

WLU RETIREES' NEWS

A Publication of the Wilfrid Laurier University Retirees' Association

To contact the executive: retirees@wlu.ca WLURA website: www.wlura.ca

Winter 2024

Upcoming Change to Email Service for WLU Retirees

by Gerry Schaus

At the November meeting of the WLU Retirees' Association, the largest gathering of our members in recent memory was presented with information about a major change coming to the Laurier email service for retirees. This development has important ramifications for all those who have retained their WLU email addresses and who continue to rely on Laurier for this service, yet the Association was not consulted about the changes as they were being developed. The implications of this development for our members certainly brought out a large crowd of about 60 people, half in person and half on the ZOOM link. Questions and concerns were voiced for more than 90 minutes, as our two guests from WLU's Information Technology area, Nela Petkovic, Chief Information Officer, and Yi Ruan, Manager of Security and Identity Management, received more than a little feedback from the audience.

After providing some background about the upcoming changes, especially highlighting problems with security of information and volume of attacks on individuals and the system generally, Nela and Yi gave a summary of the effects that proposed changes will have specifically



WLURA members gathering for coffee and cookies before a recent Friday afternoon presentation.

on WLU retirees. The volume of emails coming through the WLU system every day, we were told, was 700 billion! Hard to believe! Trying to keep Laurier's personal and institutional information safe is a huge problem, and it is only becoming worse. The Educational sector, apparently, is the subject of the most cyber attacks of any sector in today's society. So, to protect the University from such relentless and hostile threats, beginning in January, 2024, all WLU retirees will have their email addresses changed, unless they can successfully argue to their respective deans, that they continue to have a valid working relationship at/with the University. This is specifically to meet licensing requirements by the University software providers (Microsoft Outlook). The implementation timeline is somewhat fluid, apparently, but it will be carried out as quickly as possible. The IT department will do its best to make the transition as easy for retirees as possible, we were assured. Skepticism, however, was clearly apparent.

The audience was shown in a series of illustrations what steps would be taken to implement the changes. The plan is to move all retirees who wish to continue to use WLU's email service to a new and separate domain, so that their new email addresses would have the user's full first and last names separated by a dot (.), then after the @ sign, to have the suffix "ret" followed by "wlu" and "ca" separated by dots, so, for example: john.smith@ret.wlu.ca. This change, we were told, was approved both by the Legal Officer and the Privacy Officer at the University, and has been approved by the Board of Governors. We were also told that the WLU Faculty Association had "signed off"

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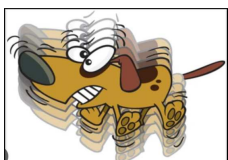
on the proposal, and that it had also been approved by the Staff Association. When pressed, however, on whether there was a *written* approval by the Faculty Association for these changes, we were told that there was not.

Among the concerns raised by the audience, both online and in person, was the implementation timeline since it was clear that 60 days or less for retirees to go through all their old emails and make decisions about which ones would be moved to the new domain was not going to be enough time. Our speakers were told that six months or a full year for implementation ought to be considered. Meantime, as new email addresses were being set up, the problem of how long newly arriving emails using the old addresses would be forwarded to the new email addresses was also worrying. Several in the audience thought that this forwarding service should continue for at least a year, and probably longer.

Another issue was one brought up a year and a half ago (April 28, 2022) when Nela and Yi also addressed our group, and that was access to our email archives. Some may remember that retirees were suddenly and unexpectedly cut off from access to the archive of all our old emails. This was again brought up at the November meeting. The problem of accessing the archive, unfortunately, was not well addressed and remained open, although it seemed that individuals will have to go through the process of gaining access on a case-by-case basis.

Another question concerning this transition was how one could access WLU emails using the multi-factor authentication, either through a text message or other means. We were told that if we have a landline phone or if we are overseas without a cell phone and could not receive a six-digit code to verify our identity, we would be able to get a device called a “dongle” and carry that around to generate a six-digit verification number for us.

One matter of some concern to the audience was having an email address that would identify us as retirees (“@ret.wlu.ca”) and therefore more easily vulnerable to online predators through phishing or malware or other means. We were told that the Privacy Office had vetted the proposal, and that’s why the suffix “ret,” not, for example, “retiree” was used. This provoked the response that “ret” is easily figured out as an abbreviation for “retiree.” How the Privacy Officer approved this was a question in people’s minds.



Tail (IT) wagging the dog (WLU Retirees)

In January, both online and in-person seminar sessions have been offered to anyone interested in changing their emails to this new system. Meantime, the WLURA Executive has met and plans to make a presentation to the WLU Board of

Governors about concerns regarding these changes and how they were handled, along with a list of other matters on the minds of WLU retirees. (See page 12 for more information.)

President's Message

by Jim Butler



Best wishes for a safe and happy 2024!

The new year finds WLURA active on a number of files. Your Executive met on January 12 to set the program through to May. We were also pleased to welcome two new members to the Executive Committee, Sheila McKee-Protopapas and Connie Palenik. They both come with a wide range of experience and we look forward to their contributions for the benefit of retirees.

We will continue to host hybrid meetings for January, February, April, and May with a Pub night in March. In addition to our social events, we are working on strategies to reduce or mitigate the inflationary costs of post-retirement benefits. This is of interest to the growing number of retirees who contribute to post retirement premiums. WLURA has a strong commitment to Pension Plan oversight and is pleased to report that the plan is in positive health.

Of particular importance concerns Laurier’s implementation plan to convert all retiree email accounts to a separate and unique suffix address for retiree emails. This change is to occur within 60 days. We have been working with IT Services to ensure that the transition away from the “@wlu.ca” address suffix occurs in the least disruptive manner possible.

We are looking for a volunteer to edit the WLURA Newsletter. Similar to most Executive roles, it need not be a long-term commitment. Here is a chance to reach out to former colleagues and friends. A number of key issues affect Laurier’s retirees and these need to be communicated along with the development of a strong social network.

We are continually looking for suggestions and ideas for programming and presentations. We are open to a wide range of topics that may be of interest. Please send your ideas to any member of the executive committee.

Finally, we will be asking Laurier’s Board of Governors to give WLURA ten minutes to make a presentation at one of their meetings. It is felt that the relationship between Laurier and its retirees can be strengthened by way of better communication.

WLU Press at 50

by Gerry Schaus

On September 10, 1974, Richard K. Taylor sent out the following "News Release":

Wilfrid Laurier University Press Aims to Make Books Affordable

Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, announced today the formation of a publishing arm to be known as Wilfrid Laurier University Press. In making the announcement, Dr. Norman Wagner, dean of graduate studies at the university and director of the press, said the new venture is dedicated to producing significant publications by Canadian authors at reasonable cost.

Unlike the large university presses, Wilfrid Laurier University Press is able to bring work from manuscript form to finished product in a matter of months. Many university presses take several years.

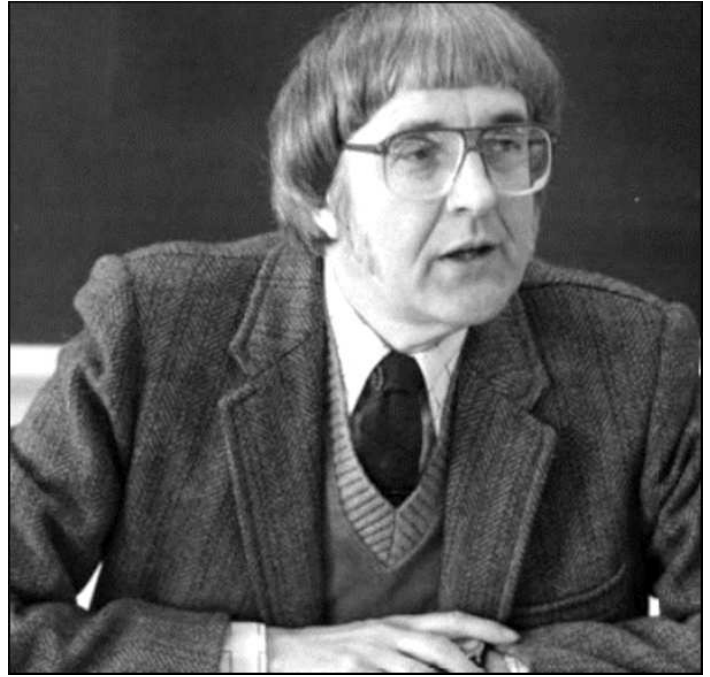
Because typesetting is done on campus, and because of other economies, the new press is publishing full-length books in soft cover for \$3.50 and \$5.95 for cloth. This price, considering the short run and specialized subjects, marks an important step forward in making books available.

Dr. Wagner said dissemination of the results of scholarly research is vital to the life of the nation. "With books today often costing \$15 or more, it is obvious that ways must be found to break this spiral. . . . The private libraries accumulated by scholars just won't exist in the future unless ways are found to make important books available at an affordable cost," Dr. Wagner said. "We think this new press built upon the close co-operation of author and production staff, with minimum overhead, is a significant step in finding a solution to this problem."



Dr. Norman Wagner, first Director of WLU Press

And so it was that WLU Press took its first steps. Fifty years and more than 700 titles later, WLU Press has reached its golden milestone. No doubt you'll hear more about its plans to celebrate the big event as the year moves along. Prominent among the many people who worked at the Press over the years are fellow retirees who have contributed so much to the WLU Retirees' Association. These include Doreen Armbruster who passed away last year but who worked so diligently to put out three editions of the *Retirees' Newsletter*



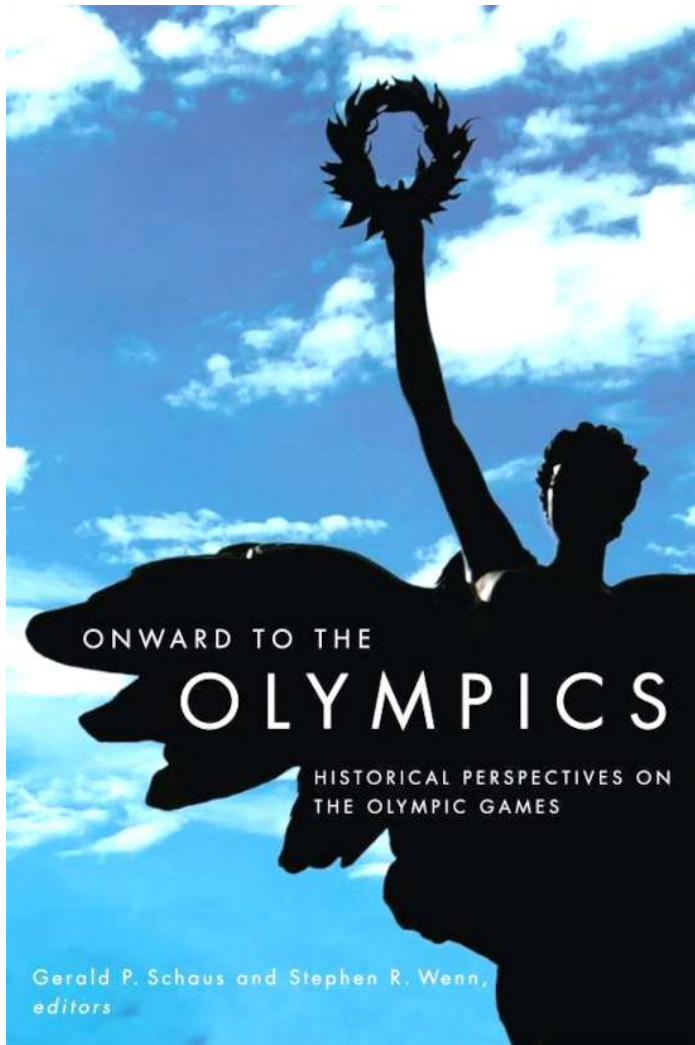
Harold Remus

every year; Steve Izma, who is still busy laying out our newsletter so carefully every issue and is also the designer and webmaster of WLURA's website; and Harold Remus, another former editor of the *Retirees' Newsletter*, who was Director of WLU Press from 1978 to 1983.



Doreen Armbruster

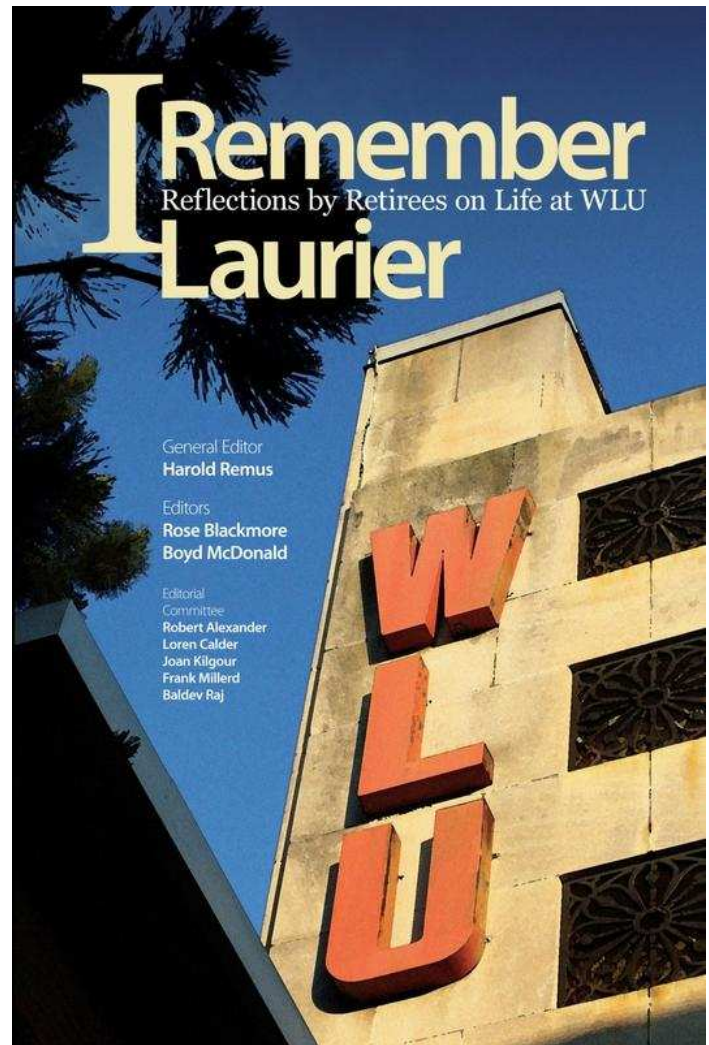
It was Harold who brought me on board the WLU Press Editorial Board in 1980. I was a very young professor with almost no publication experience. It was just the second university committee I was asked to sit on after arriving in 1978. Being eager and willing, if wet behind the ears, I did my best to contribute to discussions about which manuscripts to approve. Believe me though, it was Harold Remus' show and if Harold liked a manuscript, it was very quickly approved, even while he was willing to listen to our opinions. It was directly due to that experience on the Editorial Board that Prof. Stephen Wenn and I



turned to WLU Press when we were looking for a publisher in 2007 for the collected papers from an international conference we organized on the history of the Olympic Games. It was a great delight to work with the Press and move through the various stages of publication so smoothly and collegially. I remember dropping over to the Press offices on several occasions and always finding friendly faces ready to chat, and tackle the issues we were facing.

By the way, just to recommend to Laurier retirees a very special book published by WLU Press, that might be of interest: Harold Remus's *I Remember Laurier: Reflections by Retirees on Life at WLU* with the editorial work on it by such WLURA stalwarts as Rose Blackmore and Boyd MacDonald, Loren Calder, Frank Millerd, Baldev Raj, Joan Kilgour, and Bob Alexander. The price is no longer \$3.50 or \$5.95 for a hard cover version, as Norm Wagner advertised WLU Press books in 1974, but you can get an electronic version for \$10.00, which old Norm would be very proud of.

Congratulations, WLU Press!



"Schaus" at 100

by Gerry Schaus

There can't be too many families who can claim that they have been connected to Wilfrid Laurier University and its institutional predecessors *continuously* for the past 100 years! My family can. The first Schaus family, three brothers and a sister with their children, came to the Waterloo area in 1846 from Germany. Ten years later, they bought farmland near Clifford right on the border of Grey and Bruce Counties, settled down, and had big families. But it was not until 1923, 12 years after the founding of Waterloo College, that the first Schaus enrolled at the little institution – Lloyd Henry Schaus. A century later, there are still Schaus's at WLU in different capacities: alumnae/alumni, staff and emeritus professor. In between, there have been a dozen or more students and even one prominent administrator at Laurier – that was Lloyd.

When I was growing up in Nova Scotia, my father, a Navy chaplain based in and around Halifax if he wasn't riding the aircraft carrier, *Bonaventure*, or one of several destroyer escorts, would proudly mention Dean Schaus



Waterloo College Students in Front of Willison Hall, 1923. Lloyd Schaus, far right.

from time to time. I didn't know who he was really, other than that he was at Waterloo Lutheran University. I thought for a long time that his first name was "Dean." Gradually, I learned that he was Dad's first cousin, that "Dean" was an important administrative job at the University, and that he was a scholar of Biblical literature.



Glenn Carroll, Bas Healey, Dean Schaus 1963

It was purely good fortune that I wound up at Wilfrid Laurier University in 1978. I was finishing my PhD with a job offer from the University of Alberta already in hand. While I sat at my carrell deep in the stacks of a library in Athens, I opened a letter from my younger brother, Philip, a second-year student in the business program at WLU. As I unfolded the letter, out fluttered a tiny piece of paper that he had cut out, advertising a position in classical archaeology at Laurier. He had taken an Intro to Classics course co-taught by Vera Vanderlip and Hugh MacLean and somehow learned about the job opening. I applied, got the job, and moved to Waterloo instead of the University of Alberta.

A couple years after arriving in Waterloo, I finally had a chance to meet this semi-mythical Dean and Doctor

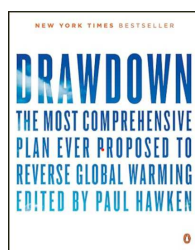
(Honorary) Lloyd Schaus, who was now retired but still living on Columbia St. near Albert, just around the corner from where Pam and I bought a house. So, the Schaus family thread at WLU has continued for another forty-six years and counting, in total a century of learning, service and scholarship at Laurier.

Drawdown, the book to learn about climate change

Book recommendation by Shannon Purves-Smith

Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming. P. Hawken, ed. Penguin, 2017

I'd like to introduce you to a soft-cover book entitled, *Drawdown*, what I call "my climate change bible." I highly recommend it to fellow retirees. Just after my husband Michael's death in 2018, I heard about the book, and after thumbing through 221 pages, the fact that the longest article was only three pages long, and each article had a beautiful photograph that enhanced its meaning, I bought it. *Drawdown* was the work of 204 people. Some of them were sent out around the planet to learn what is helping or damaging our environment and others wrote up the accumulated information.



The editor, Paul Hawken, organized the articles to be read one per day. The articles are divided into eight sections in which all eighty articles are ranked by how valued each one is. There is a ninth section that includes "coming attractions." I can explain the content by including some of the interesting ideas from the eight groups: Energy, Food, Women and Girls, Building, Cities, Land Use, Transport, and Materials.

In the Foreword the editor tells us,

Sometimes, when a concept or institution reaches its logical conclusion, the world looks at the results and cries: "Never again." For really bad ideas – from totalitarianism to fossil fuel dependence – saying "never again," isn't enough. Humanity needs other, better ideas to take their place. That's where we are today. We know we can't avoid the cataclysmic impacts of global warming by only focusing on achieving zero net carbon emissions; we must also rapidly re-sequester carbon. *Drawdown* – by identifying and re-searching dynamic, innovative solutions – creates the playbook for this urgent goal.

Of course, people have come a long way, and while



Don't forget about the upcoming Pubnight. See our events list under "Upcoming Gatherings" on page 9.

there are still deniers of climate change, many of us don't know about the multitude of skills, habits, facilities, and the millions of "understandings" all over the world that can cause harm, or the benevolence that is a part of the inclination to hold these harms back. *Drawdown* is easy to read (but put on your glasses, there is a lot of small print), and the facts are often the subject of argumentative conversations, such as vegetarian and vegan eating, that are fun if you have more facts than your opponent.

After every section there is a little "Ranking and Results by 2050" in the corner of the page. The numbers, up to 80, with cost and savings, and the amount of reduced CO₂, are useful bits of information now because fossil fuels are well known to most of us.

In addition, each article offers a reason for the suggested initiative. In the Materials example, Patagonian women are modeled together in recycling household and industrial waste. "The total additional implementation cost is estimated at \$734 billion, with a net operational savings of \$142 billion over thirty years. On average, 50 percent of recyclable materials come from industrial and commercial sectors. At a 65 percent recycling rate, the commercial and industrial sectors can avoid 2.8 gigatons of carbon dioxide by 2050." The numbers are staggering. The accompanying picture shows five engaged women seated in a row, working at their tasks. In a second example, carpet tiles are being made from 100 percent recycled fishing nets.

In two pages on Energy, we learn that "The oceans

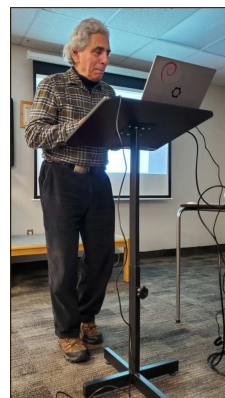
are in constant motion, rippling, swirling, swelling, retreating. As wind blows across the surface, waves are formed. As the gravitational forces of earth, moon, and sun interact, tides are created. These are among the most powerful and constant dynamics on earth. Across the world, a variety of wave-energy technologies are being tested and improved in pursuit of the ideal design for converting waves' kinetic energy into electricity."

These are only samples of the Summary of Solutions by Sector, but they certainly are impressive and could be useful in educating high school and university students. The entire book offers hope; questions to problems are answered. And yes, I myself have implemented some of them in my own life. Every school teacher, university professor, scientist, and climate change denier should have a copy of the book on their desks.

Walking on the Lebanon Mountain Trail

Steve Izma's Return to Lebanon

by Gerry Schaus



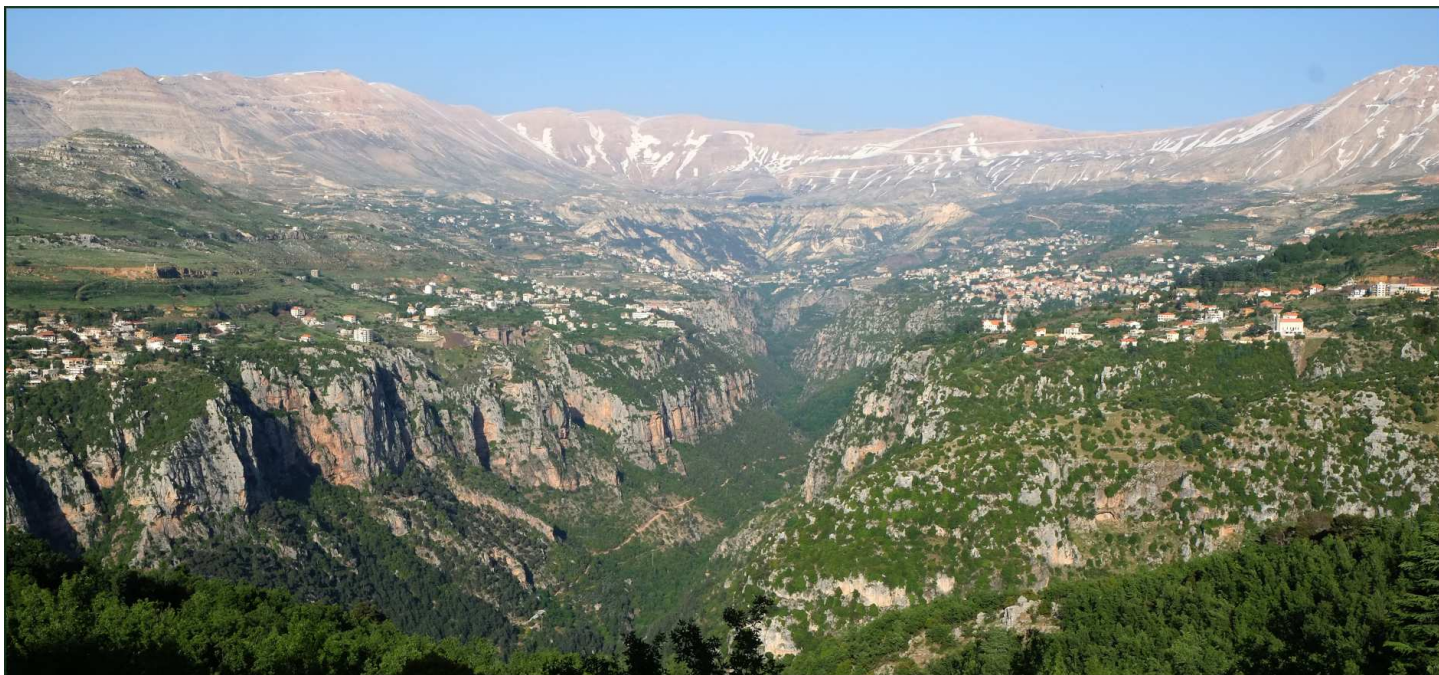
"I still intend to make a presentation about Lebanon on the 26th, although I've been set back in most things for the last month because of a serious fire at our house in early December. We're all fine and set up quite comfortably in a neighbouring house (for several months). With some difficulty, I've managed to salvage my computer equipment and get back up to speed in that respect, but we are spending a lot of time

dealing with listing and salvaging everything else in the house."

With these brave words, Steve Izma informed the WLURA Executive that he was still going ahead with his presentation to us on January 26. His audience of over thirty people were delighted he did.

Steve began by telling us that three of his grandparents arrived in the Waterloo area from Lebanon around 1900. His parents' generation lost contact with Lebanon almost completely, but in 2017 Steve was one of the first of his family born in Canada to travel back to Lebanon. In three trips – 2017, 2019, and 2023 – Steve spent much of his time hiking the Lebanon Mountain Trail (LMT), about 600 kilometers long, that runs from north to south through the mountainous middle of the country.

He informed us about the trail's significance to a sus-



The Qadisha Valley in northern Lebanon, with villages surrounding the gorge.

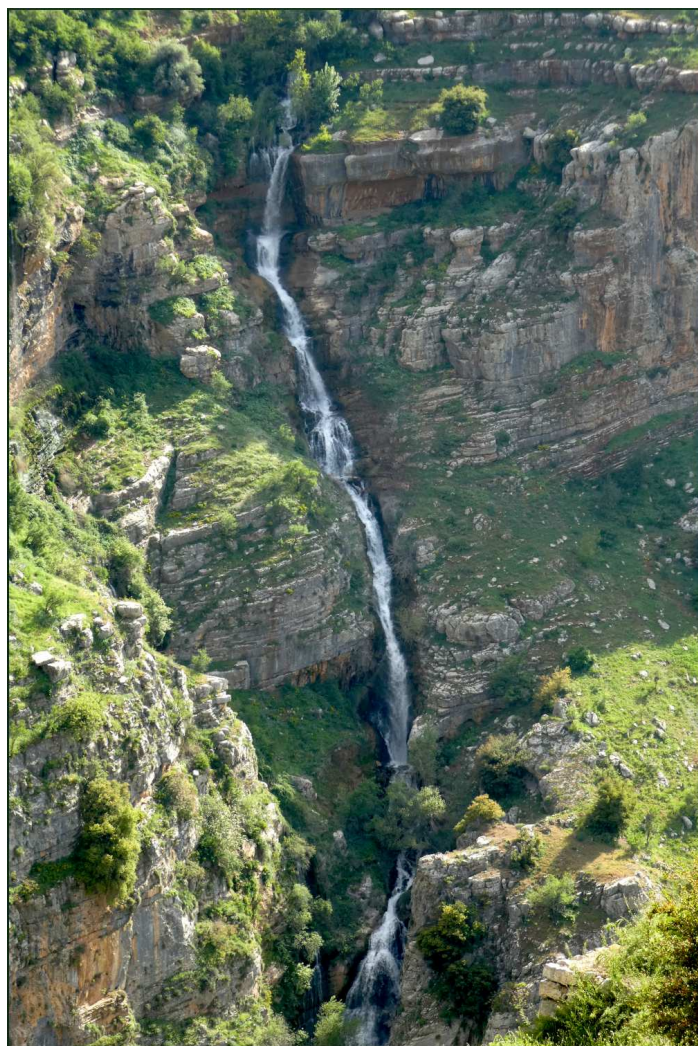


Steve in Lebanon in 2017, wearing a WLU Press cap

tainable environment and agriculture in Lebanon and followed it with a summary of the complex politics of the country. We were told that news of the country's deep troubles, including bloody and destructive sectarian violence, an economy in collapse especially after the deadly grain elevator explosion in Beirut, and the relentless bombardments from Hezbollah on the southern border, colour our views of the entire country and blind us to the beauty of the peaceful countryside and walking trails of the interior.

This was Steve's message to us as he showed beautiful images of the villages where he and his family stayed on their walks and the spectacular scenery all along the LMT.

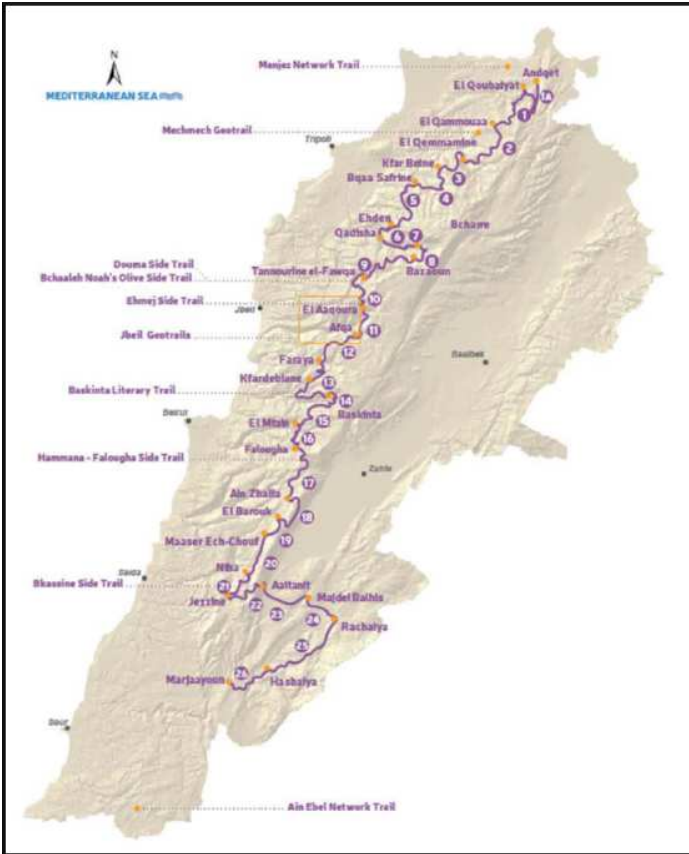
The Lebanon Mountain Trail Association has a great



One of many waterfalls along the walls of the Qadisha Valley



Ancient Cedar; apparently the model for Lebanon's flag



The Lebanon Mountain Trail

website: <https://www.lebanontrail.org/home> for more information.

The website of the Canadian Friends of the Lebanon Mountain Trail: <https://cflmt.ca>.

CURAC Affinity Agreements

by Frank Millerd

Please mention that you are a member of the Wilfrid Laurier University Retirees' Association when applying for

coverage under any of the CURAC affinity programs. Some programs provide rebates to our Association.

Registered Teachers of Ontario Plans

Members of WLURA may join the Retired Teachers of Ontario (RTO) and participate in RTO's group plans. You must be a member of RTO (fee is \$76.50 per year) to join an RTO group insurance plan, but you can join RTO without joining an RTO plan.

RTO Extended Health Care Plan

- ◆ Pays for eligible expenses that are recommended as medically necessary but are not normally covered by a government health insurance plan.
- ◆ Includes, with some limitations, prescription drugs, vision care, eldercare guidance, paramedical practitioners, aids and appliances, accidental dental, and guidance on treatment options.
- ◆ Comprehensive travel medical insurance for 93 days per trip.

Retirees not now members of WLU or another extended health care plan, or those wishing additional insurance, may join RTO and the RTO Extended Health Care Plan. RTO members currently in Laurier's plan will be accepted into the RTO Extended Health Care Plan without a medical questionnaire. Coverage is also available for a spouse and dependent children.

Joining RTO to ensure that the surviving spouse or partner is eligible to join RTO group plans:

- ◆ The surviving spouse of a deceased retiree may join RTO and RTO's plans only if the deceased retiree was an RTO member at time of the retiree's death.
- ◆ After a retiree dies, health and dental benefits from Laurier for a surviving spouse and eligible dependents continue for two years.
- ◆ A surviving spouse who joins the RTO plan within two years of the retiree's death and is still a member of Laurier's Group Benefits Plan will be accepted into the RTO plan without a medical questionnaire.

RTO does not offer stand-alone travel insurance but their full extended health care package includes competitive travel and trip-cancellation insurance.

Travel Planning

- ◆ **Collette Travel:** Inquiries and bookings can be made at 1-855-394-8687 or through a travel agent. CURAC members save \$100 per person on all tours, all dates. Mention your CURAC membership when calling. Use code CURACSAVE for seasonal offers up to \$500 off per person. www.gocollette.com
- ◆ **Trip Merchant:** At the website www.curac.tripmerchant.ca/ enter the CURAC password: CURACTM18. Mention your CURAC membership when inquiring.

- ♦ **Travel Insurance:** Johnson Inc. offers two Travel Insurance plans to CURAC members.
 - MEDOC Travel Insurance provides emergency health care as well as trip cancellation or interruption coverage.
 - Stand Alone Trip Cancellation Insurance for those who already have out-of-province medical insurance. The coverage is per person per trip for an unlimited number of trips per year at an annual premium to cover an individual, a couple, or a family. Extended family members or friends of CURAC members are also eligible.

For information on the policies and how to enrol, go to:

curac.johnson.ca.

Members who do not see a fit with the above may contact Securiglobe (**1-888-211-4444**), a broker that endeavours to match individual clients to insurance coverage that suits their needs.

Home and Car Insurance

Belair Insurance offers auto and home insurance at advantageous rates to CURAC-affiliated retirees. Details at www.curac.ca. Click on "Member Benefits, Insurance, Home and Auto."

Pet Care Insurance

PetSecure offers retirees affiliated with CURAC pet insurance at advantageous rates. PetSecure is a member company of Economical.

Visit petsecure.com/group for information.

For further information on all affinity agreements go to the CURAC web site www.curac.ca and click on Member Benefits.

Upcoming Gatherings

Friday, February 23, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

A Gaspésie Scavenger Hunt, with David Peirson.

An illustrated tour of the Gaspé in which we search for a host of amazing objects and places. Sure, Gaspé is Percé Rock, but, it is much more than that, which you will see, if you join us as we follow our guide.

This will be a hybrid gathering: on Zoom and in-person in the first floor lounge of the 202 Regina building.

Come at 1:30 pm for coffee and refreshments and to catch up with fellow retirees.

Friday, March 22, 2024, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Our next pub night: at Beertown, Waterloo Square, 75 King St South, Uptown Waterloo. Let's Celebrate the Com-



Carl Langford, managing the virtual part of the Friday gatherings

ing of Spring! <https://www.opentable.ca/beertown-public-house-waterloo>

Joan Kilgour reports that our last Pub Night was not well attended:

"On October 27, WLURA held its semi-annual 'pub night' at Abe Erb in Kitchener; it was perhaps the threat of bad weather rather than gruesome ghosts and goblins that kept folks at home, but the eight or nine of us who turned up enjoyed a few hours of libations and conversation."

Well, this just shouldn't happen despite goblins! We've planned the next Pub Night back in Waterloo, at a big local watering hole with lots of parking!

Friday, April 26, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

WLURA Presentation to be announced at 202 Regina St. Lounge. We are hoping to have a representative from Vincenzo's but it is not yet confirmed. Bring the Parking Pass or register at the Parking Office. Coffee and Snacks at 1:30 p.m.

Friday, May 31, 2024, 2:00 (Tentatively)

WLURA Annual General Meeting, 202 Regina St. Lounge, to be confirmed.

Pension Update

by Alastair Robertson

Pension Plan Rate of Return and Funded Status

Stock and bond markets staged a strong recovery last year after the losses suffered in 2022, a year in which Canadian pension funds experienced their largest declines in asset values since the financial crisis of 2008. In 2023 the

Canadian S&P/TSX Composite Index rose by 8.1%, while in the U.S. the S&P 500 Index posted a gain of 24.2%. Meanwhile, after suffering one of their worst years on record in 2022, bond markets recovered in 2023 with the FTSE Canada Universe Index up 6.7% over the year.

Buoyant markets in 2023 helped the Laurier pension fund post significant gains, albeit with some month-to-month volatility. Based on (unaudited) year-end data, the pension fund earned an annual rate of return of 10.31% in 2023. This result stands in welcome contrast to the previous year in which the fund registered a loss, with a rate of return of -1.72%.

Strong investment returns in 2023 contributed to a continuing increase in the estimated funding status of the Laurier Pension Plan. The latest actuarial valuation reveals that at July 1, 2023 the plan had an estimated going-concern funded ratio (assets divided by pension liabilities) of 105%, yielding a going-concern surplus of \$45.5 million. This is an increase from the going-concern funded ratio of 104% recorded at January 1, 2023 and corresponding surplus of \$29.5 million.

Pension Fund Management: A Closer Look

The pension fund is Laurier's largest invested fund with a total market value of approximately \$900 million, allocated across three broad asset classes: equities, fixed-income securities, and investments in real assets. Assets are held in eight pooled funds, administered by eight professional investment managers appointed by the University's Board of Governors. There are four equity fund managers: Boston Partners (global equity), Fiera Capital (Canadian equity), Manitou Investment Management (Canadian equity), and Walter Scott & Partners (global equity). Two managers are responsible for fixed-income funds: PH&N Investment Management (Canadian bonds), and Romspen Investment Corporation (mortgages). Finally, there are two managers of real asset funds: CBRE Global Investors (global real estate) and IFM Investors (global infrastructure). Each of these eight investment managers must agree to an Investment Mandate Statement (IMS) which ensures alignment to the University's investment policies, sets performance expectations, and outlines reporting requirements.

The pension fund is managed in accordance with the fund's Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures (SIPP) – a document which is reviewed and updated annually by the University's Board of Governors. The fund's SIPP: identifies investment objectives and rate of return expectations; stipulates diversification requirements and sets asset allocation targets; and establishes oversight and monitoring requirements and procedures.

The University's primary long-term objective in managing the pension fund is to achieve, and maintain, a go-

ing-concern funded ratio (pension plan assets divided by pension plan liabilities) of at least 100% over 10 years. (According to the most recent actuarial estimate, in 2023 the pension plan had a going-concern funded ratio of 105%.) To achieve its primary pension fund objective, the University has set a long-run average annual rate of return target for the fund of 6.35%, before management fees. (Over the last ten years, from 2014 to 2023, the fund earned an average annual rate of return of 7.5%, after management fees.)

To achieve an appropriate degree of asset diversification, the SIPP currently specifies the following fund allocation targets: 53% in equities, with separate targets for Canadian equities (23%) and global equities (30%); 27% in fixed-income investments, comprising holdings of Canadian bonds (17%) and mortgages (10%); and 20% in real assets, divided between investments in infrastructure and real estate.

Investment oversight is jointly exercised by two standing committees of the University's Board of Governors: the Finance, Investments & Property Committee and the Pension Committee. They are assisted and advised by the Investment Oversight Subcommittee (IOC), which conducts detailed quarterly reviews of investment performance and prepares a full report for the two Board committees. The IOC is also responsible for ensuring compliance with the pension fund's general investment policies (SIPP) and managers' investment mandate statements (IMS) and can recommend changes in investment policies, in asset allocation targets, and in the selection of individual investment managers.

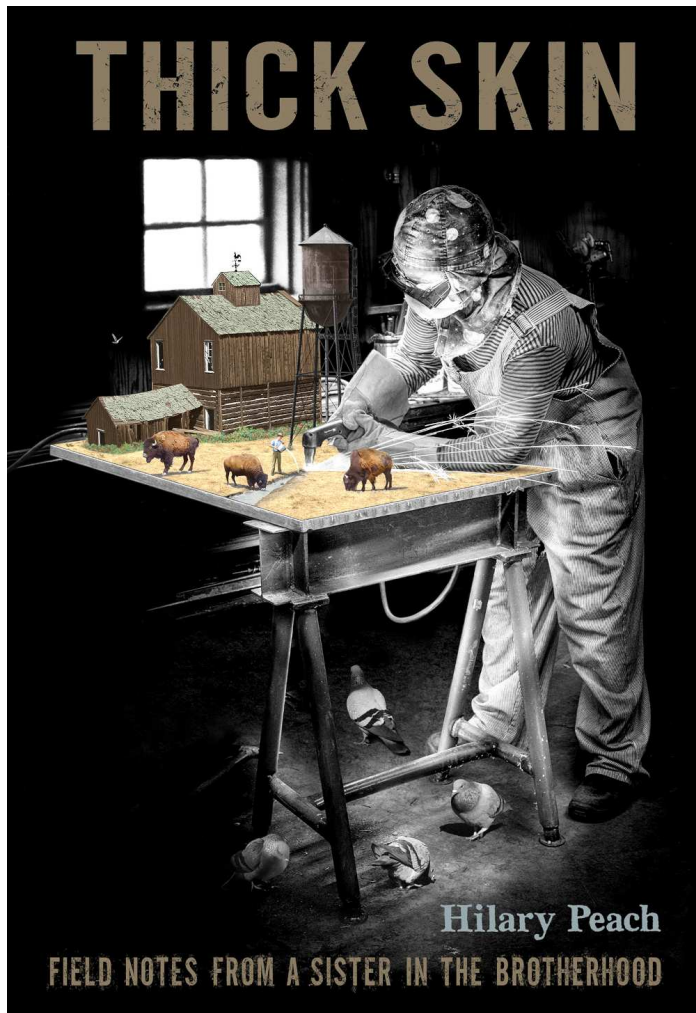
In Memoriam

Please see our [website](#) for linking directly to the online obituaries. Or go to the funeral home website as indicated.

- ◆ Marek Krawiec, October 4, 2023
<https://www.henrywalser.com>
- ◆ John Szierer, November 16, 2023
<https://www.henrywalser.com>
- ◆ Doreen Armbruster, November 24, 2023
<https://erbgood.com>
- ◆ Raj Govindarajan, November 27, 2023
<https://erbgood.com>

Edna Staebler Award Winner Announced

The Edna Staebler Award for Creative NonFiction has announced an event to celebrate the 2023 award-winner, Hilary Peach, for her captivating memoir, *Thick Skin: Field Notes from a Sister in the Brotherhood*, published by Anvil Press.



The awards ceremony will take place on Wednesday, March 27, from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. at the Lodge Administration Building (45 Lodge St.).

In her book, Peach takes the reader on a lively journey through her nearly 30 years as a boilermaker, a lucrative but tough trade that saw her follow jobs across North America. With wit, humour, and pull-no-punches honesty – skills she honed to thrive in a male-dominated field – Peach describes the rigours and extremes of a boilermaker's work, welding industrial metal structures.

Frequently funny and often gritty, this memoir reveals the challenges women face to be taken seriously and treated as equals on the job.

The event will feature an award presentation, read-

ing, Q&A, and book signing, as well as a reception with complimentary refreshments. Copies of *Thick Skin* will be available for sale at the ceremony, but if you'd like to start reading right away, you may also buy a copy through the Hawk Shop:

<https://www.wlubookstore.com/Thick-Skin>,

This is a free event, open to all members of the public, but tickets must be reserved in advance at this website: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/edna-staebler-award-reception-in-honour-of-author-hilary-peach-tickets-839130691487>

Should you require further details or have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the organizers at ednastaebleraward@wlu.ca.

Notes and Announcements

From the editor: I wish to express thanks to Alan Auerbach for his work editing the Newsletter over the past couple years. Happy retirement, Al! The Association is looking for a new Editor. If interested, send a note to me: gschaus@wlu.ca.

This summer **Daniel Lichti** is organizing a new opportunity for the professional development of advanced singers and pianists (in pairs), specifically as it pertains to German Lieder. It will take place at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in downtown Kitchener from July 19 to 27 and will provide many events that are open to the public at no charge. Here's a link to the website, which, with a bit of exploring, will provide a full calendar of master-classes and concerts at which audiences are most welcome: <https://theartoflied.com/>

Simon Dalby, Emeritus Professor, Geography and Environmental Studies, has just published a new book with Agenda Publishing, *Pyromania: Fire and Geopolitics in a Climate-Disrupted World* (Newcastle, 2024). It is available from Columbia University Press <https://cup.columbia.edu/book/pyromania/9781788216517>, your local bookseller, or Amazon.ca.

Here's an excerpt:

We are the only species that uses fire. It has determined how we have made our home on this planet and it has propelled us to the role of the dominant species in the biosphere. But at the heart of contemporary climate change is the process of combustion. [This book] explores what a life without burning things might look like, and how we might get there.

Fires make the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere that is heating the planet, melting the ice sheets, changing weather patterns, and making wildfires worse. Our civilization is burning things, especially fossil fuels, at prodigious rates. So much so that we

are now heading towards a future “Hothouse Earth” with a climate that is very different from what humans have known so far.

See also Simon’s article in *The Conversation* on why we need to break our addiction to combustion: <https://theconversation.com/cop28-why-we-need-to-break-our-addiction-to-combustion-218019>

WLU Email Changes

On or about December 15, 2023, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) sent all retirees with an active wlu.ca email address information about a change in their email.

An application for extended access for a retiree of their current wlu.ca email address is available at: https://wlu.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a90SkPF9EbQ1qcZ.

ITC has advised us of the criteria for a retiree being granted extended access: “The principle is a retiree still working or doing research with the University.”

If your email address changes, please inform Frank Millerd fmillerd@wlu.ca to continue to receive messages from the Retirees’ Association.

ICT has advised us of the following:

If you are now switching to a non-WLU email address, you may want to advise senders to your wlu.ca address of your new email address. In Outlook go to “Settings,” then to “Automatic Replies.” While your wlu.ca address is active, you will still receive messages sent to your wlu.ca address.

After you receive a new WLU address there will be an overlap. You will be able to receive messages sent to either address (your wlu.ca address and the new wlu address) for 60 days. An automatic reply for your wlu.ca address will be active as long as your wlu.ca address is active. The automatic reply can be used to advise senders of your new WLU email address.

After a wlu.ca address ends, ICT will set up an automatic reply, advising senders to a wlu.ca address that “This email address is no longer in use, to contact [name of intended recipient] please send the email to [new WLU email address].” ICT will insert the intended recipients name and new WLU email address.

If you are moving to a non-WLU address and want that new address inserted in the automatic reply, ICT will insert that address if you advise Yi Ruan yruan@wlu.ca by sending him an email from your current wlu.ca email address.

The automatic reply will be in effect for one year. The intended recipient will only receive an email sent to

wlu.ca if the sender re-sends the email to the new address.

If you wish to move saved email messages to a non-WLU email address ICT will export the “ToBeMigrated” folder as a PST file. The retiree will then have to import the file to the other mail platform.

If you do not want to keep your Laurier email address, fill out the “Retiree Account Closure Request Form” https://wlu.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6Vx1Vgbh9rXgl0m.

To inform WLU Human Resources of a change in your email address, send a message to hr@wlu.ca or retirement@wlu.ca.

If you have questions or problems, contact Yi Ruan at ICT: yruan@wlu.ca, phone (548) 889-3069.

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