19th at 12:00 noon
at Alumni House

If you have any concerns or comments that you would like brought forward, please contact one of the Executive members.

Check out our website at:
<http://www.uoguelph.ca/~exempt/>

Our Memorandum of Agreement (January 2006), Constitution (February 2006)
and
Enrichment Fund details/Application Form are located on this website.

The *Exempt Express* is available on our website, *after dues-paying members have received their copy.*

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NEWSLETTER

Only dues-paying members receive a copy of the Newsletter. Important messages will be sent out via e-mail/mail to all of our members.



Ext. 52982

Your calls are important

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