1 October 2007: International Day of older persons

**Global Age-Friendly Cities Project**

Every month, almost one million persons reach the age of 60 years in the world: 80% of them live in a developing country.

“In an Age-Friendly City, public and commercial settings and services are designed to accommodate varying levels of ability. Age-friendly service providers, public officials, community leaders, and business people anticipate and respond flexibly to aging-related needs and preferences”.

Cf. page 3
News and Events

General Assembly 25 October 2007

The fifth General Assembly of AFSM will take place on 25 October 2007 at 13h30, in WHO HQ, Salle A. We strongly hope it will be attended as in the past. See details on page 3

Vaccination against Influenza in Geneva

For the third consecutive year, two sessions of free vaccination of, will be performed on 15 and 16 October for former staff who are members of WHO Health Insurance. Cf. page 4

Annual reception

Thursday 6 December from 17h
WHO HQ Cafeteria

Our annual reception, which is held every year on the first Thursday in December will take place this year on Thursday, December 6.

Active staff are also welcomed.

Please fill in the slip on page 12 and return it by e-mail or post.

DG Dr Chan addressing the participants, at last reception (AFSM archives)
News and Events

General Assembly

Our General Assembly will take place on Thursday, 25 October 2007; please see below the provisional agenda. According to the statutes, only life members and annual members having paid the 2007 dues will be allowed to vote.

Simultaneous interpretation will be available.

Provisional agenda

13.00-13.30: Welcome and participants registration

13.30
1. Opening of the Assembly
2. Election of the Chairman for the Assembly. Election of polling officers
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. AFSM President’s report

The main activities will be presented and discussed, in particular the Quarterly News, Website, directory of members, WHO memoir, social and cultural activities, vaccinations, relations with the WHO Regions and other associations…

5. Financial report, budget, election of account auditors.

Coffee break: around 15.00-15.30*

Refreshments will be offered by UBS; Mr Dreyer, Assistant Director of the WHO UBS branch, will be available to answer any banking questions.

6. Health insurance
7. Pensions
8. Amendments to the statutes
9. Other questions
10. Closing

*During the coffee break, Dr Arthur Brown’s book: “A public health Odyssey” (in English only) will be available for the modest sum of CHF 10.-, to help us cover transportation cost from England.

The book was reviewed in QNT No 63 (January-March 2006) under the title of: “Who will pay for the elephants, Dr Brown?”

This book told of his pride at having belonged to WHO, and his belief that it is possible to reduce, if not to eradicate human suffering due to illness in spite of ignorance, poverty, wars...

Arthur Brown writes about the first 25 years of WHO; he used to say: “I believed in WHO, and I continue to believe in it”.

He passed away on 7 September 2005.

He left to AFSM the remaining stock of this extraordinary book.
1st October 2007: International Day of Older persons

This year, the theme of the International Day of Older persons will be: “A city for every age: age-friendly cities”.

This is a WHO project, developed with other official or private organizations, aiming to facilitate the use of the city for older persons.

As usual, our Association has fully contributed to the commemoration of this day in Geneva, together with the Ville de Genève, which participates annually to this celebration.

Key figures from the political and humanitarian worlds, as well as artists, have been invited to participate and animate this manifestation.

Vaccination against Influenza in Geneva

For the third year, two sessions of free flu vaccination for retirees and spouses, who are still insured under WHO staff health insurance, will be undertaken in October at WHO/HQ, in cooperation with the Medical Service, Health Insurance, and AFSM.

The first session will take place on Monday 15 October from 8:30 to 12:30, and 13:30 to 16:30 and the second one on Tuesday 16 October, from 8:30 to 12:30, and from 13:30 to 16:30.

The vaccinations will take place in the Hall in front of the Medical Service. You are invited to dress such a way that you can easily bare your arm.

In order that we may anticipate the number of doses of vaccine required, and organise the sessions, we need to know how many people are interested.

You are therefore invited to fill in the form below and send it through post or e-mail as soon as possible.

Only retirees who are still members of WHO Staff health Insurance are entitled to be vaccinated. So, please, indicate below your membership N° and bring your card with you.

Even if it is not always effective, the antiflu vaccine lowers the incidence of influenza and the severity of the possible complications, in particular pneumonia, which especially attacks older people.

Dr D. Cohen
AFSM Representative to the Surveillance Committee of Health Insurance

*Those who are suffering a condition which could contra-indicate the vaccination should ask their family doctor.

Family name ……………………… First name ……………………………………….
Number of persons ……………… N° of WHO Health insurance card.
Address

Telephone ………………… E-mail …………………

Selected session: □ 15 October morning □ afternoon □ □ 16 October morning □ afternoon □ (tick the relevant boxes)

Date, Signature
A victory for patients’ access to essential medicines in developing countries

The landmark decision by the High Court in Chennai (formerly Madras) to uphold India’s Patents Act in the face of the challenge by Swiss pharmaceutical company Novartis is a major victory for patients’ access to affordable medicines in developing countries.

“This ruling allows India to keep a law that limits the extent of patents said Dr. Tido von Schoen-Angerer, Director of the Doctors without Borders (MSF) Campaign for Access to Essential Medicines, based in Geneva. We call upon multinational drug companies and wealthy countries to leave the Indian Patents Act alone and stop pushing for ever stricter patent regimes in developing countries.”

Novartis took the Indian government to court over its 2005 Patents Act because it wanted a more extensive granting of patent protection for its products than offered by the law. Novartis claimed that India’s Patents Act did not meet rules set down by the World Trade Organization and was in violation of the Indian constitution. Apparently all of Novartis’s claims have been rejected by the High Court.

India began giving patents on medicines to comply with WTO rules, but it designed its law with safeguards so that patents can only be granted for real innovations. This means that companies seeking a patent for modifications to a molecule already invented, in order to extend ever further their monopolies on existing drugs, would be unsuccessful in India. It is this aspect of the law that Novartis was seeking to have removed. A ruling in favor of the company would have drastically restricted the production of affordable medicines in India that are crucial for the treatment of diseases throughout the developing world.

Developing country governments and international agencies like UNICEF and the Clinton Foundation rely heavily on importing affordable drugs from India, and over 80% of the antiretrovirals that MSF prescribes to its patients worldwide come from Indian generic companies.

India must be allowed to remain the “pharmacy of the developing world.”

To support the Indian government, MSF had launched a petition signed by over 420,000 people worldwide. Among the signatories were Global Fund Director Michel Kazatchkine, the Indian Health Minister Anbumani Ramadoss, Archbishop Desmond Tutu from South Africa, members from the European Parliament and the US Congress, former Swiss President Ruth Dreifuss, former UN Special Envoy for AIDS in Africa Stephen Lewis, German Development Minister Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, Norwegian Development Minister Erik Solheim, as well as authors John Le Carré and Naomi Klein.

One should also note that in July 2007 another country, Rwanda, decided to import an antiretroviral HIV manufactured by a Canadian generic drug maker, thus being the first country to test a World Trade Organization (WTO) waiver on drug patents. This waiver allows poor countries with critical problems to import generics. This experience may determine the future of the WTO waiver.

Pensions: What is happening to Investments

Last year there was a lot of hue and cry about investments of assets in the Pension Fund. Participants’ representatives, including retirees’ representatives, were critical about proposals made to passively manage assets in North American equities and use an indexed benchmark for that purpose. Since then, the UN General Assembly has upheld the proposal with certain caveats. Although the issue is now a moot one, it may be useful to recapitulate where we are now.

The criticisms had the following main elements:

1. the assets of the Fund have been performing well; so why change it?
2. possible outsourcing of management of the North American equity assets would subject the Fund to unacceptable risks.

It should be remembered that the Pension Board and the Secretary of the Fund, exercise responsibilities regarding assessment of benefits and administration of the Fund, but have only an advisory role in investment decisions. Investment decisions are the responsibility of the Secretary-General or his designated representative. An Investment Committee was created to advise on the investments of the Fund.

The benefits paid to retirees come from two sources – the contributions to the Fund from serving staff, or Participants, and income from investments. For instance, contributions for 2004–2005 were USD 2.6 billion, and investment income was USD 4.4 billion, while benefit payments amounted to USD 2.7 billion. Currently there are approximately 94,000 active participants and 55,000 beneficiaries (retirees or their dependents drawing pension). As of the end of June 2007, the assets of the Fund stood at USD 39.4 billion although it is likely that it might have decreased somewhat due to recent market downturn. The Fund is healthy and there is no foreseeable risk of any actuarial deficit (i.e. the difference between long-term liabilities of the Fund and its assets) occurring. The total assets are distributed as follows – 62% in equities, 31% in bonds, 4% in real estate and 3% in short-term investments.

The controversy was generated regarding approx USD 9 billion invested in North American equities. It is felt that the US equity market is one of the most efficient where it is difficult to outperform the market through active management. Since 1986, the MSCI/USA index has outperformed the Pension Fund actively managed portfolio for 17 years out of 22. In other words, a passively managed portfolio would have done better in 17 of the 22 years. The second concern has been the cost and risks of outsourcing the management of the North American assets. However, one forgets the Investment services staff are advised by private sector bankers and outsourcing would merely imply that a preset mix of equities would be followed, thus reducing costs considerably. Some further work is needed to assess what to do when the market is volatile, or is in a downturn. The role of the Investment services would change from actively investing to overseeing the indexation and its implementation.

Recently there has been an Asset-Liability management (ALM) study which gives some further indication of how the assets should be invested, especially in view of the different markets and currencies of payment of benefits. For instance, the fall in the value of the dollar has increased the value of the benefits payable to those on dual track pensions. However, ALM studies cannot indicate whether passive or active management is better.

Dev Ray
WHO Memoir

An account of the experiences of a WHO nurse

This is the story of my life as a staff member of the World Health Organization from 1959 until my retirement in 1980. Few people even now seem to be aware of the significance of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Never before in the history of mankind have people of the countries of the world come together to work for a common purpose. The international nature of the experience has, I believe, an immeasurable effect on the lives of most people who are privileged to participate, whether in country projects or in the Secretariat at regional or headquarters levels.

On 26th October 1959, I went to Geneva for briefing. The World Health Organization was housed in the Palais des Nations building. I still have the folder Joining WHO, given to me by Grace Meyer, Briefing Officer. One paragraph especially impressed me:

“The countries of the world created WHO to do on their behalf such things as providing international health services; giving technical information and counsel; assisting governments to meet their health needs; and, of especial importance, in view of events, coordinating international health work.”

Mention must be made of the Nursing Unit in Geneva where Elizabeth Hill, then Nursing Officer, welcomed me warmly. Lyle Creelman, Chief Nurse, was on duty travel. The work of this office is crucial in the development of nursing worldwide. As I sit writing now, how very much I would wish for the world’s nurses to be more aware of the work of WHO.

The project to which I was assigned was organized at the request of the Government of Orissa State through the Government of India, for the World Health Organization to provide a nurse tutor for two years for the Sriram Chandra Bhanja Medical College Hospital, Cuttack, to assist in expanding and upgrading the nursing and midwifery training programmes, and at the same to assist in the introduction of public health teaching and practice in the hospital.

I qualified as a public health nurse educator. Miss Adrienne Petty was my team leader, and my national counterpart was Miss Suprity Patnaik known as Ini Didi.

From Geneva I travelled to New Delhi where I was greeted by Frances Lilly-white, Regional Adviser on Nursing in the South-East Asia Regional Office. WHO/SEARO in those days was housed in Patiala House, a lovely house owned by the Maharajah of Patiala. There, people of many nationalities worked together for the aims of the Organization. I remember meeting Miss Adranvala, Chief Nurse; Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur, then a famous politician; Dr Henry Richards; Dr Bland; and Dr Eddy, senior members of the SEARO staff and Dr. Mani, our Regional Director.

Dr Mani’s words to me were never forgotten: “Miss Abbott, I know that you are technically competent or you would not be here. What is important however is when you get to Cuttack, not that you like...”
JULY-SEPTEMBER 2007

WHO memoir

the people there but that they like you”.

I have written at length about my life in Cuttack, yet there is much untold.

Upon arriving in Cuttack, I found that the Medical College Hospital was a general hospital of 747 beds serving a local population of about 175,000 people.

Apart from the original main building, the wards were built at random, unconnected by a covered way. It was common at the time of the monsoon for the whole compound to be flooded as much as two, sometimes three, feet in depth. Every morning at about 10 am a herd of cows was driven into the hospital compound to be milked under the eye of the bearer responsible for the hospital milk.

In a rural area about thirty miles from Cuttack, Adrienne was much concerned to find that the harijan (untouchable people) in the village had no assured source of water and were obliged to carry water over long distances. With the help of the Block Development officer, who much appreciated the presence of the nursing training project, a tube well was sunk and on the cement surround in English and Oriya was written: Miss Petty WHO nurse 1961—a tribute to a remarkable public health nurse.

Hopefully, as Miss Lilly-white wrote, the work there “lit a tiny diwali candle of better understanding”. Certainly the kindness of the people of Cuttack and of all whom I met during my stay with them, is never forgotten.

With the palms of my hands held together, I bow to them all and say Namaskar.

This article was excerpted and adapted from A Memoir by Mary O. Abbott: an account of the experiences of a WHO nurse from 1959 to 1980: part one: 1959 to 1961. We are very grateful to Miss Abbott for sending us a copy of this fascinating memoir; it is a unique chronicle of the history of nursing at WHO and will be a valuable addition to the WHO Archives. The full text of the memoir will be available soon on the AFSM web site www.who.int/formerstaff
**Environment**

**Anti-nuclear demonstrators outside WHO Headquarters**

Anti-nuclear demonstrators denounce an Agreement with the International Agency for Atomic Energy (IAEA) which they believe limits WHO's freedom in all nuclear matters

Since April 26, anti-nuclear militants have been stationed near WHO Headquarters. Their purpose is to draw attention to, and denounce, an agreement signed in 1959 between WHO and the IAEA.

The text involved stipulates in Article 3 that “WHO and IAEA recognize that they can be called upon to apply certain restrictions to safeguard the confidential nature of some documents”.

According to the Canadian André Larivière, of the Réseau sortir du nucléaire France”, WHO is tied hand and foot by IAEA in nuclear matters.....It must regain its independence in matters of radioactivity to better manage the consequences of Tchernobyl”.

These accusations are completely rejected by Gregory Hartl, a spokesman for WHO "The agreement which is referred to is one of dozens which define the responsibilities of each organization to avoid overlap! As regards the figures for Tchernobyl, WHO has on occasion been in complete disagreement with IAEA”. "IAEA is the only institution which reports directly to the Security Council. Therefore it has precedence over WHO, corrected André Larivière. Proof of this is the fact that the proceedings of a 1995 conference on Tchernobyl have never been published". "To my knowledge, these proceedings have indeed been published", corrected Gregory Hartl. “In fact, our field of action is not limited either by the 1959 agreement or even by these demonstrators who are quite free to express their views as much as they wish. But they have their point of view and we have ours”.

The demonstrators are planning to maintain their post until autumn or even spring 2008. « We have in the past managed to have a resolution on this considered by WHO, but unfortunately it was rejected”, regrets André Larivière. "We know that our action is beginning to have an effect. It is said that even Dr Chan is starting to take notice”...

From Genève Home Information (GHI) 6 June 2007.

**Readers’ Corner**

In response to the article by Jean-Jacques Guilbert about his time in Brazzaville, we received the e-mail below from Dr Desmond Nugent as well as a long letter from Raymond Hubinois, from which we take great pleasure in bringing you an extract on next page.

"Thank you for my copy of the Quarterly News, April - June 2007-08-01

To an aged former staff member these issues are very welcome. In addition to getting news of former friends, they stimulate personal memories. Having had to visit Brazza more times than annually during the reigns of two Regional Directors, the article by Jean Jacques Guilbert, with whom I attended a very stimulating discussion once in Ibadan, Nigeria, on their Teaching Programme, was specially interesting. I can only add that I found in the Poto Poto district a great business in African Paintings of which I have a collection lying somewhere and that “the Catholic Cathedral, which I attended regularly when there, is truly magnificent. It was meant to serve the four countries that were in collaboration in the French days. The Brazza Office was not conveniently located for Africa and it was said that WHO was conned into accepting it as a gift - they thought”.

Yours sincerely

Desmond Nugent (Former WR, Nigeria)
Readers’ Corner

Brazzaville revisited on the great river

The recent evocation of Brazzaville in the QNT brought back some happy memories after my arrival in BZV at the beginning of April 1967. I noticed that the adolescents, living in the WHO enclave at Djoué had very few resources for activities appropriate to their age. Besides the one cinema in town and the Caïmans swimming pool which was some ten kilometers away, there was only a golf course and some tennis courts, mostly frequented by their parents.

One Sunday morning, Freddy TROSS, a malaria-ologist wearing his white skippers’ hat, invited me for a boating trip on the Congo River. From the sailing club we reached Stanley Pool, a vast stretch of calm water about 600 kilometers square where the river spread out before a narrowing downstream from BZV and then forming the formidable rapids of Kintama. At the centre of this pool, Mbamou Island sheltered a forest reserve and several fishing villages. Twice a year the low water level revealed a number of sandy beaches.

As the years passed, we were joined by other colleagues, parents of adolescents for the most part. Among them were our friends Yves Quero and Georges Pauquet as well as Marie-Andrée Vacherot from Nursing and Neel Mani from Personnel.

Often two or three boats sailed together following the river up some ten kilometers. The German and French Embassies each had their official boat, and so did several of the French doctors. Their children joined ours on the sandy beaches where we put down anchor.

We put up tents to protect ourselves from the sun. We played volleyball. The sand was burning, but in a few hops we were in the water—its temperature was around thirty degrees. Water skiing soon replaced volleyball. One of our exploits was to jump over bunches of aquatic hyacinths floating in the current. There were also competitions to take off on a monoski. Life-jackets or May Wests were required for all swimmers no matter how experienced.

One morning as the boat glided noiselessly with the current, we came upon a fishing village built on stilts. The women were plunging their young children into the water and bring them back up again to teach them to synchronize their respiration—a necessary survival reflex in this difficult environment.

Suddenly, I saw a huge head emerging from the surface of the water one meter behind me. It was a Manatee or sea cow, a gentle herbivorous mammal and an endangered species—its local name is Mamiouta.

I could tell many stories about the river. Our seven years in BZV were punctuated with the moments of pure joy we experienced on the Congo River.

Raymond Hubinois
From AFSM-SEAR:

Greetings and Best Wishes for the wonderful presentation of the Quarterly News. Here in New Delhi we are publishing the quarterly UNPA Bulletin and are making every effort to improve our standard but there seems to be a long way ahead.

Comments or suggestions: AFSM-SEAR published from here could be designated as your SEAR correspondent. It could be requested to contribute something regularly so as to give QN a regional hue. It could also collect membership dues from the retirees and transmit it to AFSM Geneva through SEARO. Bhola Nath Agrawal [agrawalbhola@yahoo.co.in]

ED: Thank you, Mr Agrawal: very good suggestions; we always read UNPA with a great interest and we sometimes quote articles or jokes, as in this issue.

AFSM-SEAR New Office and Telephone Number

Please note that we now have our Association’s office in SEARO. Our telephone is 91-11-2337080 and extension is 26650. We are still in the process of establishing the office and determining its functioning procedures.

We recently had an informal meeting with Mr. Neel Mani during his visit to New Delhi.

Please convey our best regards to all members of the Committee, Best regards,
H.S. Dhillon President

Mind your punctuation, lest...

(The following is from the blurb of the book, “Eats, Shoots & Leaves” by Lynne Truss, Gotham Books, 2003.)

A panda walks into a cafe. He orders a sandwich, eats it, then draws a gun and fires two shots in the air.

“Why?” asks the confused waiter, as the panda makes towards the exit. The panda produces a badly punctuated wildlife manual and tosses it over his shoulder.

“I’m a panda,” he says, at the door. “Look it up.”

The waiter turns to the relevant entry and, sure enough, finds an explanation.

“Panda. Large black-and-white bear-like mammal, native to China. Eats, shoots and leaves.”

So, punctuation really does matter, even if it is only occasionally a matter of life and death.

J.V. Perumal (formerly of SEARO and EMRO)

ED: Thank you, Mr Perumal, for your humorous contribution.

Pensions:

After the article: “Action to be taken on the death of a WHO pensioner”, we have received the following letter:

Dear Mr Fontana
I received through Mr. Goossens the Quarterly News April-June 2007 from the Association of Former WHO Staff...

…Please allow me to add a few comments:
- please inform your pensioners / surviving spouses that in order to speed up their queries / applications the following distribution key should be taken into consideration:
- the Geneva Office of the Fund is managing the retirees/ beneficiaries residing in Europe, Africa and the Middle East
- the New York Office of the Fund is managing the retirees / beneficiaries residing in America (North/Central/South), Asia and Oceania.

- The surviving spouse should also complete the form E10 and provide a proof of residence if he/she would like to opt for the local track of his/her surviving spouse benefit.

In this respect, I attach an article which it might be useful to publish.

Do not hesitate to contact the Client Servicing Unit in case you need further information.

Best regards,

Renata De Leers
Chief Geneva Office
UN Joint Staff Pension Fund

Tel: 00 41 22 928 88 00
Fax: 00 41 22 928 90 99
Email: rdeleers@unog.ch
Visit our website: www.unjspf.org

Association of Former Staff
Readers’ Corner

“Two track and surviving spouse benefits: good to know!

As a general rule, the retiree/beneficiary selects for “dollar track” or “local track” at the commencement date of the entitlement payments. Eventually, if benefit were initially on the dollar track, the retiree/beneficiary can opt later for the local track (but once a beneficiary has selected the local track, always on the local track).

In case of the unfortunate event of death, the widow/widower must elect for “dollar track” or “local track”, provided the renewed proof of residence and the E10 form. Indeed, the widow/widower is a “new” beneficiary of the Fund’s benefits and therefore has the possibility to elect or not for one of both.

However, it is the Fund’s policy, after carefully checking the widow/widower personal data, and provided the deceased spouse was on the local track, to put the surviving spouse on the local track. For this purpose, the Benefits Assistant reviews whether the mailing address was in the same country as the local track of the main beneficiary or checks the nationality of the survivor (if known). Those issues could cause some “alarm bells” since the survivor might choose to move back to Ghana, for example, from Switzerland and then clearly the individual would need to understand the pitfalls of continuing on the local track.

If a widow/widower has not provided the E.10 and proof of residence for the local track and the deceased spouse had been on the local track we would normally place the survivor on the local track.

The surviving spouse would be informed by letter sent by the Fund. At the same time the Fund would ask for the proof of residence and the E10 form. If not received within a certain time frame the Fund would ask again.

However, once again, few of these persons are elderly and may not understand the issue at all in which case we are not overly rigid. Management has to exercise judgment and that is why one cannot give a straight cut and dried answer. In some cases, dependent on the age of the survivor and possibly the medical condition the Fund would keep the person on the local track even the Fund did not have the documents provided that the mailing address and banking information remained the same in the country of residence for the local track.

In view of the reviews above the Fund had only had very few cases where the surviving spouse decided not to continue on the local track. In that case, there was an overpayment, what the surviving spouse was advised of, circumstances were explained and the surviving spouse willingly agreed to return the overpayment.

Most of the cases are fairly cut and dried but as is always the case the Fund must be diligent in the review before putting the widow/widower on the local track automatically.

UN Joint Staff Pension Fund
15 February 2007

Change of address of Pension Fund in Geneva

Effective 1 September 2007, the UNJSPF Geneva office has moved to: Du Pont de Nemours Building, Chemin du Pavillon 2, 1218 Grand-Saconnex, Switzerland

Visiting us:
Client Servicing welcomes you from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Please phone Client Servicing on +41 (0) 22 928 88 00 to make an appointment in advance.
Please come to the Du Pont Reception Desk with your picture ID. You will be escorted to our Client Servicing Area located on the ground floor.
"Visitors" parking is available at the entrance of the building. Bus F, 28 or 52 stop at “La Susette”, at 150 meters. (see www.tpg.ch for bus time tables).

Mailing us:
All mail, including Pouch, should continue to be addressed as follows:
United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, c/o Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10

Express mail ONLY (DHL, UPS, FedEx, etc.) to UNJSPF, Du Pont de Nemours Building, Chemin du Pavillon 2, 1218 Grand-Saconnex, Switzerland.

Contacting us by phone, fax or email:
Our new numbers are: Tel: +41 (0) 22 928 8800 Fax: +41 (0) 22 928 9099 Our email address remains: jspfgva@unog.ch

Our Client Servicing Unit will take your calls from 08:30 a.m. until 5:30 PM.
Dear Mr Fontana

On behalf of the members of the Committee of VERF (Voluntary Emergency Relief Fund), I wish to warmly thank the Association of Former Staff for their donation of CHF 254.20, which was left over from their trip to Morocco and was transferred to the VERF account on 13 July 2007.

In view of all the natural catastrophes which are affecting many regions of the world at the moment, VERF supports some actions of the Fédération des Sociétés of the Croix-Rouge to help the populations concerned. These donations are therefore most welcome. Best wishes

Maryvonne Grisetti Treasurer, VERF

2007 VERF Book sale

The 2007 VERF Book Sale which took place on 12 and 13 March raised the extraordinary sum of CHF 11,737.-

Our grateful thanks to everyone for once again making the book sale such a great success. Special thanks to those who participated in the preparation, sale and cleaning as well as to those who helped with the logistics.

Latest VERF’s donations: CHF 3000.- typhoons in the Philippines, CHF 3000.- floods in Kenya, CHF 2000.- typhoons in Viet Nam and CHF 1000.- floods in Haiti

MANY THANKS TO EVERYONE AND... DO NOT FORGET THE VERF ACCOUNT UBS 0279-D3587161.0

New members

We have pleasure in welcoming into our large “family” the following new members, who we congratulate warmly on their decision.

Life membership:
AHMAN Elizabeth; BAYLEY Jennifer; EVANS Maureen; ECUVILLON Daniel; LONATI Pamela; PEDERSEN Ann; YANG Robert; YAO Kuan Mu.

Conversion from annual to life membership:
BUJEVIC Aldo; CHRIS Sandra; ECUVILLON Daniel; GOUDAL Monique; HANSON Gerald; HUMBERT Nicole; KALM Vera; LHOEST A.;
MOREAU Catherine; PETRIDES John; PITT David; SAYOUR André; HORNGACHER Marie-Aymone-Selleger; SHOUSA Rafik; STRUDWICK Richard; TABA Touran; THYMAKIS Kyriakos; WALLART Hannelore; WALTER Joachim; WEITZEL Rolf; ZENETTI Jennifer.

Annual members:
ADJDARI Ahmad; ANKER Martha; DESPINA Farah; GRANDBOIS Yvonne; KURKCUOGLU Lydia; NALLET Josette; WEISS André.

Annual reception

Thursday 6 December 2007 at 17h, WHO Cafeteria

As usual our annual reception will be an opportunity for former colleagues to meet and participate in an excellent buffet. Active members of the personnel are also welcome.

Mr, Mrs, Miss SURNAME, First Name

Will attend the annual reception on 6 December

Number of participants:

Date Signature

(Send to AFSM, Office 4141, WHO or aoms@who.int)
Here is a little puzzle...

You are driving down the road in your car on a wild, stormy night and when you pass by a bus stop you see three people waiting for the bus: (a) an old lady who looks as if she is about to die; (b) An old friend who once saved your life; and (c) a bewitching beauty, a perfect partner you have been dreaming about.

Knowing that you can accommodate only one passenger in your swanky sports model, whom would you choose?

**The answer**: the old lady, of course! After helping the old lady into the car, you can give your keys to your friend, and wait with your perfect partner for the bus.

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**Good memory!**

Two elderly couples were enjoying friendly conversation when one of the men asked the other. "Fred, how was the memory clinic you went to last month?" Outstanding, Fred replied. They taught us all the latest psychological techniques, visualisation, association, it made a huge difference to me.

That's great, what was the name of the clinic?

Fred went blank. He thought and thought, but couldn't remember. Then a smile broke across his face and he asked "What do you call that red flower with a long stem and thorns?" You mean a rose? Yes, that's it.

Then Fred turned to his wife and said "Rose, what was the name of that memory clinic?"

---

*From UNPA Newsletter*

Reproduced from the Bulletin of the Section of IUT Former Staff
In memoriam

Our friend and ex-colleague, **Isobel Hogg**, died on 25 June 1007 in Scotland.

Born on 7 August 1940, Isobel was a member of the secretariat of the WHO Personnel department from May 1978 to December 1995. Her charming personality and her sense of humor were appreciated by all of us. It is hard to believe that she is gone, as a result of a long and cruel illness which she fought with courage and dignity.

We are thinking in particular of her mother, her husband, her two daughters, her sister, her sister-in-law and her two grandchildren to whom we send our sincere condolences. A religious service in her memory was celebrated on Sunday 5 August at the Auditoire Calvin.

Marinette Daniel, Jacqueline Spassov

Norman Claude Cobbold died in Versoix, Switzerland, on 19 July 2007.

Norman was born on 1 July 1920 in a village near the Essex coast, in England. In school he was awarded first-class certificates in mathematics and science. In June 1940 he volunteered for service in the British Royal Air Force where he became a flight radio operator. On demobilisation from service in 1946, he qualified in medical laboratory technology, in bacteriology, haematology and blood transfusion. He became a Fellow of the Institute of Medical Laboratory Sciences, and the Royal Society of Health, United Kingdom, and was a member of the Institute for Medical Biological Science for more than 50 years.

Norman worked for London County Council Pathological Service, primarily as Senior Technician with the Group Laboratory at St. Mary Abbots, Kensington, and assisted in the establishment of tuberculosis laboratories in the United Kingdom. He became Senior Bacteriological Technician in the National Health Service for the Essex County Hospital Group Laboratory with specialized duties in tuberculosis diagnosis, parasitology and blood transfusion.

Norman joined WHO in August 1956 as Scientist in the East African Tuberculosis Survey team, working in Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho, Tanganyika, Uganda, Kenya, Zanzibar and Pemba. He was reassigned in 1960 to the Tuberculosis Project in Bangalore, India; in 1964 to a Public Health project in Kabul, Afghanistan; and in 1967 as the Officer in Charge of the Tuberculosis Control Laboratory in Nairobi, Kenya. In 1969 he became the Medical Supply Officer in the South East Asian Regional Office, New Delhi, a difficult posting, with urgent requests for supplies for WHO’s Smallpox Eradication Programme, which Norman handled with great efficiency. He was transferred to the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office in Alexandria, as Supply Officer and later to HQ in Geneva as Procurement Officer, Laboratory Supplies and Equipment, dealing with all global programmes, until retirement in September 1980.

Norman continued to work from 1981 to 1986 as a Short-Term Consultant in the UN Inter-Agency Procurement Services Unit, New York and Geneva.

I first met Norman in Nairobi in 1958 when we worked on parallel tuberculosis programmes. We formed a friendship that lasted until he died. He loved classical music and was a good sportsman, playing tennis and golf, cycling and cross-country skiing.

Norman was married and leaves two sons, a grandson and many friends.

Alfred Beer
In memoriam

Cécile HUBERT, who joined the WHO staff during the post war years, passed away on Friday 20 July 2007.

After living through forty days of bombing in Caen in 1944, Cécile Hubert volunteered to care for the wounded in the hospital; then she worked one or two years for the Institute Pasteur before going to Morocco. At that time, she joined WHO and remained until her retirement.

Cécile Hubert worked in more than thirty counties: Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Iraq, Pakistan, Sudan, Tunisia, Syria, Jordan, Mauritius, Madagascar, Kenya, Guinea, Haute-Volta, Central Africa, Rwanda, Niger, Togo, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Ivory coast.

Some of her colleagues and friends described her as a great lady, reserved, devoted, generous and always elegant. For her family, her nephews and nieces, she was the great traveler who told charming and amazing stories which grew more and more precious as with the passing of time. It is difficult to imagine how she managed to carry out vaccination campaigns, alone in remote areas. Some of her stories demonstrate her love of adventure and her delight in discovering a country or region outside of her work assignments. Her many films and photos give a glimpse into a long ago distant world when air transport took time and communications were limited. Cécile lived her often difficult life with courage, generosity and domination until her illness extinguished her and her love for life. Her family and friends will keep in their hearts her gift for listening, her sparkling eyes and her extraordinary smile. Like a flame, she was extinguished with a soft breath. Our only regret is that she did not write an account of her life—she who wore so well—her essays still serve as models, a generation later in the Ursulines de Caen.

Apologies for having omitted this obituary author whose name was not found.

Other deaths of which we have been recently notified

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<tr>
<td>BAILEY</td>
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What are the criteria for the publication of detailed obituaries?

We have no criteria for deciding whether or not to give detailed obituaries. Anyone can provide an obituary, whether it be a parent or a friend wishing to pay homage to a deceased person. It is sufficient to send us a text and a photo of the deceased.

The only conditions are that the deceased person was a member of WHO and that the text should not be too long, 300 words on average, except in exceptional circumstances.

In order that a notice appears promptly, it should be sent directly to the responsible person on the editorial committee: Dr David Cohen, preferably by email to:

dacohen@mysunrise.ch

together with a scanned photo; or by post to:

Dr David Cohen, Editor, QNT, Office 4141, WHO, Avenue Appia, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland.

The text should be at least typed.
This book describes and assesses the strengths and failings of the UN. Starting with the origins – « The Troubled Advance to a New World Order » –, he analyzes the evolution of the « Many UNs » since 1945. Looking at the present and the future, like other scholars, politicians and think-tanks, he proposes reforms taking a middle ground position between the hard-nosed realists and the liberal internationalist/idealists. Transforming the UN has to be partial and gradual: a « softly, softly » approach to reforming the UN, in his view, is critical, to get around the usual roadblocks by the Great Powers and others who prefer things to stay the same. He sets two tests: do proposals actually offer a prospect of measurable and practical improvement in human conditions, and – here the experienced realist speaks – do they have a chance of being agreed to by the governments that control the UN.

A few of these proposals:
- Amend the UN Charter to increase the number of rotating (non-permanent) members of the Security Council, and allow all non-perms to be re-elected immediately after their two-year term.
- The General Assembly should ask the Permanent five members to agree to the principle of using the veto only as a measure of last resort.
- Set up a UN central intelligence office in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.
- Improve Security Council-General Assembly cooperation through a working group on matters related to arms control.
- Reduce number of ECOSOC members to 24, instead of 54: one-third from the developed world, one-third from the larger developing states, one-third from small countries.
- Challenge the strict regional-rotational system of national representation if an incoming candidate nation is remiss in its own governance (read for instance, Sudan in the Human Rights Council).
- The SG’s Office, like Caesar’s wife, has to be above suspicion, a house of rectitude, efficiency and fairness.

The author focuses on the UN, not on the specialized agencies. WHO is only mentioned briefly as part of the “Softer face of the UN’s mission”.

In summary, Kennedy assesses the UN as in a school report: « Much achieved, but could do better ». As a modest compliment, Kennedy proves that “ it is difficult to imagine how much more riven and ruinous our world of six billion people would be if there had been no UN social, environmental, cultural agencies – and no institutions to attempt to put them into practice on the ground”.

Good luck for these proposals. We know that UN reform faces major hurdles: the opposition of the Perm5, of developing countries, and, at times of the UN secretariat itself for different reasons.

A few progressive nations and true UN believers, like the Scandinavian countries, and a push by the newly-elected SG may help start another reform campaign, on a modest scale.

Paul Kennedy CBE, a British historian, has written in 1988 the bestseller The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers. UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali sought his advice. He helped draft the report of the Yale University-Ford Foundation The United Nations in its Second Half-Century.
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Function occupied on separation (optional)…………………………………………………………
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