

This issue of **And By The Way, Retirees.** was assembled and edited by Deborah Blacklock, Judy Boxler, Patricia Cia, Martin Gerson, and Dave Lidstone with contributions by Alan Cooper, Kevin Craib, Ken Naumann, Stephen Phillips, Cathy Sosnowsky and Xina Morisette, and Brad Van Dam. Current news & updates are available at <https://lcar.ca/>.

LCAR UPDATE

LCAR WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Langara College Association of Retirees is a network of all former faculty, staff, and administrators who have retired from Langara College. LCAR was created to allow us to stay connected with each other through the pursuit of activities of common interest, and to help retirees stay engaged with the College and its students.

Please **register as an LCAR member** to receive information about member benefits, and to hear of our upcoming events. Membership is free and it's never too late to join! Register at <https://lcar.ca/>.

Registered as retiree since the last newsletter:

- Bette Chadwick (*Film Arts, 2026*)
- Derrick Chung (*Information Technology, 2026*)
- Sandra Finlayson (*English, 2026*)
- Alan Girling (*LEAP, 2025*)
- Shelina Keys (*Nursing, 2025*)
- David Li Lam (*Continuing Studies, 2025*)
- Tara Lum (*Nursing, 2025*)
- Kevin McMillan (*Web & Mobile Application Design & Development, 2026*)
- Stephen Phillips (*Political Science, 2025*)
- Wanda Pierson (*Nursing, 2025*)
- Harold Schaffrick (*IT Project Manager, 2025*)
- Jessie Smith (*Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS), 2026*)
- Guy Wilkinson (*English, 2025*)

Registered as non-retiree: Anu Kumar (*Business Technology Management (BTMT)*)



LCAR BOARD

The LCAR Board held a brainstorming session this spring and continues to explore events and activities that would be of interest to our members. Stay tuned as we reach out for your feedback and ideas. We post LCAR Board meeting minutes to our website under About | Our Society at lcar.ca/our-society/meeting-minutes/.

Dave Lidstone attended and spoke at a recent LFA year-end social providing a brief presentation mentioning our newsletter and the May Medical & Dental workshop. He was well received by LFA and attendees. Dave also connected with former colleagues. The LFA and CUPE agreed to post a print copy of our *By the Way, Retirees*. newsletter outside their offices.

President's Retirees' Lunch Recap

LCAR Chair, Patricia Cia attended the President's Retirees' Lunch on May 20, 2026. Of the 40+ faculty and staff who formally retired from the College in the preceding year, over 25 attended the lunch, one of the largest turnouts in recent years. Their Department Chairs, Division Chairs, Directors, and Executive Team leader helped them celebrate this milestone event.

President Paula Burns noted the depth and breadth of experiences that the retirees have brought to Langara and the many changes they have lived through. Each attendee received a certificate and gifts from the College. Patricia spoke briefly about LCAR and our activities. She noted that LCAR is financially supported by Langara, so membership is free, but is not automatic. She encouraged everyone to sign up at lcar.ca/register to be a member and to go out and enjoy the rest of their life! Special thank you goes to Alice Hsu, Executive Assistant for the President, for ensuring the event was such a success. Photographer Jennifer Oehler's [images are available on flickr](#).



2026 EMERITUS AWARD RECIPIENTS

LCAR congratulates 2026 award recipients announced during the June convocation ceremonies.

Sarah Bowers, *Faculty Emerita, Educational Technology, and Teaching & Curriculum Development*, joined the English department in 1997 and Educational Technology in 2010, extending her influence across the province as vice-chair of the Educational Technology Users Group. In 2013, Sarah helped found the Teaching Curriculum and Development Centre, creating a welcoming and supportive centre for teaching excellence.

Courtenay Dobbie, *Artistic Director Emerita, Theatre Arts* was a beloved and transformative figure in Canadian theatre whose warmth, boldness, and dedication left a lasting mark on all who knew her. A graduate of Studio 58 at Langara College, she went on to serve as a faculty member and Artistic Director of the program from 2017 until her passing in 2024.

Janet Douglas, *Faculty Emerita, Social Services* was a member of the Langara graduating class of 1980, was a child protection social worker in B.C. for over 30 years before serving sixteen years as a faculty member in the Social Services Department. Her leadership extended across the institution through her foundational work with the Teaching and Curriculum Development Centre, her role in establishing Langara as a research institution, and her thoughtful contributions to major policy and committee work.

Pari Ranjbary, *Faculty Emerita, Physics & Astronomy* joined Langara in 1989, making history as the first instructor to hold simultaneous appointments in Mathematics, Computer Science, and Physics, before dedicating herself fully to Physics. During her remarkable 36-year career at Langara College, Pari was celebrated for her exceptional teaching, innovative curriculum development, and authorship of comprehensive laboratory manuals.

Susan M.M. Todd, *Faculty Emerita, Kinesiology*, taught a broad range of courses over her remarkable 51-year tenure at Langara College (1974–2025). She served as the Recreation Leadership program coordinator and the department chair when it was still known as the Department of Human Performance and Recreation and developed an applied learning initiative assessing community participants from infancy through adulthood.

Visit <https://langara.ca/emertus> for more details on their contributions to Langara and the broader community.

LCAR GIVING

Langara College Foundation [2025 annual report](#) highlights the meaningful impact of philanthropic support across our community, from expanding access to education through financial aid to strengthening programs that prepare students for meaningful careers.

The LCAR Fund is currently at \$16,030. Thank you to everyone who has given so generously. We are still striving to attain Endowment level of \$25,000. In the meantime, we have set aside an additional \$1600 for the LCAR Bursary over the next two years. The Endowment Level would provide a sustainable bursary for Langara students. Please consider donating using our form at lcar.ca/bursary/.

WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

Upcoming Events

LCAR Summer Casuals

July 30, and August 27, 2026, from 2 pm

All the summer socials will be at the Langara Golf Course dining room and patio. It's a great way to catch up with old friends and colleagues. As always, your good friends and partners are also welcome.



Help us to arrange seating by registering for each date separately. If you are “iffy”, register anyway. You can always cancel later if your plans change. Register at lcar.ca/summer_casuals/

Event notices and registration information are posted at our website.

Past Workshops

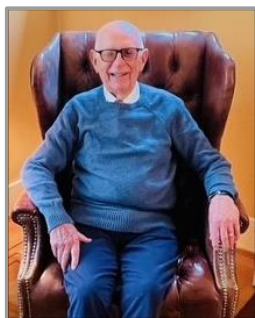
Estate Planning workshop, held on April 9 at Langara in partnership with the Foundation, had over 30 attendees of which 18 were current employees. The workshop was insightful and provided many the inspiration to create or update the various parts of estate planning.

Health and Dental Plan workshop, held on May 6 at Langara, had about 30 attendees including 16 current employees. They provided great feedback noting that it was helpful on many levels including, clarification that the medical/dental plans are each owned by the College Pension Plan, Municipal Pension Plan, and Entente Plan who negotiate with insurance companies. LCAR plans on doing the workshop again. Executive Assistant Kiki Armstong was a pillar of support and offered to help in future.

IN MEMORIAM

The In Memoriam page (<https://lcar.ca/in-memoriam/>) commemorates deceased Langara employees. If you know of someone who should be included, please consider submitting a testimonial. We can gladly add to [existing submissions](#). Send your stories to memorials@lcar.ca. To read more about our former colleagues, click on the underlined names below go to either the LCAR In Memoriam page or to formal obituaries such as the Vancouver Sun-Province Remembering section <https://vancouver.sunandprovince.remembering.ca/>.

George Karas (1932-2026) was a member of the Mathematics Department from the days at King Edward Campus until he retired in 1997. He served as Chair for 1981 and 1982. A lovely obituary from the family is available at Dignity Memorial.



Below are some reminiscences from former colleagues.

Erryl Sanderman: I remember George especially for this interaction: We were sitting in the faculty cafeteria when George entered the room and came to our table. I said, "Hi Curly". (Not a charitable thing to say to a balding man). Rather than taking umbrage, he beamed and said, "I had a beautiful head of hair when I was young and my nickname was Curly. How did you know?" George was truly a nice person.

Dave Lidstone: George was a most affable colleague with some preferences that were unique within our department. He alone requested a split schedule that started early in the day, had a considerable midday break, and then ended with an early evening class. He filled that midday break with a vigorous swim at the local YMCA. He was alone in being drawn to the four-inch-thick tomes covering the first two years of university level mathematics that textbook publishers offered at that time. In his office was a table that was bare except for a stack of two such volumes. On that table, he napped after his swim and the two tomes served well as pillow.

Judy Boxler: I, too, remember George's midafternoon nap! He was a truly nice man and always happy, maybe even sometimes humming? And a contented slight skip to his gait. He was very interested in Greece and her history. He was active in the Hellenic Community Centre, where my husband and I met up with him at a large public gathering where there was Greek food, costumes, dancing, and music.

Martin Gerson: In 1975, my second year as a term instructor in the Math Department, I was assigned to a desk in office A382b, where George was the senior resident. George welcomed me, had my wife, Carole, and me over to dinner with his family, and initiated me into the "ways" of Langara. He welcomed me to the infinitely expandable table in the Faculty Lounge (as it was called then) where he introduced me to his many good friends, who were among the people who made Langara such a wonderful place to work—Dick Reiner, Erryl Sanderman, Jack Kunin, and so many more. At that table, there was always thoughtful, intelligent, and good-natured conversation, where we analyzed the current events of the day and devised solutions to most of the problems of the College – and the world in general. If only someone had bothered to implement them. George and I remained A382b office mates for over five years, until George moved first into the Department Chair's office, and then into A382d, the office with the napping table and text-book pillows. A wonderful, generous, happy, warm, intelligent man.

Jack Kunin (1938-2026) taught Philosophy at Langara for 30 years before enjoying 27 years in retirement.



His good friend Richard (Dick) Reiner recalls, I met Jack when I started my career at Langara College decades ago. We happened to live close by and our two families met frequently. From the start, Jack remained kind, considerate and keenly interested in a wide range of topics. He loved food with a passion and was familiar with a host of inexpensive but good restaurants in the Lower Mainland. It was a treat to see him enjoy lunch while conversing about local, national and foreign affairs, and, of course, college matters. He loved his job at Langara and often repeated a favourite observation: "We landed where the lollies are".

Frank Williams (1958-2026) retired in 2021 after 30 years of teaching. He served for many terms as Chair of both the Biology and the Interdisciplinary Studies Departments and as Coordinator of Environmental Studies and Coordinator of Canadian Studies. Frank received Langara's Emeritus Award in 2022.

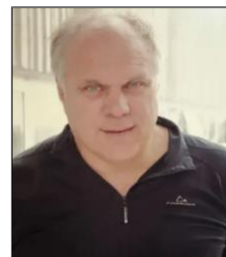
Frank Williams remembered

Ken Naumann

Frank and I first met in the first half of the 1980s when he was just beginning grad school and I was finishing my BSc, and since then we have followed surprisingly parallel paths. We ended up overlapping through grad school, and then I was hired on at Langara a couple of years after him.

After more than 40 years, what I remember most about him is the wonderful, rambling conversations that we had. Like most people who are deeply interested in the world, he knew something about a lot of different topics, and always had something new to contribute. That innate curiosity led him into diverse projects during his 30 years at Langara. He participated in field schools to the Mekong River, the Fraser River, and Haida Gwaii. He also participated in Langara-led public health initiatives in Tanzania, participated in Wetlandkeepers and Streamkeepers, was one of the charter instructors in the Health Science program, and organized and participated in the Environmental Studies field school.

Outside of Langara, Frank and Jan raised three children, and he coached soccer and was involved in the Boy Scouts for many years.



Frank had a strong sense of responsibility and believed in contributing to the good operation and growth of the college. He served as chair of the Biology and Interdisciplinary Studies departments and coordinator of Environmental Studies and Canadian Studies. He was a member of Academic Plan Action Group for environmental, financial, and social sustainability, and served as an LFA representative.

He helped ensure that diverse trees were planted around the campus. He was active in innumerable departmental committees and activities and was brave enough to host some of our departmental potlucks; biology is a big department.

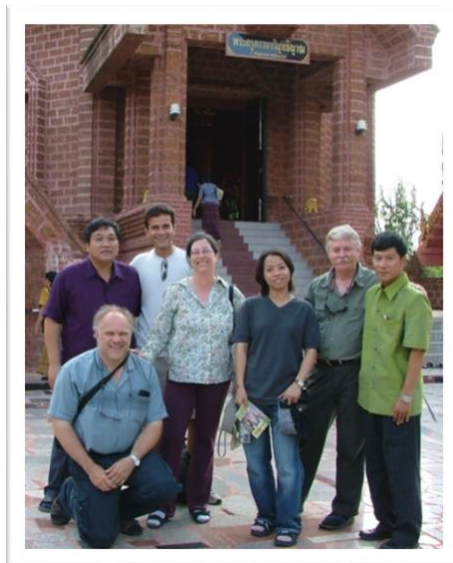
But mostly, he will be remembered by those who knew him as a kind, funny, interesting and dedicated person. He liked teaching and he liked his students. Back in the 80s, I got to know him during a multi-day plant ecology field trip, where we may have shared a drink or two. I learned that he was keen on plants, British sports cars, and comedy. Like many of us in that era, he had a deep knowledge of Monty Python routines, but he took it one step farther by writing group comedy skits and shopping them to the media.

Health problems began to intrude into Frank's busy life near the beginning of this decade. He and Jan retired home to Victoria in 2022, but he never really had the opportunity to turn the big yard into the garden paradise that he had hoped for. He passed away at the end of May, while on the organ transplant wait list. Even in his last months, his eyes sparkled when he laughed.

Below are some reminiscences from former colleagues.

Mary Goldie: Frank and I shared a large office (with several other folk) when I first came to work at Langara in the early 1990s. That was before the A building came into existence so there weren't enough individual offices for everyone. Frank was a joy to have as an office mate as he was always very funny and encouraging. I remember that I once brought in an unusual large beetle for his expert identification. Imagine my horror and surprise when he told me it was both rare and extremely poisonous! Of course that turned out to be a joke. He was a very fine man with a deep sense of dedication to his students. I was so sorry to hear of his untimely passing. Please accept my most sincere condolences.

Kathy Hanson: Thinking of you as you celebrate Frank's life. He was one of the good ones. Frank always had a good story to tell and was generous with his students and colleagues alike. Frank and I bonded over our experiences cycling to work, he the ardent environmentalist, me just trying to get some exercise. I will remember him fondly.



Frank and Jan, Thailand Field School, July 2004 (courtesy Anoush Dadgar)

GRAND GALA 2026 – A YEAR OF TRANSITION

Dave Lidstone



Readers may recall that in V4N1 of this publication I reported on the efforts of current Studio 58 staff (Halla Bertrand, Ruth Bruhn, and Kevin MacDonald) to properly account for the funds we directed to the Studio 58 General Fund over the lifetime of the Grand Gala. A key outcome of their work was to establish a scholarship in the name of Bruce Kennedy, our LCAR board colleague. For the record, Bruce has been involved in **ALL** Galas since members of the LFA started the event in 1987, as has Carol Chrisjohn, another LCAR board colleague who has had established a scholarship in her name some time ago. They are the figures dressed in black who might be seen moving equipment around for performers and who really run the show with little attention from the audience.

When we reconvened in the early fall of 2025, those same Studio 58 staff shared another initiative for us to consider: a proposal that they take over almost all of the production work for the next gala and that proceeds

be targeted for Bruce's fund. We deliberated and took the proposal to the LCAR board. The Board agreed we would try the proposed model for the 2026 event. "Almost all" of the production work included licensing, promoting, and ticketing; these are all tasks that have been very difficult for us over the years. Our roles would be limited to collaborating with the Studio 58 Artistic Director on programming (that would include the host and acts by students and retirees) to on-stage production and to front-of-house reception. And so, this new model was piloted for our 2026 co-production.

Did it work? Ultimately that answer will have to wait until late August when staff are back at work and we can reconvene to evaluate the effort. I will share that it was a financial success, which resulted in a contribution of \$2000 to the scholarship. A healthy part of the contribution came from the bar opening before the show and at intermission. I think, it was also an artistic success. Below, Cathy Sosnowski will offer her observations of the evening. From a preproduction perspective, I was very happy to have my "to do" list taken over by those who do such work regularly; that was a huge success for me. We had hoped that the audience might be larger with cohorts from Studio 58 supporters, student family and friends, and retiree regulars. Each of those cohorts were represented, but the total number was not as high as we might desire. As the audience often reflects the performers, fewer slots for retiree acts meant there would be fewer retired friends attending. In recruiting, I ran into many who had scheduling conflicts. Such factors will always be at play. I do hope that this production model will be seen as a success by others and that we might perpetuate a long-standing tradition that unites parts of the Langara community.

GRAND GALA, 2026 – A REVIEW

Review by Cathy Sosnowsky, Photography by Xina Morisette

Those of us who have been attending the annual Grand Gala for a number of years (over 25 years for me) were delighted on April 20th to be entertained with fresh talent, while pleased again to know that aging retirees continue to hone their musical skills. I brought a friend along this year and was a bit worried that she might not be so taken with the show without the sentimental attachment of Langara retirees like me. I'm pleased to report that she was just as delighted as I was with the show and wants to come again next year.



Brian McGibney in fine voice



*Little Mountain Trio:
Rob McGregor, Kitty King & Dave Lidstone*



*Roger Holdstock
channels Frank Sinatra*

A tone of jovial melancholy was set in an opening performance by Brian McGibney (the one in the Roy Rogers shirt) playing and singing "Sweet Misery." A later song by Dave Lidstone (as a member of *The Little Mountain Trio*), "Analog," continued this satirical, self-mocking. Near the end of the performance, Roger Holdstock's rendering of a satire of academia, "Their Way", had the audience all joining in on the chorus. Even though I love that song, I need to insert here that the oppressive hierarchy of an educational institution was not my experience at Langara. As a member of the English department, I was part of the lobbying to introduce film studies to the curriculum and helped introduce Peace and Conflict Studies as an interdisciplinary program. Roger, by the way, was part of both these initiatives. Both were new to the colleges and universities of the west coast.

Interesting additions to this year's show were two "Art slideshows" produced by retiree Evelyn Nodwell. One was visuals from "The Time of Tasting New Rice" in China, the other, shown in the second part of the program, "On the Road," turned a trip between Vancouver and Calgary into an art experience with the help of a Willie Nelson soundtrack.



Evelyn Nodwell introducing her slideshows with Deb Williams



The CrouTones: Mike Allan, Sheila Allan, Debi Wood, Wendy Solloway, Scott Alpen

I found *The CrouTones*, a family-related group of five talented musicians, inspiring. Led by guitarist Mike Allan, a retiree from International Education Administration, they played pieces from a variety of sources. Their second piece, "All I Ask Of Me" was written by bassist Wendy Solloway. They closed with a Cuban piece popular in the 1930's titled "Veinte Años". This song featured Scott Alpen accompanying himself on both trumpet and cajon. Cajon, a box-shaped percussion instrument from Peru, especially lent itself to the Cuban sound. Vocalist Debi Wood proved most proficient in Spanish. The band was rounded out by Mike's sister Sheila on violin. The generous donation of time from such guests is most appreciated.



Mime Act 1



Vada Collins



Mime Act 2

Interspersed with the vocal and musical pieces by retirees were pantomimes performed by current Studio 58 students. It was great to get a glimpse of what training is involved in preparing these aspiring actors. I'll be looking forward to seeing their names on the programs of local theatre productions in the near future. Students also performed amazing dance numbers and a vocal duet. Wow! How they can move! And so syncopated!



Jocelyn Wale, Tap solo



Jazz Troup



Tap Troup



Saidi Mader & Dylan McNulty

The host this year, Deb Williams, is a graduate of Studio 58. Thirty-nine years ago, she won the Anthony Holland scholarship award. Her long career on the stage was evident in the ease with which she addressed the audience, even drawing them in with questions at times. A behind-the-scenes note is that Deb is married to Bruce Kennedy, the man for whom a new Studio 58 scholarship is named and supported with funds from this event.



Deb Williams, host



Deb & Paul Moniz de Sa, Studio 58 Artistic Director

I'm sorry if you missed this year's Gala. I'm grateful that we are promised it annually in the future. I brought a pleased friend and will bring more with me next time. I urge you to do so too. It's an entertainment of high caliber with a local and intimate feel. We are blessed to have this vigorous theatre program as part of our Langara tradition.

RETIREE TALES

After the formal working life, retirees often explore other passions and have time for reflection. In this issue we are happy to welcome remembrances from long time retiree and a member of our newsletter team, Judy Boxler, and a more recent retiree and Faculty Emeritus, Stephen Phillips. If you wish to contribute your story or creative endeavors, please contact us at newsletter@lcar.ca.

REMEMBERING WHEN....

Judy Boxler

Throughout our life together, when something out of the ordinary happened to my husband and me, we would say, "When we are older, we'll say, 'Remember when ...'" Well, that's where I am now.

And I would like to share some of my memories of life at Langara.

My first memory, of course, is The Interview in 1980. It was **so** uncomfortable. I had an MSc in Computer Science but my only experience teaching was as a TA as an undergrad. My main experience had been programming and development of computer systems. The interview wasn't bad until Dave Mitton, one of the originals at Langara and one of the LFA Presidents, asked me, "What is your philosophy in teaching?" **Philosophy**???? I wanted to crawl under the table. I was originally a mathematician. I avoided courses in history, social science, philosophy, etc. I did find a course in logic in the philosophy department; who knew that logic was philosophy!!! I have no idea how I answered the question. But I got the job.



Judy Boxler, programming in Fresno, 1971

Now, I would answer that question by saying, "I like to find a story that illustrates what I mean." For example, at that time, we were still using punch cards and there were no individual computers with screens. Students had to wait for the computer centre to run their programs. They would come to my office and describe how they did **exactly** what I had said but the results were outrageous and made no sense. I asked for a printout of their program and its output. So, when this story of disaster came up again in class, I told them a story: "Last Friday, I worked late. It rained and rained and rained. It rained so hard that people got out their sailboats and started sailing up and down 49th St." Pause. Everyone looked like they needed to find another course taught by someone sane. And then I tried to gently suggest that my story might have been

more believable if I'd had a picture. "The picture" [read: "evidence"] I needed was a printout of both the program they wrote and the corresponding output from the computer.

Back to the beginning. I was not prepared for that first day when I saw a sea of students who all somehow looked the same. How in the world would I remember all their names. And then there was the class list. I assumed I needed to do a roll call? How in the world did one pronounce Ng or Ngygen or Fuk? And it didn't get any easier. Year after year, the shock of that First Day: the wave of hair colours from green to violet to ... or the body piercings or everyone dressed from head to toe in black or ... The Teacher is supposed to be respectful and not shocked, right??!! My husband tells me not to ever play poker, but I think I managed to smile warmly and I really enjoyed what was happening.

One semester, I was teaching a cohort of computer tech students. I walked in the classroom. The chalk board was clean except for way up at the top there were familiar words: "Last Friday night, I was working late ..." We all had a big laugh. And for those of you who don't know me, I'm quite short. So I had to look at the unreachable words for the next hour.

Yes, the students were so much fun. I was teaching Excel to a cohort of a business students. They all knew each other well. Toward the end of the semester, they asked if I wanted to join them at a pub. I wasn't sure if that was appropriate, but another teacher was going, so I went. After a while, I heard one student encouraging another to do something. After a bit more encouragement, he got up and started talking. He described the Excel formula and the values to enter. And asked what the result would be. Then he turned around, looked **very** puzzled and started scratching his head. "And now, students, what would happen if we changed the input to xyz?" I burst out laughing. It was a perfect parody of **me**!!



Judy Boxler at Sawyer Glacier, 2012

And then there were the personal stories. That first exam period was the first time I came face to face with the emotional turmoil of being young. A young man came in crying. His fiancée had just dumped him and he was in no shape to take the exam. He sat and we talked and we agreed he would let me know when he was ready to take the exam.

Another time, a student came to my office and talked about how he had escaped Iran. He had spent days walking through the desert: little food; little water. He just needed to get out of Iran. Then he found a route through Turkey and other countries, landing finally in Canada and Langara. I don't remember why he told me his story or why he needed to leave Iran; I just remember my heartbreak. Later, I learned he had gotten a good job in NYC with a computer consulting company.

One night, my husband and I went to an Indian restaurant. Our server was a former student. He told my husband about my hearing, how I could hear students talking in the back of the room and I would answer their questions.

And then I remember the student who was always late for the 8:30 class; he would walk in and with my face to the board, I would say, "Good morning, Bill."

Or the time when I was introducing myself to the class at the beginning of the semester, saying that my first computing course was in 1966 and that my first computing job was in 1968. A quiet voice in the back came through, "Wow, that was before the Atari!"

Of the many students, one was particularly memorable. She paid attention. When her hand went up, I knew I had missed something. She was doing my What-If-We-Changed-It-To routine! And she was always right.

It was always a pleasure when former students contacted me or when I met them on the seawall. One such case was a couple who had met in our tech program; they had married, were much more well fed, and both had good jobs.

Another foreign student contacted me to say he was in a leadership position at a college or university in Alberta!

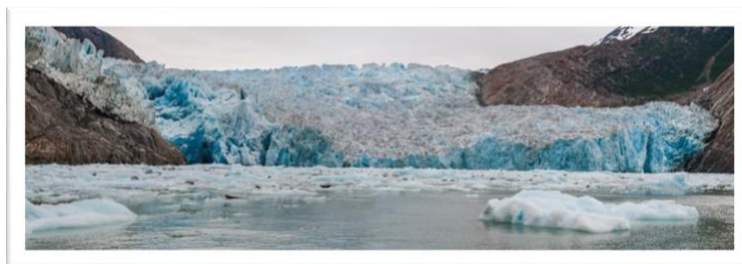
And oh, how I enjoyed going to the faculty cafeteria, sitting with a new group of people, and listening to their stories. I learned so much. But that's a different memories story.

I am also grateful for the freedom I had to try new things. Somebody would say, "Why don't you do xyz, Judy?" Really? I could do that?!! I made mistakes, but people were kind in showing me a different path.

I retired in 2001, the youngest and last to get early retirement. And now, it's so nice to see how the College has grown and is leading in new ways.

Coincidences

A friend suggested I submit a picture of more recent activities. The one that I chose was of one of the many special places along the NW coast that we explored. It was the Sawyer Glacier in Tracy Arm, Alaska. Just a bit farther in, we anchored overnight near a seal calving ice shelf.



South Sawyer Glacier, August 2012, submitted by J. Boxler

It is just [now being widely published](#) that there was a massive landslide there in August 2025. It caused a tsunami that went out the inlet and caused waves to rise up to 120 m in some locations.

I just needed to share, because it is such a shock to us and for some reason, I chose to submit that picture.

GOODBYE TO ALL THAT: REMEMBERING MY YEARS AT LANGARA

Stephen Phillips



I retired from Langara in September 2025, two years before the standard retirement age of 65. As I look back on my 31-year career teaching political science, I'd say the title of British politician Denis Healey's memoir sums it up well: *Time of My Life*. After all, my years at Langara were eventful, rewarding, and thoroughly exhilarating.

Here I offer some abiding memories and impressions, beginning with a word or two about the path that ultimately led me to Langara. My interest in politics started when I was a child in Liverpool in the 1960s -- an early fan of Harold Wilson, prime minister at the time, who represented the Merseyside constituency of Huyton. After the family moved to Edmonton, I attended my first political meeting at the age of 12, a nomination meeting addressed by federal NDP leader David Lewis, one of the finest political orators of his day. The following year, I heard T.C. Douglas speak at a provincial election rally. I even took out a subscription to Hansard, the record of debates of the House of Commons. While my sympathies were decidedly on the left, I read widely about politics and public affairs.

At the University of Alberta, I earned a BA in political science, not with a view to teaching, but as a prelude to studying law. Though I completed my law studies and was admitted to the Alberta bar, by then I had discovered that teaching politics was my true vocation. I therefore did an MA in political science and moved to BC in 1991 to begin a Ph.D. at UBC. The choice of Vancouver was no accident: I hoped to find a teaching job and to make Vancouver my home. I also preferred the dynamic and sometimes wacky world of BC politics to the tedious predictability of Alberta politics at the time. (How times have changed in my home province!) Though I expected to do sessional work at various colleges, things didn't work out that way; instead, a term contract at Langara in the fall of 1994 put me on track to a permanent appointment which opened the very next year when Martin Toren took early retirement.

I'm grateful to Langara for hiring me. Though I'd worked as a teaching assistant, I had no teaching experience to speak of. I recall anxiously asking Martin for advice; a former high school teacher, he was happy to oblige. His most helpful tip was that I should use overhead transparencies, which I did for the next 15 years before adopting power point slides. For the most part, I tried to emulate teachers and professors of

mine whose teaching styles I most admired. Not knowing quite what to expect in the classroom, and conscious of my relative youth, I grew a beard to make myself look more mature and donned a jacket and tie to acquire an air of authority, or so I imagined. Mind you, the jacket and tie era had all but disappeared by the mid-1990s. But I did my part to keep it going well into the 21st century!

In my first four years on the job, I was teaching full time and writing my thesis, completed in 1999. Though it was arduous work, annual non-instructional duty terms helped a lot. One evening, after working late in my office, I emerged at about 12:15 am, just in time to observe my car travelling east on West 49th, courtesy of Buster's towing. As I usually took the bus to work, I was unaware the parking lot officially closed at night.

Teaching political science afforded wide scope to incorporate current events into lectures and class discussions. Time and again, by happy coincidence, relevant issues were in the news on precisely the right week of the syllabus. Not that there was any shortage of relevant historical events, issues, and people on which to draw to illustrate lecture points and inform class discussions. Before long, the distinction between recent and historical events began to blur. Not infrequently, I would mention events in class that seemed to me to have happened not that long ago (e.g., the furore over the introduction of the GST or Gordon Campbell's resignation as premier), only to elicit blank expressions from the students.



President Paula Burns presents Certificate of Retirement to Stephen Phillips, May 2026

Langara offered ample opportunities to pursue sundry interests, such as presenting conference papers and writing textbook chapters, thankfully free of the tyranny of publish-or-perish. I also found time to get involved in the LFA and Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC (FPSE), our provincial federation. Off campus I gained insights into the real world of Canadian politics through my involvement in the NDP, including serving at different times as president of two riding associations: Vancouver Langara (provincial) and Vancouver Kingsway (federal). These experiences enriched my classes, as did an education leave I took in 2009-2010 on Parliament Hill.

There were, of course, less agreeable moments over the course of thirty years, some of which will be well known to those who served, as I did, as department chairs and programme coordinators. As many have observed, collegial governance has deteriorated in recent years. In the classroom, meanwhile, the incidence of plagiarism noticeably increased and only grew worse with the advent of AI. But I prefer to end on a brighter note. What I remember and value most about my time at Langara are the people I worked alongside, many of whom I count as friends. As for life after Langara, I may have more to say about that on another occasion.

AND ON 49TH

Besides staying connected to each other, LCAR Members often want to maintain a connection to snəwəyəł leləm' Langara College. In this section we showcase current articles, news, and stories about Langara.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION IN TRANSITION: CHALLENGES, CHANGE, AND THE ROAD AHEAD

Brad Van Dam, Director, Langara Global

Over the past two years, international education in Canada has undergone one of the most significant periods of disruption in its history. At Langara College, and across the country, we are navigating a rapidly shifting landscape shaped by federal policy changes, global competition, and evolving student expectations.

For many years, Canada's value proposition for international students was clear and compelling: high-quality education, a welcoming and safe environment, the ability to work during and after studies, and a relatively predictable pathway to permanent residency for those who desired a longer-term opportunity to contribute to Canadian society. This combination made Canada one of the top destinations globally.

Today, that value proposition has been significantly eroded.

A System Under Strain

Recent changes introduced by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) have had far-reaching effects across the sector. These include caps on study permits, the introduction of provincial attestation letter requirements, changes to Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP) eligibility, and restrictions on spousal work permits. Individually, each of these policies have a rationale. Collectively, however, they have created a system that is increasingly difficult for students to understand and trust.

In the years leading up to these changes, Canada experienced rapid growth in international student enrolment. In some parts of the sector, this growth was driven by an assumption that demand would remain effectively unlimited. Institutions expanded quickly, often relying heavily on international tuition revenue as a key funding source.

While many institutions, including Langara, remained focused on quality and student success, there were well-documented cases across the country where growth outpaced infrastructure, student supports, and oversight. This raised legitimate concerns about the student experience and the reputation of Canada's education system. A correction was needed to ensure Canada continued to be viewed globally as a destination defined by high standards and quality education.

However, in the absence of a federal ministry of education, the responsibility for implementing that correction fell largely to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. The resulting policy response has been broad and, at times, blunt.

Prospective students now face:

- Unpredictable and often lengthy study permit processing times
- Significantly lower study permit approval rates in many key markets
- Frequent policy changes with little advance notice
- Reduced access to post-graduation work opportunities
- Limited and uncertain pathways to permanent residency

The cumulative effect has been significant. Demand for Canada has softened and institutions across the country are experiencing substantial declines in international enrolment. This uncertainty has also had a profound impact on student confidence. Where Canada was once seen as stable and transparent, it is now often perceived as inconsistent and difficult to navigate.

Disproportionate Impact on Colleges

While the entire sector has been affected, colleges like Langara have experienced particularly acute challenges.

Recent PGWP changes have introduced field-of-study requirements that disproportionately impact college programs. Many of our offerings, designed to provide practical, career-oriented education, no longer align as clearly with federal eligibility criteria. This has made it more difficult for students to justify choosing college pathways over university options.

At the same time, enrollment caps and new administrative requirements have added complexity to recruitment and admissions processes, slowing momentum and increasing uncertainty for both institutions and students.

Global Competition Is Intensifying

Other countries, including Australia, the United Kingdom, and emerging destinations in Europe and Asia, are actively adjusting their policies to attract international students.

In some cases, these countries are now perceived as offering clearer pathways, faster processing, predictable outcomes, and more stable policy environments. For students making life-changing decisions about where to study, predictability matters as much as opportunity.

Responding at Langara

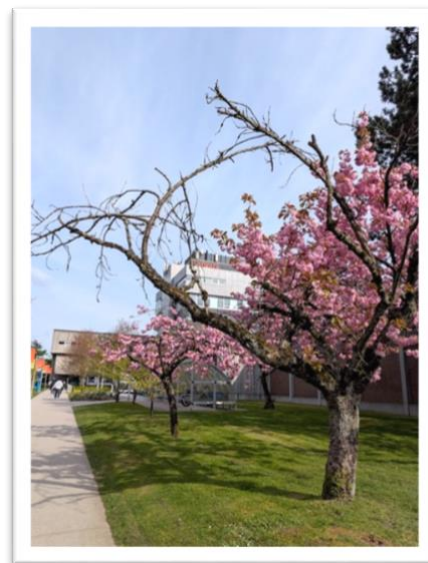
In the face of these challenges, Langara Global has been actively adapting its recruitment approach to ensure resilience and sustainability.

A key priority has been to continue diversifying our recruitment markets. Like many institutions across Canada, Langara historically saw strong enrollment from India. However, recent policy changes and declining approval rates have led to a significant reduction in students from that region. In response, we are continuing to invest in a broader range of markets to reduce overreliance on any single source country and build a more balanced and sustainable student population.

We are also focusing our efforts on regions where students currently have a higher likelihood of obtaining study permits. This allows us to better support prospective students in navigating the system successfully while maintaining program viability.

Our partnerships have become more important than ever. We are working closely with experienced and trusted recruitment partners and agents who understand the evolving requirements and can identify and prepare students who are well-positioned for success, both academically and in the study permit process.

At the same time, Langara is placing increased emphasis on domestic recruitment. Our local outreach channels, combined with the outstanding work of our domestic student recruitment team, are helping to ensure that we continue to serve learners within our own communities while maintaining enrollment stability.



Looking Ahead

While the current environment is challenging, international education remains a vital part of Langara's identity and Canada's broader social and economic fabric.

There is growing recognition across the sector that stability, clarity, and coordination are essential. Institutions, governments, and other stakeholders are actively engaged in discussions about how to restore confidence and ensure that Canada remains a competitive and ethical destination for international students.

At Langara, we continue to evolve by diversifying our recruitment, strengthening partnerships, and enhancing student supports. Most importantly, we remain focused on the core principle that international education is about people: their aspirations, their journeys, and their contributions. We are further committed to continue delivering the high-quality education that Langara is well known for and that our students expect and deserve, thanks to our incredible faculty and those who support students every day.

International education in Canada is at a crossroads. While the challenges are real, so too is the opportunity to rethink and rebuild a system that is more sustainable, transparent, and student centred.

CAMPUS EMPLOYEE NEWS

David Anderson resigned, stepping down as Dean of Science and as Interim Provost and Vice-President, Academic, effective May 1st.

Patricia Aroca-Ouellette will continue in her acting role as Dean of Science as the search for a permanent Dean begins.

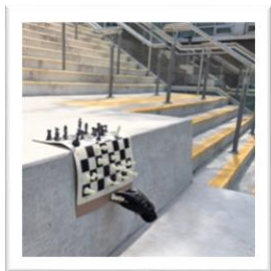
Marg Heldman returned as Langara's interim Provost and Vice President, Academic as of April 17th. The search for a permanent Provost and Vice President, Academic, is underway.

Laura MacKay has been appointed Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences and Community Programs effective May 1st. She has served as interim dean since March 21, 2025.

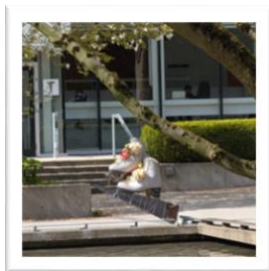
snəwəyəl leləm' LANGARA COLLEGE NEWS & EVENTS

LangaraFest, Langara's reimagined open house event, was held in March, bringing about 2,500 people from the local community onto Langara's campus.

Convocation celebrated and recognized the remarkable achievements of 1686 graduates from over 100 diverse programs. Other opportunities to **celebrate successes** include the Falcons athletic awards gala, Grad shows, exhibitions and pop ups from Fine Arts, Design Formation, and Professional Photography.



@beastyclown on Instagram



@bbthehedgehog on Instagram



Miniature Rooms – Lyn So

Program Changes

Academic programs continue to evolve, sometimes in small ways, sometimes in large ways. Effective Fall 2026, two long-standing and well-recognized programs are no longer accepting new students. These programs are [Journalism](#) and [Studio 58's Theatre Production](#), although Studio 58's Acting program is continuing. The Social Service Worker Department, together with Education Council, have decided to cancel Gerontology due to very low enrollments.

New Student Information System goes live

Approximately 360 staff and faculty began using Langara's new student information system (SIS) on June 1, 2026. This Go-Live 1 launch primarily affects those who participate in the admissions process for Regular Studies limited enrolment programs offered starting summer 2027. The full system rollout (Go-Live 2), for summer 2027- registration (Regular and Continuing Studies) will be on March 15, 2027.

Office of Student Support, Rights and Responsibilities 2025 Annual Report

The 2025 annual report illustrates the ongoing work and support that the Office continues to provide the students, staff, and faculty. The Office saw a 49.1% increase in the number of reports of non-academic behaviour, consultations with faculty, staff and students, supporting students as they faced challenges with their academic journey at the College; and they saw a 20.9% decline in the number of reported academic integrity breaches.

Key highlights from the 2025 Annual Report include:

- 1711+ Student Connections were made through one-on-one meetings or educational engagement opportunities. This is an approximate increase of 46% from 2024.
- 1155 Academic and Non-Academic Reports, were processed by our Office.
- 60 educational engagement opportunities were offered to students, staff and faculty, an increase of 9 sessions from 2024.
- 20.9% decline in the number of reported academic integrity breaches.
- 49.1% increase in the number of reports of non-academic behaviour, consultations with faculty, staff and students, supporting students as they faced challenges with their academic journey at the College.

News

Langara marked National Nursing Week in May with an event celebrating [more than \\$11 million in support for nursing education](#).

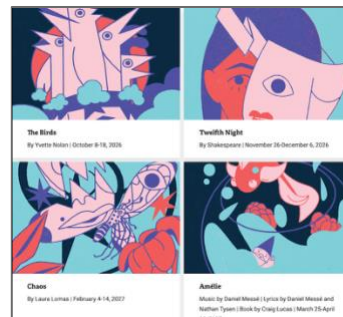
[Langara partners with CITT to offer Environmental Sustainability in Canadian Logistics Micro-Credential](#).

This suite of three courses was developed in close collaboration with industry and teaches the skills and knowledge identified as essential to understanding and creating sustainable logistics operations in Canada.

Events

Announcements are often time sensitive, so visit the Langara's events page at to see the most recent news.

- [Board of Governors](#) meets bimonthly and are open to the community upon registration
- [Celebrate Tanabata!](#) Tues, July 7, 2026, 11am-2pm On-Campus.
- [Langara Clothing Swap](#) July 8 to July 17, 2026
- [PNW \(Pacific North West\) Climate Week - Vancouver Opening Ceremony](#) Mon, July 13, 2026, 5pm-7pm
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (NDTR) September 28 & 29, 2026, details to be determined ([Langara TRC Resources](#))
- [Celebrate Diwali!](#) Wed, November 4, 2026, 11am-2pm On-Campus
- [Discover Studio 58's 2026/2027 Season](#)



Stories

- [Langara Biology student, Amber Cornick, creates a new symbol of Musqueam representation](#) - an Indigenous Falcons logo rooted in Coast Salish tradition and Musqueam pride.
- For the first time at Langara College convocation, [Black graduates received Kente stoles honouring their cultural identity](#) alongside their academic achievements.
- Nursing Week 2026: Langara [Nursing students are leading applied research on preventing lower leg venous insufficiency](#), a common but often overlooked health risk linked to long hours spent standing. Langara's [Nursing Simulation Centre](#) gives students hands-on experience with advanced simulation technology and realistic clinical scenarios before they begin placements.
- Earth Day: Langara students [help uncover the hidden biodiversity of False Creek](#).
- The [IDEAs in Public Recreation Research Project](#), an applied research initiative at Langara College, examines the barriers that immigrant and racialized communities face in accessing public recreation in British Columbia.
- Langara College's Computer Science Department is [celebrating a fourth-place finish by its students in a national cybersecurity competition](#), a result that showcases their skills and readiness for the tech industry. Discover how the department gives students a clear path into computer science and technology.
- Meet Ben Fullerton and learn how Langara's [Accessibility Services empowers students](#) with disabilities through academic accommodations, assistive tech, and inclusive support.

More details at <https://langara.ca/news-events> and <https://www.flickr.com/photos/langaracollege/albums/>

NEWS FROM OUR AFFILIATES

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY RETIREE ASSOCIATIONS OF CANADA/ASSOCIATIONS DE RETRAITÉS DES UNIVERSITÉS ET COLLEGES DU CANADA (CURAC/ARUCC)

Dave Lidstone, LCAR representative

The May 2026 *CURAC News* is recently posted on the CURAC/ARUCC website (curac.ca). It includes committee reports and a Newsletter Roundup with 32 articles from 19 retiree associations across seven provinces. Many of the RAs also give a link to their archived newsletters. The publication offers us an opportunity to gain a national perspective on retired academia.

In early April, on our behalf, Gerda Krause attended the President's Round Table hosted virtually. Her thorough report is included in the minutes of the April 16 LCAR Board Meeting. Chief among the issues raised was that of Director's Insurance for societies and association boards. This matter continues to be pursued by the CURAC board, but with little progress to date.

Another matter raised at the Round Table was that of Memoranda of Understanding between retiree associations and their affiliated institutions. Consequently, we asked the CURAC President, Walter Archer, to lobby the membership for examples we might consider. We quickly had a collection of 9 documents to study. A board subcommittee consisting of Carol Chrisjohn, Gerda Krause, and Patricia Cia, used that

collection to draft a proposal for an MOU between LCAR and Langara College. Deliberations are in progress. This topic offers an example of the utility of connecting with RAs from across the country.

Making Connections was the title of the 2026 CURAC/ARUCC Conference hosted by the SFURA at the Inn At The Quay in New Westminster. LCAR members played a significant role in the proceedings. Martin Gerson served as our voting member at the AGM. Andrea Smith and I were part of the programme presenting a collection of songs on making connections. The change from a talking head presentation was well received. Patricia Cia sat on a panel of newsletter editors that include representatives from BC CPPR, KPURA, SFURA and UBC Emeritus College. In my opinion, Patricia's presentation was particularly concise and informative, an opinion shared by a table mate from the University of Saskatchewan. Proceedings of the conference will appear on the CURAC website as time allows.

COUNCIL OF SENIOR CITIZENS' ORGANIZATIONS OF BC (COSCO)

Kevin Craib, LCAR representative

COSCO was established in 1950. It is an umbrella organization that brings together seniors' organizations (e.g., LCAR) and individual associate members to work on common issues. Registered under the Societies Act since 1981, COSCO's current membership consists of 65 affiliate groups, representing over 85,000 seniors residing in British Columbia.

The purpose of COSCO is to promote the well-being of seniors and their families, advocating for policies that allow seniors to remain active, independent, and fully engaged in the life of our province. The organization is nonpartisan but politically active, advocating for seniors' needs no matter who is in power.

COSCO is affiliated with the BC Centre for Policy Alternatives, the BC Health Coalition, the BC Public Interest Advocacy Centre, and the National Pensioners Federation. COSCO directors and members collaborate with these organizations in a common cause.

The [June issue of the COSCO News](#) is now available and includes the recognition of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15. A report on the work of the Public Sector Retiree Group (PSRG) and an explanation of why COSCO is actively supporting a proposed United Nations convention on the human rights of older persons. Other topics appearing in this issue include: a proposed code of conduct to end frauds and scams, information about the Connect!Age Project, a summary of the Third International Conference on Deprescribing held in Montreal (April 27-29), climate change in an ageing world and a fresh approach to solving the construction crisis in home building.

For more information about the organization, their newsletter, and upcoming events and workshops, visit <https://coscobc.org/> and <https://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/>.

ASSOCIATION OF BC COLLEGE PENSION PLAN RETIREES (CPPR)

Alan Cooper, LCAR representative

The Association of BC College Pension Plan Retirees (CPPR) represents retired instructors and administrators from BC colleges, universities, and educational institutes. Current issues of interest to their Executive (which met for the last time before taking a Summer break on June 11th) include monitoring the financial health of the Pension Plan in the face of a changing investment climate and shrinking post-secondary workforce, ongoing review of Extended Health plans, outreach to potential new members (both of CPPR itself and of individual institutional retiree groups such as LCAR) and facilitating communication between affiliated retiree groups.

As always, the latest issue of their 'Prime Time' newsletter and other Pension News are available from their website at cppr.ca.

*The Langara College Retirees Association (LCAR) congratulates and welcomes all Langara retirees. We invite you to explore our website to learn more about LCAR, our activities and resources, and register as a member! Please register as an LCAR member (<https://lcar.ca>) to receive Langara retiree benefits, hear of our upcoming events, and receive our newsletter, **And By The Way, Retirees**. The editors encourage all LCAR members to submit suggestions, articles, or announcements for inclusion in future newsletters. We also encourage others to join the editorial team. Contact us at newsletter@lcar.ca.*
