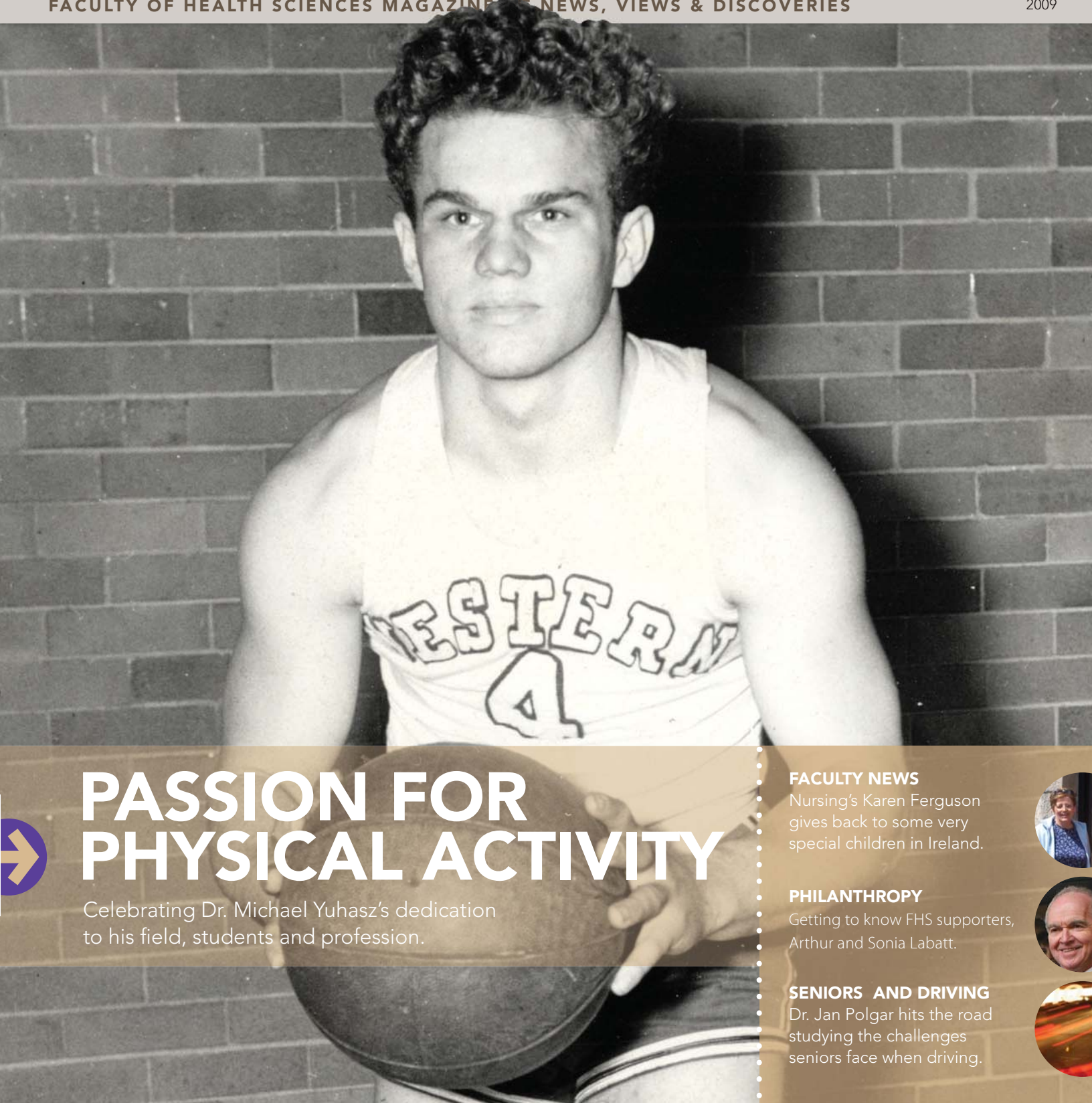


# HEALTH SCIENCES matters



FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES MAGAZINE'S NEWS, VIEWS & DISCOVERIES

2009



## PASSION FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Celebrating Dr. Michael Yuhasz's dedication to his field, students and profession.

### FACULTY NEWS

Nursing's Karen Ferguson gives back to some very special children in Ireland.



### PHILANTHROPY

Getting to know FHS supporters, Arthur and Sonia Labatt.

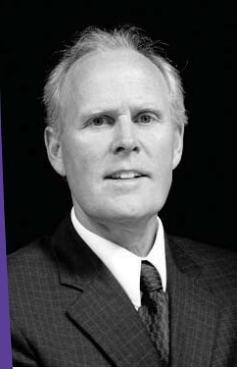


### SENIORS AND DRIVING

Dr. Jan Polgar hits the road studying the challenges seniors face when driving.



## GREETINGS FROM THE DEAN



**GREETINGS TO ALL OF OUR VALUED ALUMNI AND FRIENDS.** We are so pleased to have our association with you. You need to know that we take great energy from your pride in the Faculty of Health Sciences and the schools and programs that make us one of the most progressive, and successful faculties at Western.

Our academic programs continue to hold lofty reputations in the academy for excellence and accomplishment. We continue to attract student applications in record numbers. There is no question in my mind that societal realities make our field of study and our research undeniable areas for growth and prosperity. Our largest population cohort is aging and demanding both the results of our research programs and the services of our graduates. The consequences of an inactive lifestyle, particularly for children and youth, are now being seen, and gaining both public and government attention. We are the program of choice for the best students.

Our dual focus on research excellence remains. Our researchers continue to distinguish themselves by earning some of the most prestigious teaching and research awards that our campus, and respective academies offer. We are very proud of our accomplishments and very excited about our prospects for success.

As you'll note from the contents of this magazine, the Faculty of Health Sciences continues on its sharp, upward trend. We are attracting internal and external support in ways that commensurate with our status as an emerging leader on our campus. We have raised the bar for performance in our core areas of teaching, research and service excellence. We continue to ensure that the Faculty of Health Sciences is a desired place to study, research, work, and grow.

Great faculties don't happen by accident. They emerge as the result of assembling talented faculty, staff and students who go above and beyond the call of duty in focused, strategic areas – and ours do. They require the strong support of senior administration and its sister faculties – and we have both. They require the strong support of all levels of government – and we continue to be a place where governments invest. They need corporate support from places like Christie Digital who helped us create our state-of-the art

Anatatorium, a 3D facility used to teach anatomy using 3D MRI images. They need strong student leaders, like ours who helped lead a \$23-million gift helping us to create the Western Student Recreation Centre, a facility unparalleled at any other university campus. They also need the personal and financial investment of our alumni and friends, like the \$15 million we received from our former Chancellor, Arthur Labatt and his wife Sonia Labatt whose generous donations have allowed us to create a new Health Sciences Building as well as enrich our formidable School of Nursing (see story on page 8). Many of our alumni and friends donate funds to assist us in more effectively recruiting, and supporting the very best students, and providing them with an exceptional educational experience when they arrive.

I also want to acknowledge the non-monetary giving that has also made our Faculty so special. The commitment of people like Mike Yuhasz (see page 4), Annabel Sels, and the Barber Shoppers are just three examples of people who give generously of their time and resources. Their unbridled affection for the University and their academic unit has made us stronger.

Yes – giving – the theme of this publication, is essential if we are going to continue to deliver on our pledge of delivering the best student experience among Canada's leading research institutions. We simply couldn't do it without our loyal donors, and I thank each and every one of them on behalf of the 3,600 students we serve each year.

As my first five-year term ends on June 30, 2009, let me state what I find myself saying on a daily basis, it has been, and continues to be, a pleasure and a privilege to serve as the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences. I thank each and every one of you for your interest, commitment and support as we continue to move forward.

Have a great summer. Yours in Health Sciences,

**W. James Weese, Dean**

Faculty of Health Sciences

## HEALTH SCIENCES MATTERS

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## FEATURE STORIES

### Cover Story

Celebrating a leader in the field of physical activity and fitness.

BY KATHERINE LOW

### The Gift of Health

Arthur and Sonia Labatt discuss why giving to Nursing and the Faculty is important to them.

BY MATT QUIN

### Sweating Out the Cravings

Dr. Harry Prapavessis and his team explore how exercise can help kick the habit.

BY KATHERINE LOW

### Taking it to the Streets

Investigating and helping seniors tackle the challenges of driving.

BY KATHERINE LOW

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# PASSION FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

*by Katherine Low*  
Celebrating Dr. Michael Yuhasz's dedication  
to his field, students and profession.



“

I've been at fitness longer than anyone... I've always believed fitness to be very important to living and have maintained a relatively good living, all my life. DR. MICHAEL YUHASZ

”

It is impossible to tell the whole story of Dr. Michael Yuhasz simply through the words of his colleagues, friends, athletes and students, but what unites all of their stories is the respect, admiration and gratitude for Mike's presence in their lives. Yuhasz himself can no longer tell the stories; a stroke in 2006 has left him unable to speak, but the impact he has made at Western and beyond speaks for itself.

Researcher, developer, writer, teacher, coach, mentor, exercise leader, husband and father, Yuhasz was a graduate of Western's first Physical Education class in 1950, when he also played football, basketball and wrestled. He then returned to Western in 1954 as a lecturer, moving through the ranks of professorship to eventually become acting Dean in 1989, chairman of the graduate program, then Professor Emeritus in 1993.

Along the way, he coached football for 16 years and wrestling for 13. He also directed the intramural program and started the first university physical fitness research laboratory in 1955. He was the first professor in Ontario to complete his PhD in Physical Education, and in 1970, he prepared a PhD program proposal. He also helped create the second master's program in Physical Education in Canada.

His many honours include Western's coach of the year, the Canada Medal, a certificate of recognition for contributions to Olympic wrestling, long-service awards, and induction into Western's wrestling and sports halls of fames. He also helped

develop a fitness program for the air force in 1956, developed the 'Yuhasz five-minute muscular endurance test', and the Canada Fitness Survey, among many other research achievements.

## OUTSTANDING PASSIONATE COMMITTED

None are small feats.

In 1988, he said it best himself: "I've been at fitness longer than anyone... I've always believed fitness to be very important to living and have maintained a relatively good living, all my life." In December 2002, Yuhasz put together a 50-year history of honours in physical education/kinesiology at Western. In it, he writes about his experiences as one of 12 students of the inaugural Physical Education class. As the Faculty had no facility of its own, students had to trek to Brescia, South Street, and the YMCA for classes. That wasn't the all-male faculty's only problem: "Convocation Hall was used for the required dance instruction and it was necessary to import girls from the general student population as partners," he wrote.

Along with his reflections of the Faculty's early days are countless examples of Yuhasz's dedication to his students, his field, and his athletes. It is impossible to tell the story of physical education at Western without Yuhasz.

"He's a first-generation scientist in physical education," said Dr. Ron Watson, former Director of Western's School of Kinesiology and Professor Emeritus. Watson has known Yuhasz since his own arrival to the faculty in 1965. "He and some of his colleagues were really the pioneers in fitness testing and development programs. It was his life's passion to try and promote the concept that exercise and sport were such important things to individual's lives whether or not people recognized that. He was totally committed to fitness."

One of Yuhasz's peers, George Wearing, first met him in 1947 and was one of his classmates in the inaugural Physical Education class. They have kept in touch since graduation and continue to have lunch together in London often. Wearing describes Yuhasz then as a "very active and capable young man... he was very active as an athlete and as a coach."



“ He was totally committed to fitness. ”  
 DR. RON WATSON

Along with Yuhasz and Wearing, Paul Thomas rounded out the entire first graduating class of Physical Education. “Mike was a lot more studious than I was,” Thomas said. “Mike knew what he wanted to be earlier than the rest. George and I were more athletic bums.” But Thomas also describes Yuhasz as a “good, trusted and loyal friend... He had the happy ability to keep and maintain his friendships with students, faculty, colleagues, and his athletic acquaintances all through his life.”

These feelings are shared by Dr. Bob Barney, Professor Emeritus and Acting Interim Director for the International Centre for Olympic Studies, who met Yuhasz in 1972. “He was an outstanding colleague, helpful in what you’re doing and what you’re trying to do,” he said. Barney refers to Yuhasz as likeable, quiet and even, with a good sense of humour. He points out that Yuhasz earned his PhD at the University of Illinois where T.K. Cureton, a “major historical giant in the study of exercise,” mentored him. “That had a lot to do with shaping Mike. And we give Mike a lot of credit, but we ought to give his mentor credit too. Anybody that studies exercise physiology or the effect of exercise upon health and fitness, if they don’t know the name T.K. Cureton, then they don’t know anything!”

Perhaps it was this relationship with Cureton that enabled Yuhasz to have such an impact on those he mentored. Dr. Bert Taylor of the University of Manitoba had the opportunity to experience Yuhasz as a mentor as well as a professor, a football and wrestling coach, a supervisor and as a family member. “He was outstanding. Just outstanding,” Taylor said of Yuhasz. “He got me very much involved in a lot of things that essentially kept me in university and kept me going.” So much so, in fact, that when Taylor left Western to pursue a Master’s degree in Physical Education at the University of British Columbia, he continued to send his work back to Yuhasz at Western.

“Mike was essentially my supervisor. Even though he was still in London, I was sending all my master’s work back to him,” he said. “He really served as my master’s supervisor, even though he wasn’t listed as that.” Taylor then went on to pursue his PhD in biochemistry, but credits Yuhasz with the academic path his life has taken. “He’s the individual who convinced me to go on to graduate school and taught me the importance of research. He was the catalyst, the stimulus, who really got me there,” he said. “Because he’s such a quiet gentleman, he had a tremendous calming effect. He doesn’t talk a lot, but when he speaks, you listen.”

But even with all of Yuhasz’s academic guidance, his role in Taylor’s life meant much more. “My father had been killed in World War II, so I didn’t have a dad, and Mike essentially played that role for me and made me part of



(L-R): Glynn Leyshon, Earle Zeigler, Michael Yuhasz, and Claude Turner

the Yuhasz clan,” he said. “I can never stop thanking him. Any place I am in my career and any success that I’ve had, I would suggest to you that he was the most influential person in my life from an academic perspective. The essence is in the man. The gentle, caring, empathetic, sympathetic type of individual he was, he just had foresight and a vision. But the vision wasn’t for him, it was for the field and it was for his students. In a sense, we try to carry that vision out for him. Every time I’m asked to give some type of a keynote address and people ask me the most influential person in my life from an academic perspective, it’s Mike Yuhasz.”

Yuhasz himself understands at least a part of the significant role he has played in shaping much of Western’s fitness culture and its people: “I feel that I have influenced students, to understand and to pursue the scientific approach to sport and exercise, especially early in my career, when it wasn’t the vogue,” he wrote in 1988. “I have continually tried to influence people to see the importance of adding physical activity to their life, and when it happens I’m pleased.” It seems, then, that Mike Yuhasz and those who were influenced by him have much to be pleased about.



**CSD GROUP TRAVELS TO LIMA, PERU**



Students Rebecca Affoo, Julia Cott and Katie Clark at Machu Picchu

Originally initiated by second-year CSD student Katie Clark, this project showcases our FHS students' community involvement on an international scale.

In August of 2008, three students (Julia Cott\*, Rebecca Affoo\* and Katie Clark) and one faculty member (Susan Schurr) from the School of Communication Sciences and Disorders travelled to Lima, Peru, to give back.

Bringing skills learned during their time in Western's Speech-Language Pathology program, the group supervised assessment and treatment services to children with cleft lip and palate. The students also took part in family consultations and played an active role in the interprofessional team activities at the clinic. Their time in the country was a tremendous opportunity to hone collaborative skills and to establish lifelong connections with the Peruvian community.

The Peruvian clinic in which the foursome worked employed only a small paid staff and welcomed their Canadian visitors with open arms. The services offered by the clinic are provided by community professionals – doctors, dentists, social workers, and speech-language pathologists, who volunteer their time to the cause. The children treated came from across Peru, and were sponsored by private citizens and volunteers. "These children wouldn't have access otherwise," said Schurr. "Some of the children had never seen a car or had shoes, the private

sponsorship is integral in their ability to obtain treatment."

This excursion was a co-ordinated effort between Western (FHS and CSD), Solidarity in Action Inc. (a non-profit social justice organization) and Armonizar (the first IP initiative for CLP in Peru). Students participating received funding from the Clinical Education Fund and from the FHS Study Abroad Support Fund.

The School of Communication Sciences and Disorders is currently planning a return trip to Lima during the summer of 2009.



*\*graduated*

Check out the blog and Flickr gallery from the 2009 trip.

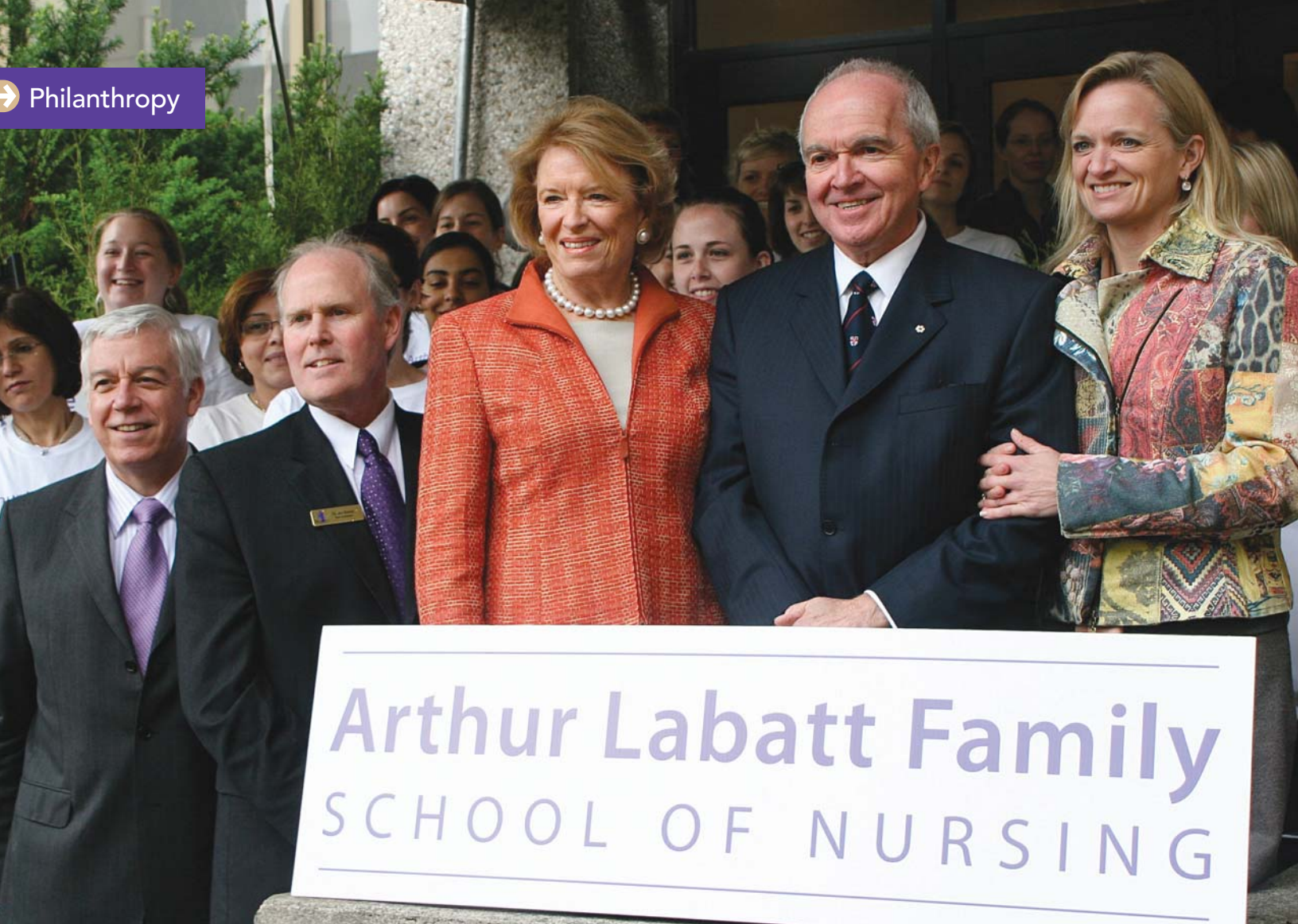


Student Katie Clark with a client and Western Clinical Educator Susan Schurr

## FACTS THAT **matter**

CHRONIC DISEASE ACCOUNTS FOR OVER 46% OF THE GLOBAL BURDEN OF DISEASE, AND 83% OF OLDER PEOPLE HAVE ONE OR MORE CHRONIC DISEASES. AS POPULATIONS ARE AGING, RESEARCH AND PRACTICE IN THE FIELDS OF HEALTH PROMOTION AND SELF-CARE MANAGEMENT ARE CRITICAL.

*Carol McWilliam, Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing*



# The Gift of Health

by Matt Quin

In the long list of academic and community leaders who are champions for the Faculty of Health Sciences, few are more passionate ambassadors than Western's former Chancellor and his wife, Arthur and Sonia Labatt.

When asked what motivates and focuses their philanthropic spirit, Arthur without missing a beat notes, "we are so happy and fortunate to be in a position to give back and to support various causes. We really like to focus on education, health and research, and institutions that are leading edge."

The Labatt family has a history of supporting the Faculty of Health Sciences. Their 2005 gift towards the construction of the Arthur and Sonia Labatt Health Sciences Building, in support of the Ontario Women's Health Council Chair in Rural Women's Health, and graduate studies in Health Sciences, helped to shape the Faculty as we know it today.

Pictured above: Western President Dr. Paul Davenport and Dean Jim Weese welcome Sonia and Arthur Labatt and their daughter, Jacquie at the May 12, 2008 naming of the Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing ceremony.



In May of 2008, Arthur and Sonia made a historic \$10-million donation to Nursing, leading to the renaming of the school to The Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing. This gift will create new opportunities for undergraduate and graduate nursing students and will increase the research capacity of our nursing school.

"Health Sciences is a young but large faculty and is growing quickly," said Arthur Labatt. "One reason we wanted to support this group was our belief in the work being done and our hope to assist in bringing a higher profile and more understanding to Health Sciences." Labatt also reinforced the link to FHS by noting that the Faculty was a great fit with their philanthropic focus on health, education and research.

In his May 12 address announcing his gift to Nursing, Labatt noted that the opportunity to support the school resonated immediately with he and his wife. "I believe it is because we know how essential the nursing profession is to our society." Labatt's words and passion show an appreciation for the work nurses do in our society. "At convocation, the Nursing graduates appear to walk across the stage with a sense of quiet determination," he noted. "It seems as if the men and women who go into nursing have a passion for their future vocation."

"Society has not always recognized the contribution of these bright and confident nursing professionals," he said. "Sonia and I would like to do our part to change this perception. We want to show our recognition of the importance of the nursing profession."

In a recent interview, Labatt candidly discussed his personal experiences with the nursing community and was quick to note that "[nurses] are often the people I remember most. I've always been truly impressed with the care they provide. Nurses are not only great caregivers, but they deliver a lot more than that.

**We are so happy and fortunate to be in a position to give back and to support various causes. We really like to focus on education, health and research, and institutions that are leading edge.**

**ARTHUR LABATT**



They are managers, researchers [and] deserve much greater recognition."

The Labatts are true ambassadors for Nursing, the Faculty, and Western. They show incredible passion and dedication for the advancement of our programs and students.

We have come to know Arthur and Sonia for their support of Western and the Faculty, but I was lucky enough to be able to get to know him personally.

The Labatts have many philanthropic interests that lie outside of the University gates and some are truly international in scope. Arthur speaks proudly of one such group called the Kibo Foundation; a Ugandan educational foundation where Arthur has taken a leadership role. Based in Kampala, Uganda, this group teaches information technology, leadership tools, and communications skills to young people of all educational backgrounds. These skills assist them in getting jobs and even starting small businesses. With a tremendous success rate and many graduates coming back to volunteer, Labatt hopes to set up a

system and model that can be replicated in other parts of Africa.

Outside of their philanthropic endeavors, the Labatts find time to remain active and healthy. "I wish I were a better golfer," he said when asked about his love for the game. "It is a very difficult game," he laughs while talking about his rather wild style of play. "I started playing golf when I was 62." Labatt notes that in earlier stages of his life he just couldn't find the time to play. What changed his mind was his wife Sonia who noted, "living on a golf course and watching the golfers walk by, it may be time to learn how to play." For the last 13 years, lessons and perseverance have led them to a point where " [they] do enjoy it... most of the time. It can be frustrating."

After chuckling about the amount of golf balls lost in recent games with his son-in-law, Arthur opened up about hiking, another physical activity he and wife Sonia enjoy while at their Arizona home. "In Tucson there are four mountain ranges and the hiking is just terrific. That is a good thing to keep you fit – the best."

With what already seems like a full schedule, Labatt notes "when I have some extra time, I'm sort of a frustrated musician. I used to play the violin when growing up, but put it away for about 30 years until recently." With help and lessons from the concertmaster at the Hamilton Symphony, he is getting his skills back in tune. Clearly not afraid of any musical challenge, Labatt also proclaimed "of all things, I've also taken up the accordion! It is an unusual instrument and very difficult to play well!"

"We keep very busy... and out of trouble."

Without a doubt, the Labatts' schedules are jammed full but they never cease to find the time to give back – to their passions, to the local and global community.

The Faculty of Health Sciences is deeply indebted to Arthur and Sonia for their generous support of the Faculty.



## CHAMPIONING AGAINST DIABETES

Faculty of Health Sciences Assistant Professor Shauna Burke is hoping to bring the number of local obese children at risk for Type 2 diabetes down to size.

Burke is the lead researcher for the Children's Health and Activity Modification Program (CHAMP): A community-based lifestyle intervention for obese children at risk for Type 2 diabetes and their families. In 2008, the program was held at the Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging at *The University of Western Ontario*. This summer, the program will be held at the YMCA Centre Branch in London.

"Childhood obesity is a serious issue, but there are ways to address it in a fun and supportive way," Burke said. "This is a really exciting and unique program in London."

The four-week session begins August 4 and 30 children between the ages 10 and 12 and their families participate. The youth must have a body mass index greater than the 97th percentile for their age and gender, and have a general medical assessment and be given written clearance to begin the program.

Participants will engage in group-based physical activities and will be taught behaviour modification skills such as goal setting and monitoring the types of foods they consume. Families will also be taught new strategies and tools that can be applied in the home to encourage healthy eating, and staying active.

The program is designed to prevent the onset of Type 2 diabetes and is not intended for children with the disease.

"This is not a weight loss program or a boot camp," Dr. Burke says. "It is about encouraging and promoting healthy behaviours in a supportive environment."

Burke said it is important that family members get involved in the program. They will be encouraged to participate in weekly educational sessions, including those focusing on promoting self-esteem at home and anti-bullying.

As well, participants will be given a family membership at the YMCA of London for the month.

"This program is an opportunity to work with the entire family... (and) address some of the non-visual issues associated with being overweight," she said.

"The research goals of the program are to increase the children's physical activity behaviours, to improve physiological and psychological outcomes and to assess the overall effectiveness of the program."

Although data analyses from year one are incomplete, preliminary results appear promising and anecdotal reports from children, family members, and program staff have been extremely positive. So far, it appears as though CHAMP is effective in terms of improving a number of body composition measures, some indicators of cardiorespiratory fitness, and providing a positive experience for both children and parents.

As one parent recently noted after receiving her son's six-month assessment results, "I look at these results and more importantly I look at my child and am amazed at his lifestyle change. This initiative impacted my son – our family... at the most optimal time in our lives. We are in a place in our lives where we were ready to dedicate ourselves to making some critical changes in our lives because we were on a pretty scary trajectory! Most important, too, are the staff that are affiliated and have been affiliated with CHAMP. The impact they had on [my son] –



“ Childhood obesity is a serious issue, but there are ways to address it in a fun and supportive way. ”



CHAMP participants celebrate at the 2008 Camp

as leaders, role models, teachers, supporters and champions have changed a young boy's life. Thank you for empowering [my son] and I to change our lives – to choose healthy eating and physical activity as a way of life every day, to enjoy our time together cooking and exercising and to feel great about ourselves inside and out!"

Burke also said the children will benefit from participating in the program with peers facing similar weight issues.

"It's an opportunity for children and their families to make life-long friends and develop meaningful relationships" she said.

Following the program, families will receive post-intervention support three, six and 12 months later. If participants are willing to continue with the program, Burke says researchers will follow up with the children and their families six months after the program and then once a year for five years.

"This could be an effective way to combat the onset of diabetes in these children," said Burke.

The program runs Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and weekend family education sessions are held every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The cost of the program is \$200, which includes transportation, the YMCA family membership, weekly field trips, T-shirts and hats, among other items, however meals will not be provided.




## FACTS THAT **matter**

CLOSE TO 100% OF THE OVER 475,000 CANADIANS WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND RELATED DEMENTIAS HAVE LANGUAGE AND COGNITIVE-COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS THAT REQUIRE HELP BY SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS

*JB Orange, Director, School of Communication Sciences and Disorders*

# CELEBRATING MUSTANG ATHLETICS

## Summer 2008

- ▶ After a strong summer with the men's 8s winning the prestigious Royal Henley Regatta in England, both the Western men's and women's teams won the CURC national team titles in November



## Oct 2008

- ▶ Western announces Thérèse Quigley as the incoming director of Sports and Recreation Services. Quigley, a former Mustangs varsity volleyball player, comes to Western after serving as the Athletic Director at McMaster
- ▶ Mustangs win provincial title in women's golf (fourth straight)
- ▶ Women's rugby team advances to CIS nationals after qualifying for OUA Championship against Guelph. Team continues to produce many players for women's senior national teams, with national women's 7s coached by Mustangs bench-boss Natascha Wesch

## Nov 2008

- ▶ Pat Mroczek, rookie men's soccer player, named CIS rookie of the year
- ▶ Sophomore cross-country runner Kyle O'Neill finished in 10th place as the top Mustang at the CIS Cross Country championships held on the Plains of Abraham in Quebec City. Western's women placed fifth, the men sixth overall
- ▶ Western wins men's and women's OUA badminton titles, Western's fifth title in the past six years. Jennifer Lam, a student in the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry, won her fifth OUA MVP title in six seasons
- ▶ Mustangs rowing teams capture national titles in university and college rowing championships in B.C. Mustang Cam Sylvester named rower of the year
- ▶ Western's football team wins the Yates Cup OUA Championship and Mitchell Bowl national semifinal before falling to Laval in the national final
- ▶ Michael Faulds named OUA Yates Cup MVP (Dalt White Trophy) for second straight year



## 124 OUA All-Stars, 14 recipients of major awards at the provincial and national level, and six provincial or national rookies of the year

The Western Mustangs athletics teams had a banner year in 2008-09, and have reason for optimism with incoming Director of Sports and Recreation Services Thérèse Quigley transitioning into the position over the summer in 2009.

In what was truly an exceptional year for the Mustangs, 36 of Western's 38 teams finished in fifth place or better provincially. Western had 124

OUA All-Stars (103) or CIS All-Canadians (21), 14 recipients of major awards at the provincial and national level, and six provincial or national rookies of the year.

Additionally, Western had a number of coaches honoured for their achievements, with six OUA coaches of the year and co-winners of the Canadian University Rowing Coach of the Year in Chris McCully and Dan Bechard.

Western is busy preparing for the upcoming 2009-10 season, with a relaunch of the website expected in July with a fresh look.

Visit [westernmustangs.ca](http://westernmustangs.ca) for schedules, scores, news, bios and more. Sign up for the Western Mustangs newsletter so you don't miss any news through the season.

Below is a look at some brief highlights from the 2008-09 year.

### Jan 2009

- ▶ Amanda Anderson passes Michele Vesprini as Western women's basketball's all-time leading scorer in home contest against Lakehead
- ▶ Western hosts 2nd Annual Jack Frost Cup in 5-4 win over Wilfrid Laurier in men's hockey at JLC



### March 2009

- ▶ Senior group of Mustangs men's basketball players win OUA West Final in convincing fashion on home court, advance to second straight CIS men's basketball nationals, playing in thrilling semifinal against eventual champion Carleton
- ▶ Jen Cotten named CIS track and field female athlete of the meet at nationals, helping women's Mustangs to tie for third place overall. Men finish fifth
- ▶ Men's hockey squad advances to national championships in Thunder Bay, fights adversity to reach CIS final against New Brunswick

### Feb 2009

- ▶ Western's men's squash team wins 26th straight OUA title, 36th in history, while women's team also wins on home soil. Stephanie Edmison named OUA women's squash player of the year
- ▶ Men's and women's curling teams capture OUA titles in Peterborough
- ▶ Bess Lennox, who became Western women's basketball's all-time leading rebounder, wins OUA player of the year
- ▶ Women's swimming team wins OUA gold, unseating Toronto, led by two-time reigning OUA female swimmer of the meet Hayley Nell



### April 2009

- ▶ Jen Cotten, women's track and field star, wins FWP Jones Trophy for most outstanding female athlete, Cam Sylvester, an Olympian and Mustang rower, wins Dr. Claude Brown Memorial Trophy for most outstanding male athlete.
- ▶ Vaughn Martin, Western football defensive lineman, drafted into the NFL by the San Diego Chargers in the fourth round. Becomes first CIS underclassman to be drafted in NFL

# Sweating Ou



# t the Cravings

by Katherine Low

.....  
**Participating  
in regular  
physical  
activity...  
cravings and  
withdrawal  
symptoms  
will decrease,  
ultimately  
helping them  
become  
or remain  
smoke-free**  
.....

It's been 18 excruciating hours since you last had one. You're irritable, stressed out, and the cravings are intense. There is only one thing you can think about firing up – and it isn't your treadmill. But that's exactly what Western researchers have been hard at work trying to convince smokers to do. Dr. Harry Prapavessis, Director of Western's new Exercise and Health Psychology Laboratory, and his team (Dr. Anita Cramp, Dr. Mary Jung and Therese Harper) are getting smokers to make the switch from lighting up to lacing up in an effort to help beat their cravings and kick their smoking habit – for good. The team works in the 1,800-square-foot Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) funded lab, built in 2006 and housed on the fourth floor of the Arthur and Sonia Labatt Health Sciences Building.

Dr. Harry Prapavessis and his team have shown that supervised exercise in addition to pharmacological agents like nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) helps smoking cessation, improves physical fitness, and delays weight gain in women smokers.

"However, as with all smoking cessation intervention, relapse effects after stopping the program are common problems."

In a recent study, 70% of women had stopped smoking at the end of the 12-week program, but after one year, only 27% remained abstinent. "Our physical fitness and weight data supported the abstinence data," said Prapavessis. "This suggests that exercise needs to be maintained for individuals to continue to kick the habit." He goes on to say "it is important to determine whether inexpensive home and community-based lifestyle exercise maintenance programs can maintain exercise, fitness and weight after cessation program termination, and hence prevent (reduce) smoking relapse".

Mary Jung, a CIHR post-doctoral fellow, is working on a Canadian Cancer Society funded project that will test these notions. "This research project will not only contribute to a better understanding of the role exercise plays as a smoking cessation aid, but it will also explore a means of increasing the cost-effectiveness of long-term smoking cessation programs" said Jung.

Prapavessis and his team are also getting ready to test exercise as an aid to help curb smoking behaviour on pregnant and post-natal women. Anita Cramp, a SSHRC post-doctoral fellow, is working on this project. “We would expect that if these women can participate in regular physical activity, their cravings and withdrawal symptoms will decrease, ultimately helping them become or remain smoke-free” said Cramp. The team is currently looking for volunteers for this important study (pre and post-natal women who want to quit smoking as well as those who have quit and want to remain smoke-free).

“One of the mechanisms we are examining is the stress hormone called cortisol” said Prapavessis. “It has been shown that cortisol levels drop during abstinence which seems to heighten cravings and withdrawal symptoms. We’re hypothesizing that exercise may buffer this drop in cortisol and lessen the impact of these cravings and withdrawal symptoms.”

Participants will be asked to undergo a six-to-eight-week supervised exercise training program, where they will come into the lab to work out twice a

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**70% of women had stopped smoking at the end of the 12-week program, but after one year, only 27% remained abstinent... this suggests that exercise needs to be maintained for individuals to continue to kick the habit**  
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week and once a week for behavioural counselling. “Not only will we be exercising the body, but the mind as well,” said Cramp.

Therese Harper, a PhD student being supported by the New Zealand Foundation for Research Science and

Technology said she believes the counselling will be the key to the study’s success. As part of our smoking cessation and relapse prevention studies, “we’re going to be giving the volunteers cognitive – behavioural training sessions once a week. These sessions will include tips on how to quit smoking, goal setting, working with partners and overcoming barriers to exercise,” she said. “We’re hoping that they will quit or at least reduce their smoking behaviour. If exercise can help to reduce their cravings and they don’t pick up that cigarette – that would be the ultimate.”

“This important work will assist those who wish to stop smoking, thus decreasing cancer risk, and ultimately, the cost of health care to the Canadian public” said Prapavessis

*Pregnant or postpartum and trying to quit? Quit already? Here’s how to get involved with the study: Call the lab at 519.661.2111 x 81189, e-mail Anita Cramp at [acramp2@uwo.ca](mailto:acramp2@uwo.ca), email Therese Harper at [tharper2@uwo.ca](mailto:tharper2@uwo.ca), or visit [www.ehpl.uwo.ca](http://www.ehpl.uwo.ca)*



### TRYING TO QUIT? TRY THIS.

“If you experience a craving or withdrawal symptom while trying to quit, some form of moderate activity for a 5-to-10-minute bout can alleviate those symptoms,” says Prapavessis. “That could be something you could do just about anywhere – a brisk walk or using exercise equipment in your house.” In the long run, hit the treadmill, bike or rowing machine at a moderate to vigorous intensity for 30 to 45 minutes each time. Aim to work out three times a week. Not only is this great for your overall health, it can help you remain smoke-free. Prapavessis adds that combining nicotine replacement therapy with physical activity can give added benefits, too. But the real key to success is to keep up with the exercise to avoid potential relapses.



### KAREN FERGUSON – A TRUE CARA

For some, summer holidays are about Muskoka chairs, swimming at the beach, and road trips, but for Nursing's Karen Ferguson, summer vacation is an opportunity to give back. In June 2008, Ferguson visited Ireland to volunteer at a special camp for some very special campers.



Karen Ferguson arriving at Barretstown

Situated on 500 acres in the picturesque foothills of the Wicklow Mountains, Barretstown welcomes children from across Europe who are battling cancer and other serious illnesses. Barretstown is the European flagship site for Paul Newman's "Hole in the Wall Gang" Camps, an organization that provides children with cancer and other serious illnesses and conditions a camping experience of the highest quality, while extending year-round support to their families and health care providers. This camp is recognized by the medical world as playing an important part in their recovery from serious illness.

Barretstown isn't your typical camp for these very special youngsters, but is what can only be described as a magical retreat complete with castles, kings, queens and even a dragon! For just over a week, over 100 children (aged 6-12 from Ireland and 22 European countries) get to do what kids do best, have fun. With days filled with games, dances, crafts, artwork and all-out adventure, fun was indeed serious business. Other serious business was the medical treatment that these energized youngsters require. Barretstown employs one full-time and one part-time nurse while also relying on the skills of two volunteer physicians and nurses; this is where Karen comes in.

Having discovered the camp a number of years ago while involved in her clinical focus of children, it always stuck in her mind that "if I ever go to Ireland, I'd love to be a part of this camp." Here is where the planets align. With a 30th wedding anniversary trip in the works and a paper accepted at a conference in Ireland, opportunity knocked.

“For Karen Ferguson, summer vacation is an opportunity to give back.”

From the very first day where eager campers entered this magical land, Barretstown proved to be a life-changing experience for the children and Ferguson. She was quickly taken by the energy and imagination of the youngsters and their outstanding leaders (called Caras – Irish for friend). As a health care professional, Ferguson played an important role at the camp. Staffing the "Med-Shed", Ferguson with her team of paid and volunteer physicians and nurses worked tirelessly to provide top-notch care for the campers. "There was a tremendous amount of treatments and medications", noted Ferguson. But, it was more than the medications that she and her team provided. A positive attitude, encouragement and support welcomed anyone entering the "shed".

For a few special days, illness took a back seat for the campers and they were not defined by their illness but were magically transformed into knights, kings, queens and princesses. "It really energizes you," notes Ferguson. "It gives you a renewed sense of enthusiasm for living."

Filled with this enthusiasm, Ferguson accompanied by her husband, will be returning to Barretstown this summer to once again give back and maybe slay another dragon with some very special children.



Karen Ferguson with colleague Helen O'Connor. Check out the video about Karen's experiences at Barretstown.

# Taking it to the streets

Jan Polgar investigates seniors and driving. *by Katherine Low*

Seniors face a variety of unique challenges when it comes to hitting the road... getting in and out of vehicles, loading and unloading walkers and wheelchairs, mobility while driving and checking blind spots, medical conditions, seatbelts, seat adjustments and even cognitive impediments.

*me driving at night*

*king*

*hammer*



• ONTAR  
LIBA

**No talking.  
No radio.  
No driving  
at night.  
No driving in  
bad weather.  
Don't even  
think about  
driving the  
400-series  
highways.**



No, this isn't a lecture from a worried parent to a 16-year-old driver with a fresh license in his hand, it's only some of the many rules seniors invoke upon themselves to ensure they drive safely as they age.

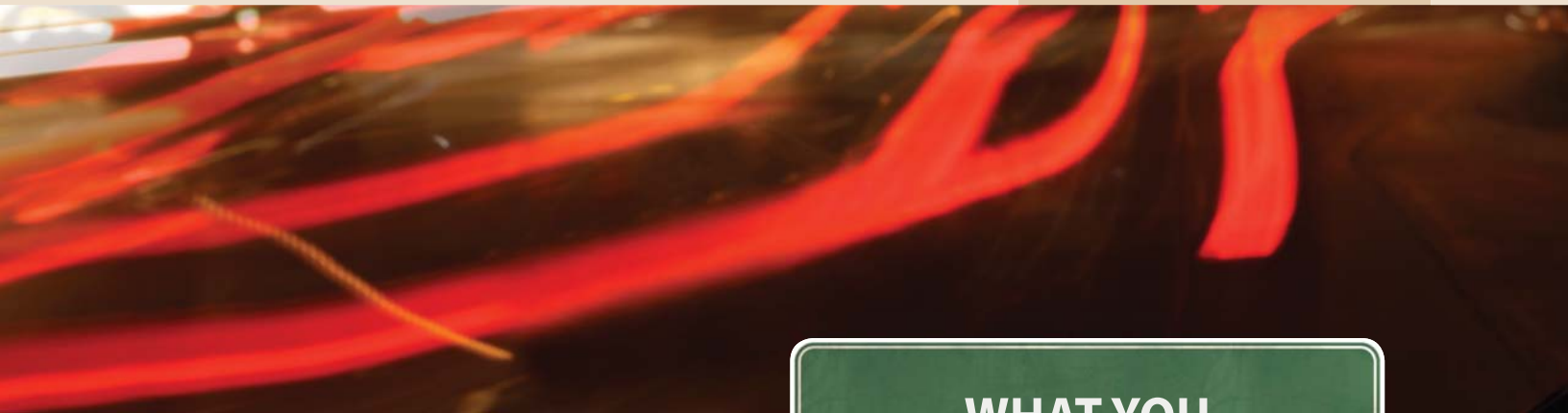
But Western Occupational Therapy professor and Associate Dean Scholarship, Jan Polgar has some other ideas to keep seniors safe on the roads, and it all starts with her research in occupational therapy.

Polgar completed her B.Sc. and her PhD at the University of Toronto, with a master's degree from the University of Southern California. Her work includes researching mobility and seating for people with physical disabilities. But lately, her focus has been on seniors and driving.

Seniors face a variety of unique challenges when it comes to hitting the road, she said: getting in and out of vehicles, loading and unloading walkers and wheelchairs, mobility while driving and checking blind spots, medical conditions, seatbelts, seat adjustments and even cognitive impediments. Gender plays a big role, too.

"At this age, we have people who are using assistive devices, so we've got people who are helping or are responsible for putting a walker or even a manual wheelchair into a vehicle on a regular basis," she said. "Often what we are finding is that it's women who are helping their husbands. Regardless of who's helping whom, the individual who is helping is usually an older person and they usually have some disabilities as well. Those are some of the things that we really haven't paid a whole lot of attention to."

Polgar says many older women start to lose confidence in their driving skills, particularly those who drove less frequently than their husbands. Now, if their husbands are ill or unable to drive, older women find themselves doing the bulk of the driving, but lack the confidence. Polgar says the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) is one organization that implements programs to help boost that confidence in driving once again.



## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW WHEN HITTING THE ROAD

As for technology in vehicles, Polgar says it can be a mixed blessing. A device such as a Global Positioning System (GPS) can be very helpful as it “speaks” to the driver, giving clear driving instructions. But Polgar worries such devices can also be a distraction.

“The older people are actually quite keen to try it and to learn how to use it,” she noted. But while seniors are very keen to use the technology, computer skills in seniors are all over the map. While some pick up the technology without missing a beat, others struggle to learn skills that depend on at least some computer technology like how to navigate between screens. Polgar is eager to test the technology in a driving simulator located at Lakehead University.

When it comes to car shopping, seniors should be extra picky. “A lot of salespeople don’t really know what kinds of features might be useful for an older person and some cars are just easier,” says Polgar. Drivers should consider the vehicle’s sightlines and visibility as well as comfort for getting in and out of vehicles. Polgar even recommends the idea of something similar to a booster seat – usually used for children. She points out that many seniors are around the 100-pound mark and could also benefit from that same type of product that helps to properly position the seatbelt.

“We’re really practical,” said Polgar of her advice to seniors to think carefully when car shopping or evaluating their driving skills. “That’s what OTs are – we’re very practical people.” Polgar’s research is funded by AUTO21, A Canadian Network of Centres of Excellence.



1. **Take your time purchasing a new vehicle. Consider its sightlines, your agility getting in and out of the vehicle, and its usage (loading groceries or walkers, for example).**
2. **Older drivers should try and plan their errands and trips to reduce time on the road, but never to the point of fatigue.**
3. **Drivers should always assess their abilities and how they feel. Too tired to drive today? Call a taxi.**
4. **Seniors should also have a transportation plan in place. If they can’t drive, how else could they get around? Make a plan.**
5. **Consider the services of the VON or Meals on Wheels.**
6. **Consider taking a driving program to refresh your skills or boost your confidence.**
7. **Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about whether or not your drugs can affect your driving ability.**

### For more information, visit:

[www.CAA.ca](http://www.CAA.ca)  
[www.Auto21.ca](http://www.Auto21.ca)  
[www.OTWorks.ca](http://www.OTWorks.ca)  
[www.AAA.com](http://www.AAA.com)  
[www.car-fit.org](http://www.car-fit.org)

*Canada Safety Council*  
*([www.safety-council.org](http://www.safety-council.org))*  
*55 Alive through the Ontario Safety League*  
*([www.osl.org](http://www.osl.org))*  
*American Occupational Therapy Association*  
*([www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org))*

*The University of Florida*  
*([www.ufl.edu](http://www.ufl.edu))*  
*National Highway Traffic Safety Administration*  
*([www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov))*

### HOMECOMING 2009



Attention Alumni! Last year we celebrated at the FHS tent before the football game and you loved it! With the great success of last year's event, we are pulling out the tent, tuning up the keyboard and planning for another great Western Homecoming event. Join us on Saturday, October 3, 2009, for another pre-game celebration! This is your chance to meet up with old classmates and check out what's happening in the Faculty of Health Sciences. Visit [uwo.ca/fhs/alumni/](http://uwo.ca/fhs/alumni/) for more information, to register and to check out photos from last year's event.



### PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS WITH HEARING LOSS

Hearing aids don't solve all of the communication problems related to hearing loss. This is the premise of a series of classes by Mary Beth Jennings and her team at the H.A. Leeper Speech and Hearing Clinic and the National Centre for Audiology. The Clinic's "Programs for Adults with Hearing Loss" are inventive courses that since their inception in 2001 have welcomed over 250 participants.

During the weekly sessions, participants from throughout the London community learn strategies to improve communication with each other (spouses and significant others are often engaged in the classes), learn about their hearing and hearing devices, and support each other by sharing their own stories.

Not only do participants learn from each other and from the H.A. Leeper Clinic staff, they enrich the learning of Western's Audiology students and researchers. The programs are living research laboratories and provide learning opportunities for students, staff, and faculty. Students in the School's Audiology program are actively engaged in and often facilitate the courses.



If you are interested in participating in these courses, Mary Beth and her colleagues are always looking for participants. Please feel free to contact Karen Burrell, Clinical Administrative Assistant, H.A. Leeper Speech and Hearing Clinic, 519-661-2021.



## FACTS THAT **matter**

LITERACY HAS A POWERFUL IMPACT ON HEALTH OUTCOMES. A STUDY OF MORE THAN 3,000 ADULTS OVER A 5-YEAR PERIOD FOUND THAT LOW READING PROFICIENCY WAS THE STRONGEST PREDICTOR OF MORTALITY AFTER SMOKING. ANOTHER STUDY FOUND THAT LIMITED READING PROFICIENCY WAS INDEPENDENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH A NEARLY TWO-FOLD INCREASE IN THE CHANCE OF DEATH FOR COMMUNITY-DWELLING ELDERS OVER FIVE YEARS." – FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE THE ARTICLE "RELATION BETWEEN LITERACY SKILLS AND THE HEALTH OF CANADIANS", IN CLLRNET'S ENCYCLOPEDIA OF LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

<http://literacyencyclopedia.ca/index.php?fa=items.show&topicId=264>

### CCAA NEWS

The Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging (CCAA) is Canada's leader in current research and program development for improved physical ability and healthy aging for older adults. It is a not-for-profit national research and education centre within the Faculty of Health Sciences at *The University of Western Ontario*.

The CCAA offers weekday exercise classes to approximately 500 London, Ontario-based seniors. The average age of these participants is 75, some are as young as 50 and several are in their 90s. These exercise programs include combined fitness classes (cardio and strength training) as well as personal training, strength training, dynamic balance training and Get Fit for Active Living (exercise and education for beginner senior exercisers). There are also exercise programs tailored specifically for those with osteoporosis, stroke and chronic obstructive lung disease. For more information about these programs or the leadership training programs designed to train those who work with seniors in a fitness capacity contact the CCAA at [ccaa@uwo.ca](mailto:ccaa@uwo.ca) or 519-661-1603.

July 17 and 18, 2009 the CCAA hosted the first Research to Action: Activity and Aging Continuing Education Conference for CCAA trained individuals and others with an interest in the field of physical activity and aging. This two-day conference was held at Western and was partially supported by funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR).

Conference delegates learned about the latest advances in physical activity and aging from top researchers working at the forefront of this rapidly-evolving field.

The conference also included marketing and communication workshops providing attendees with the tools required to work effectively with the media and the public in order to better

market services to older adults in the community. For more information about this exciting event go to [www.uwo.ca/actage](http://www.uwo.ca/actage) or contact Sarah Merkel at [smerkel2@uwo.ca](mailto:smerkel2@uwo.ca) or 519-661-2029.



CCAA participant Madelyn Hill from the 9:30 Tuesday/Thursday class



Winnie Stewart and Dora Boode, volunteer fitness instructor



Angela Clarke, CCAA fitness instructor



# COME HOME TO WESTERN AND CELEBRATE!

Calling all Nursing, Kinesiology, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Health & Rehabilitation Sciences, Communications Sciences & Disorders and Bachelor of Health Sciences Alumni!

Join us at the Faculty of Health Sciences Homecoming Tent located beside the Arthur & Sonia Labatt Health Sciences Building for a pre-game BBQ luncheon and football game (Western Mustangs vs. McMaster Marauders).

- Price:** \$35 per person for BBQ and football ticket or \$15 per person for BBQ only.
- Date:** Saturday, October 3, 2009
- Time:** 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- RSVP:** Visit [uwo.ca/fhs/alumni](http://uwo.ca/fhs/alumni), email [mquin@uwo.ca](mailto:mquin@uwo.ca) or call 519-661-2111 x82269



## REGISTER NOW!



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