

Friends of the Foundation Newsletter for Spring 2017

A word from the President of the Foundation Board, Don Misener:

Greetings and welcome to reading this third edition of our Foundation Newsletter. The 2017 Saskatoon Conference was a great success for the Foundation. The various opportunities we offered CASC members and friends to contribute to our efforts to assist financially those completing units of CPE and engaged in spiritual care research totaled \$2,930. This included money raised in the Manitoba Regional run of \$620 and Ontario North East run of \$250. At the Conference we also hosted Dr. Bill Nelson as our Fun Run Honoree. Bill was the Teaching Supervisor for many years of the only Pastoral Counselling Unit ever conducted in Saskatchewan. Bill also taught Pastoral Theology at Lutheran Seminary in Saskatoon for over three decades and in this way contributed significantly to the pastoral formation of hundreds of ministers many of whom have served in various ways in CASC. At our Annual Meeting held in Saskatoon April 29, ably chaired by Michael Pasche, our BC Regional Representative to the Foundation in the absence of Don Misener, who had to catch a 5 am flight home. Saturday morning, we expressed our appreciation for the lengthy leadership to the Board of Buffy Harper and to Ron Long our Manitoba Representative who completed his second 2-year term on the Foundation Board. Tom Powell was elected to the Foundation Board as Vice President and Brian Walton to a second term as Treasurer. We also welcomed Hermann Dueck the new Manitoba Regional Representation to the Foundation Board.



Bill Nelson
Fun Run Honoree

Our next responsibility is to review the various requests for bursary assistance for those enrolled in CPE and for grants to assist financially in research efforts. This review begins in June following the May 31 closing date for applications. This year we have a minimum of \$10,000 available to invest in bursaries and grants. This is the spot in the year where those of us who are CASC Old Timers on the Board get to say thanks in a very practical way for the privilege of service to CASC in various local, Regional and National ways that has given us the opportunity to get to know great folks from coast to coast and be inspired by their work, their gifts and challenges and their friendship. Being able to contribute financially to those engaged in CPE education and in the research so essential to our spiritual care future is a very satisfying way to say thanks.

Keep our ministry in your thoughts, prayers and decisions about where to invest your donations in the coming year. We welcome and value your continuing support.

Don Misener
Foundation Board President

The Canadian Foundation for Spiritual Care has begun issuing a biannual newsletter called *Friends of the Foundation*, which is our attempt to reach out to retired members of CASC. We have learned that the newsletter readers are interested in hearing about other emeritus members and how they are spending their retirement. This spring we are happy to hear from the Alberta Region. On behalf of the Foundation, I would like to thank the following people for their generous support and expertise in producing this edition of *Friends of the Foundation*: Buffy Harper, Kathy Greig, and Tim Frymire as well as those who graciously shared intimate details of their lives in retirement.

Sincerely,

Angela King,

Spiritual Care Practitioner, PAC™ Trainer in Dementia Care & Alberta Regional Rep

James Strachan, Specialist, CPE Teaching Supervisor

I would be the retired CPE supervisor residing in Ponoka, soon to be relocated to Wetaskiwin. I spent 32 years as a CPE supervisor, in Winnipeg, Ottawa and finally in Foothills, Calgary. I've been retired forever, and don't have much contact with the CPE folk. But this is ME, for what it's worth. I'd like to keep abreast of what's going on, but had no idea who to contact. I can be reached at hamish67@gmail.com.

Pat Seale, MTS, Specialist (CASC) and Retired Chaplain



Angela: What have you been up to since you entered retirement?

Pat: I once told my manager that I would be retiring either when I became incompetent or when I turned 70, whichever came first! When he didn't ask me to leave, I gave notice that I would retire at the end of the month of my 70th birthday—December 31, 2013.

Since then I have been quite active in my local congregation, Southminster-Steinhauer United Church, in Edmonton. In addition to attending regular activities on Sundays and mid-week, I've facilitated women's retreats, provided leadership to our women's Tuesday Connection group and other events—with topics ranging from a Mandela workshop, to end-of-life issues, to Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) related topics. Currently, I coordinate our congregation's monthly chapel service at St. Joseph's Auxiliary Hospital, facilitate our congregation's TRC RESPONSE Circle, sit on the Board of Trustees, and get involved in one-off events or activities from time to time. While I am not a member of our Congregational Care Committee, I do occasional visiting and support them in their activities, and provide Healing Pathway Treatment sessions for those who request it.

Early in my retirement, a number of women in our weekly women's group were concerned about changes that were being proposed to the Alberta Health Care system. These women had first-hand experiences of the system as it affected them and their families, plus a few of us who had also worked within the system. We prepared a paper which we presented to our MLA at the time, Hon. Fred Horne, who also happened to be the Minister of Health. We had several meetings with him where our concerns and suggestions were taken seriously and forwarded on to the President and Chief Executive Officer of Alberta Health Services. While we don't know what effect our submissions had in the modifications that were made to the system, we trust that we did raise some consciousness about how the proposed changes might affect patient care, family support, discharge planning and the competency of the health workforce teams.

I became quite involved in events leading up to and during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's National Event in Edmonton in March 2014. I attended a course about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission at King's University. I also attended a number of educational sessions and events such as Round Dances, and Blanket Exercises, throughout the community and reserves near Edmonton, the focus of which was to work toward building bridges between the indigenous peoples and non-indigenous "settlers". Our congregation has established links with a Kookum (Grandmother's) Group. As a result, I am now on a first name basis with one of the local Cree Elders, Elsie Paul.

Angela: What do you enjoy most about retirement?

Pat: Retirement has given me extra time to be with our grandsons and to look after them during the spring, summer and fall while their mother teaches riding lessons to handicapped children and adults. This year we are off to Orlando, Florida in May with our daughter and her sons, ages 10 and 8. My retirement also allows me to enjoy weekly Tai Chi classes and monthly bridge games without being concerned about whether or not I'm working or on-call those days.

Angela: What highlights around retirement would you like to share?

Pat: Travelling! My husband Jim and I have taken some very interesting vacations throughout the world. In February 2014, we went on a tour sponsored by the University of Alberta Alumni Association to Ecuador, Peru, and the Galapagos Islands. So we can now say that we have stood on the equator with one foot in North America and the other in South America. The Galapagos Islands and their flora and fauna seemed even more fascinating than we had anticipated, as did our exploration of Machu Pichu.

The end of March of 2015 found us in India to attend the arranged marriage in Delhi of a colleague of Jim's. We toured for a week or so to some of the common tourist attractions that ended in a trip up to the headwaters of the Ganges river with its many ashrams. We participated in an evening *aarti*, which is "a Hindu religious ritual of worship...in which light from wicks soaked in *ghee* (purified butter) or camphor is offered to one or more deities." (Wikipedia) There were also flowers in the "dish" made of wide leaves plus other symbolic items. Once the wick was lit we placed the arrangement carefully in "Mother Ganges" for its

journey down the river. We returned to Delhi for the many activities and ceremonies scheduled in the 10 days prior to the wedding but only attended the Engagement and Sagan Ceremony on Saturday, the Mehndi (Henna) Ceremony on Monday, and the Wedding Ceremony itself on Tuesday. On the day of the wedding, celebrations began in the morning and lasted all through the night with the religious ceremony beginning around a sacred fire starting at about 4 a.m. and ending at daybreak. By this time only family and close friends were present. Apparently, the guest list was quite small for the earlier part of the evening—only about 800 people. It was quite an event!!

I've attached a picture of Jim and me at the photo booth that was set up at the Henna Party/Ceremony. If you are interested in seeing some of what happens surrounding a wedding in India, there is a "Wedding Teaser for Nikhil and Divya - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qXhWAvwWR4>". This 5-minute video shows highlights of the engagement ceremony and the wedding day rituals. You can see Jim and me seated in the left hand bottom background in some of the scenes around the sacred fire at the end of the video. Upon reflection, as I become more aware of North American indigenous culture, I'm discovering many similarities between the two cultures, e.g. the sacredness of fire and its central role in some ceremonies and rituals, and calling female relatives "aunties".

In mid-August 2016, we spent a month in France. The first part was in southern France with my sister and her family in the house in St. Guilhem that they own with 3 or 4 other couples. Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert is a medieval village located on the Chemin de St-Jacques (St. James's Way) pilgrim route to Santiago de Compostella. Having our own personal guide, we saw lots of interesting sites, including the world's tallest bridge, the Millau Viaduct which "is a cable-stayed bridge that spans the gorge valley of the River Tarn near Millau in southern France...one mast's summit at 343.0 metres (1,125.3 ft) above the base of the structure...[which is] 19 meters (62 ft) taller than the Eiffel Tower!" (Wikipedia) One day we explored the Grotte de Clamouse on our own. A fantastic cave near St. Guilhem, which according to its website, "owes its fame to the beauty, variety, abundance and uniqueness of its concretions." We moved on to explore many sites, churches and museums in Lyons and Paris before taking a cruise along the river Seine to the Normandy Beaches and back to Paris, with stops along the way, such as at Giverny where we walked through Monet's garden at our leisure. Another once in a life-time experience for us!

Angela: What have been some challenges of retirement?

Pat: ...the normal pattern of aging—lower energy levels, difficulty in multitasking, decreasing hearing acuity and poor memory!

Angela: What do you look forward to in the year ahead?

Pat: More traveling! More adventures! More learning!

Thanks for this opportunity to share with you a bit about my retirement.
Blessing and peace to all,
Pat

Barbara Meyer, Specialist (2000), CPE Teaching Supervisor

Hello, Everyone! I've been retired for 3 years (2014).

I love what I call my relaxed schedule. It is great not living by my watch. We live an hour west of Edmonton on an acre lot 5 minutes from the lake. I love the quiet as we are in a summer cottage community and there are few folks around except summer weekends. Deer and the occasional moose wander through our yard. It is so peaceful.

I have kept up participation with CASC by way of doing peer reviews, mentoring for Specialist (2x) and mentoring in an ethics situation. I was recently asked to be the mentor for another Specialist process but I'm not sure I will consent. I have enjoyed keeping some involvement with CASC but I think it's time to fully retire.

I keep involved with my new community (Alberta Beach, a summer village is 10 minutes away) by driving for Meals on Wheels, doing yoga at the Seniors Centre and coordinating the local Book Club. I have 10 grandchildren and now have more time to spend with them. I love reading and now have more time for it.

At this season of my life I feel fulfilled.
Blessings,
Barb

Margaret Clark, D.Min, Edmonton, Alberta

Angela: What have you been up to since you entered retirement?

Margaret: Believe it or not, it's been five years since I retired from the University of Alberta Hospital here in Edmonton, Alberta. Shortly after retirement I took a long and lovely road trip to some of my favourite places and visited some of my favourite people. When I returned to Edmonton there was a part-time job offer at St. Stephen's College awaiting my consideration. After that, as they say, "the rest is history". I am now using the term "semi-retired" rather than "retired", and enjoying various types of part-time temporary work in the areas of CPE supervision, spiritual direction, as well as retreat and course offerings. I thoroughly enjoy what I'm doing! ...even as I continually seek to balance my joie-de-vivre with living the limits of age and energy. It's a lifelong learning endeavor.



Angela: What do you enjoy most about retirement?

Margaret: From the time people first started asking me this question I have always had the same answer: "Not having to set an alarm clock." Love it!

Angela: What highlights around retirement would you like to share?

Margaret: These have been good years for me, something for which I am quite grateful. I find semi-retirement an opportunity to look back while also being present to the here and now. As a single soul, my forty-five years of ministry have been where I've invested much life energy. Whether it is a curse or blessing, these are "interesting times" in which to live. In fact, living in "interesting times" has been the case for me from the days of "baby-booming", to "Vatican II changes", to work place "downsizing", to entering a new "millennium", to the rise of "social media", and now the current shifts and changes in global structures and systems. With the luxury of having more time available through semi-retirement, I am freer to look around at this world of ours with a contemplative heart, to nurture my pilgrim spirit and curious mind, and to cherish "moments-in-time" where I witness the constancy of genuine human goodness. Keeps me hopeful!

Angela: What have been some challenges of retirement?

Margaret: The "old gray mare" takes more time to do less. Even with the blessing of good health, the pace of life is slowing and diminishment is felt. Recently I've been struck with losses of former colleagues, students, friends, and people served in ministry. Intentional grieving is something I've chosen to do over the years; a way of exercising self-care while also honouring the lives of people I've loved and respected. In this regard, something worthy of note is how much I've enjoyed the work Douglas Wilson and I have done over the past eight years in cultivating the Foundation-sponsored "Living Human Memories" project. The website is in place (<http://www.spiritualcare.ca/about-us/living-human-memories/overview/>), a memorial service is now part of our annual CASC/ACSS Conference, and together Doug and I have interviewed over thirty-five current, retired, and former CASC/ACSS members with a view to having a resource available for future researchers interested in our Association's history. While commitment to this project has been a challenge, the fruits of our efforts appear to be well established, and ready for others to carry forward should they so wish. In fact, if I were given three wishes in this regard, here is what I would wish: (1) the identification of people in each CASC/ACSS region with interest in furthering the goals for the Living Human Memories project, (2) CASC/ACSS funding for video-cams for all of those who come forward in this way, and (3) the taking of time by these generous people to interview former, inactive, and retired CASC/ACSS members in each region so the precious threads of our shared history can be remembered and savoured over time.

Angela: What do you look forward to in the year ahead?

Margaret: This summer holds the promise of another road trip and a reunion with close friends. In the fall, together with a Provisional Supervisor-Educator, I look forward to supervising another course-based CPE practicum out of St. Stephen's College. As well, within the context of the Alberta Consortium for Supervised Pastoral Education (AC-SPE), I hope to teach another offering of "The Sacred Art of Preceptorship" course at St. Stephen's so the role of specially prepared preceptors within our Alberta CPE programs continues to develop. In another vein, I look forward to continuing

my involvement with spiritual direction at Providence Renewal Centre here in Edmonton. And, of course, enjoying a more paced unfolding of days.

Thanks, Angela, for this opportunity to share a bit about what I've been up to in retirement. I look forward to seeing how others share their experiences, and what retirement is looking like within our CASC/ACSS circles.

Case Vink



I planned the end my career as teaching supervisor and Spiritual Care Coordinator for the fall of 2013. I has trained to become a Specialized Transition Minister because I found the skills of teaching CPE so transferable to churches undergoing identity shifts and direction changes in an experiential way. I have served 3 churches in the past 4 years' part time. Now I have stopped that and only do casual Spiritual Care coverage for 2 hospitals in Calgary. Slowly easing out of work.

We have traveled significantly: the beaches of San Diego, the rich cultures of Holland and France, campground hosting on the shores of Lake Michigan, camping in the Rockies. I am renovating the house now while I can still recover from aching muscles. We have a horse on my son's acreage and we have both started learning to ride. A year ago I had knee replacement surgery and it has taken a full year to recover. This year I plan to go backpacking with my 3 sons and 4 of my grandchildren.

I have been surprised by the intensity of tough experiences: supporting my children in serious life issues, travelling the painful cancer journey and death of a best friend, and my own post-surgery recovery which seemed endless. The loss of walking and hiking was awful. Another unexpected experience was the journey back to the fringes of life and relationships where I grew up. It was the core of my pastoral and supervisory identity. But it has been painful again as I have moved to the edges of the career I have loved.

In this mixed bag of aging and life transition, I have been blessed to still have Maria as my best friend. We keep adjusting and exploring how to keep our lives meaningful. I also have a great male "buddy". And I have a small group of retired and might-as-well-be retired spiritual care providers and supervisors who gather occasionally for some fun, stories, and caring conversation. Plus, my good Serbian neighbours for over the fence chats.

Thanks for listening. Now it's back to my slow mornings on the patio in the morning sun with a good cup of coffee and a good book.

Remembering Rev. Dr. Cullene Bryant...



The Rev. Dr. Cullene Bryant passed away on April 23rd in Vancouver, BC having been diagnosed with stage four pancreatic cancer in mid-February. Cullene was the first woman to be certified as a CPE Supervisor within the Canadian Association of Spiritual Care. A minister of the United Church of Canada, she worked most of her life as a spiritual care teaching supervisor at hospitals in Toronto, Edmonton, New York, and Vancouver, and taught at Union Theological Seminary in the Philippines. Cullene had passion for both theology and writing, and studied at St. Andrew's in Scotland and the Centre for Spirituality and Justice in New York, received a Doctor of Ministry from Princeton, and graduated from the Writer's Studio at Simon Fraser University. She spent many years in Alberta, including a decade working as the Director of Pastoral Care at the University of Alberta Hospital, where she was appreciated for her deep goodness, wit, and wisdom.

Her daughter's words describe Cullene well:

"With great grief and a certain amount of shock I must announce the death of an incredible woman, my irreplaceable mother, Cullene Bryant. Pancreatic cancer claimed her life early this morning (April 23) just over 3 months after being told she might have stage 4 cancer and barely 2 months after her official diagnosis. I struggle to say she battled cancer because it was never a fair fight, but she did continue to defy doctors' predictions at almost every turn. She was never a dull woman and lived life with a fierce passion for all she loved – including her writing and her family. Loyal, protective, creative, active, and healthy, her terminal diagnosis came as a shock but she bore it with grace. She raised me and my brother as a single mom, and it made us that much closer. We never wanted for anything and she offered us every opportunity life could afford. She was such a strong presence in our lives it is impossible to believe she won't be physically in them anymore. Her love stays with her family, most especially her children, grandchildren and children-in-law. I will miss her for the rest of my life, but I hope she is at peace now. The fiercely protective mother and the strong, independent woman I am are in large part because of her. Thank you, mom!!!" Rhiannon

*Do remember to forget
Anger, worry, and regret.
Live while you have life to live.
Love while you have love to give.
~Author unknown.*