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Welcome to Philosophers' Corner

What's in a name?

A lot, it seems. Particularly when it comes to the phrase "Philosophers' Cafe."

Simon Fraser University has accused TALK of copyright infringement and requested that TALK discontinue using the term.

The concept of Philosophers' Cafe - a group of people gathered together, typically in a cafe or bistro, to probe a pre-announced topic - has been around for decades.

According to Wikipedia, *Cafe Philosophique* was founded by philosopher Marc Sautet at the Cafe des Phares in Paris on Dec. 13, 1991.

In 1998 when Dr. Yosef Wosk, director of interdisciplinary programs at SFU, created "a cutting edge, safe and stimulating environment for public conversation" he called it Philosophers' Cafe.

SFU subsequently copyrighted the term in 2003.

The program was awarded a "Best Practices in Higher Education" by World Universities Forum in 2012.

TALK has been using the term since at least July 2000 according to board minutes. A booklet printed in 2009 chronicling the first 10 years of TALK states; "One of the founders of Kwantlen's TALK, Win Hunter, came into contact with Dr. Wosk some eight years ago and was assisted by him to initiate what has become a continuously operating arm of TALK: Our own Philosophers' Cafe."

A Google search reveals that the term is widely used across Canada and around the world.

However, in late 2014, TALK chair Al Sabey received a letter from Michael Filimowicz,

the current director of Interdisciplinary Programs at SFU, demanding that TALK stop infringing on the trademarked name or he would turn the matter over to SFU's legal department.

Sabey passed on the letter to Patrick Donahoe, dean of Academic and Career Advancement, who referred it to the legal department at KPU. The legal department advised the TALK board to acquiesce.

After much discussion and input from the TALK Program and Cafe Committees the TALK board voted on March 19 to officially adopt the name Philosophers' Corner. The new title will be printed in the fall brochure.

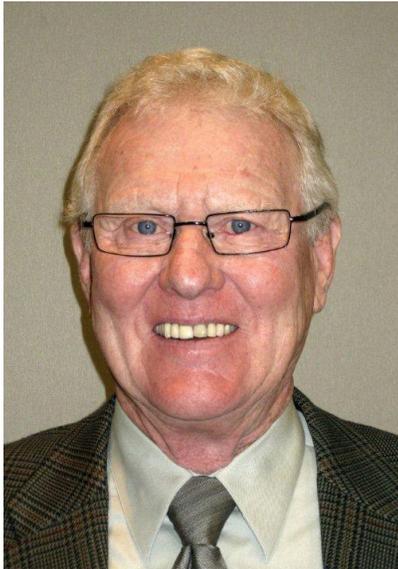
Philosophers' Corners will continue to take place at the same time and locations. Richmond Philosophers' Corner is held the first Thursday of the month at the Steveston Hotel, 1211 Third Ave. beginning at 11:30 am. Surrey Philosophers' Corner is held on the second and fourth Thursday of the month at ABC Restaurant, 2160 King George Blvd. at 11:30 am.

There is no registration necessary. A \$2 donation is suggested.

Janis Foster | janis.f@telus.net

What are your thoughts on the name change?

We'd love to hear your feedback and would be happy to print your comments in the next newsletter. Please make sure that your name and contact information is included for verification purposes. Email Janis Foster at janis.f@telus.net



TALK chair, Al Sabey



Chair Al Sabey congratulates this year's TALK scholarship winner Krista Hewlett.

(photo credit: KPU Media)



Message from the Chair

TALK scholarship winner turfs it

On Nov. 18, 2014 I attended Kwantlen Polytechnic University's 26th Annual Scholarship and Awards Dinner at the River Rock Theatre in Richmond.

Hosted by the KPU Foundation, the event was the university's biggest awards night in its 31-year history with a record-breaking \$750,000 in scholarships, awards and bursaries presented to 440 students. More than 470 students, donors and KPU representatives were in attendance.

This year's recipient of the Third Age of Learning Endowed Award of \$1,000 is Krista Hewlett.

The TALK award is presented annually with preference given to a Canadian or Landed Immigrant; a mature student (out of school) for five or more years and attending post-secondary for the first time or after a long leave of absence.

Hewlett is enrolled at the horticultural program at KPU's Langley campus and is upgrading her skills as a turf expert. In addition to her studies at KPU she is currently employed by the University of British Columbia and looks after the maintenance and condition of the turf at all the associated playing fields at UBC.

The Master of Ceremonies was Dr. Alan Davis, president and vice-chancellor of KPU. Sana Sohel, a student in the Creative Writing program, gave a very enthusiastic and insightful presentation. The keynote on behalf of donors and industry was Shelley Besse, president of Envision Financial, who spoke of the importance of supporting students and post secondary education.

My wife Barbara and I were privileged to be seated at a table for 10 which included the new dean of the Faculty of Academic and Career Advancement (of which TALK is affiliated), Dr. Patrick Donahoe.

The members and board of TALK congratulate Krista Hewlett for her hard work and for being the person chosen for the 26th anniversary scholarship award.

Davis dialogues with Dyer

Gwynne Dyer will sit down with Dr. Alan Davis for a frank and informal discussion in the second instalment of KPU's President's Dialogue Series.

Dyer, who is Canadian, is a military historian, author and independent journalist based in London. He and KPU President Davis will cover a wide range of issues including the environment, Canada's place in the world and the future of war.

The discussion takes place April 27 at 10 am in Fir 128, Surrey campus.

The event is open to the public. Space is limited

RSVP via email to presidentsdialogue@kpu.ca or call 604-599-2870.

Topic proved to be everyone's cup of tea



On Feb. 2 Dr. Jack Hayes treated TALK members to a splendid session on the history, horticulture and manufacture of various types of tea in China and Japan. Hayes covered five aspects of tea: the tea bush/tree, cultivation/terroirs of tea in China and Japan and tea types, benefits of tea, key figures in tea history and tea aesthetics.

Tea is a form of the evergreen camellia with a natural life cycle of 90 to 110 years. In southwest China, tea plants can live more than 500 years. Wild tea trees in China can grow up to 10 storeys tall. Camillia sinensis is the plant that produces most of the tea we drink.

Tea "terroir" is the climate, soil, altitude and latitude that characterize a tea plantation. A different terroir produces a different tasting tea. Hayes describes the happiest tea plants in China as growing in a hot, humid, wet climate, and on a steep hill. The daily flow of warm and cool air up and down the hillside fosters a concentration of aromatic oils and a richer flavour in the tea leaves. Another factor in the concentration of aromatic oils is the latitude, that is, whether or not the plants go into hibernation.

Tea plantations in southwest China date from at least the fifth Century and then spread to north Thailand and India. Hayes says the art of harvesting tea leaves is "delicate, careful, seasonal and expense-dependent."

The finest quality tea is the Imperial Picking in which only the terminal bud on the branch is hand-picked in the spring. The second in quality is the Fine Picking, which is the hand harvesting of the bud and the first two leaves. The Medium Picking is the first three leaves and is commonly machine-harvested. The picking method and drying process produces six categories of Chinese tea: green, black, yellow, white, oolong, dark and scented or smoked.

The Japanese terroir is marine as the tea plantations are within 25 miles of sea. In Japan the formation of aromatic oils is promoted by fanning air through the plantation to dissipate fog, heat, and discourage dew, all of which wash off the aromatic oils from the leaves.

Throughout its long history, tea has been valued for its refreshing and therapeutic qualities. Indeed, the art of tea defined a scholar and a gentleman.

In his final section, Hayes prepared five different types of tea in the traditional manner. Everyone gathered around Dr. Hayes in order to examine the different types of tea leaves, savour the scent and flavour (in a different category to anything found in the average Canadian pantry), and to admire Hayes' exquisite tea-making set.

The post-class evaluation for the tea session was a unanimous excellent.

Dr. Jack Hayes joined the Asian Studies and History faculty at Kwantlen Polytechnic University in 2013. He is also a Research Associate at the Centre for Chinese Research at UBC's Institute of Asian Research.

Robin Heath | robiheath@gmail.com

Memoir writing benefits writer and successors alike

A 73-year-old guest presenter at a March 9 memoir writing workshop said she regained her sense of self after retirement through Third Age Learning at Kwantlen.

The two session workshop was led by Sandra Carpenter, retired KPU English teacher and TALK program committee member since 2004.

Carpenter said she writes memoirs mostly for herself and values the power that writing can give to people later in life to preserve their stories.

"Writing memoirs can be therapeutic for the individual. They are naked memories woven into stories."

Her goal as presenter was to inspire participants to start writing down their experiences, said Carpenter. Memoirs are important to the next generation and should be shared with children and peers.

Among the 15 attendees ready to share their stories were Barb Wharton, 70 and Denise North, 81. Wharton said she was new to TALK and came to the workshop for motivation to begin writing her memoir.

"All of these opportunities are coming forth for me," Wharton said. "My own energy has started to come back."

North, who worked in genealogy, said that the documentation was missing in her own life. She learned a lot from other attendees in the workshop, especially that she wasn't alone in wanting to collect and write down her thoughts and experiences.

"It is time for me to get started on my own genealogy," she said. "Just something simple for my children. I am 81 now and it's time to get going."

The participants shared stories from their lives and critiqued one another's sample memoirs. Course facilitator Loretta Latta said she considered the event a success because everyone was involved and there was an encouraging energy throughout the workshop.

The memoir writing class was also successful when first held in November 2012. It was re-requested again through feedback surveys, program chair Jean Garnett said.

"We work hard to find topics that will get participants excited about TALK," said Garnett.

This is the principle that TALK was founded on in 1988 by Joanne Cunningham, a former KPU instructor. She was approaching retirement but she wasn't ready to be away from the stimulating learning environment. The goal of TALK is to promote mental stimulation and learning post-retirement - and this course certainly met the criteria!

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Alison Williams is a Canadian student studying at the University of Texas at Arlington.



Joanne Cunningham hopes that volunteers will continue to help make TALK tick.

Photo by Gerald Horne

No more small TALK

Third age learning keeps on growing

We're talking about TALK but the subject of our motherhood surfaces.

"It doesn't matter how old they are, you always worry about them," said Joanne Cunningham, who has four adult daughters.

Her other "baby" (which she emphatically declares is not 'hers') is also coming of age without her guidance, but that doesn't mean that the founder of TALK doesn't sometimes fret a bit about its future.

In 1997 while teaching nurses' aides in the Health Science Dept. at Kwantlen, Cunningham became intrigued by the concept of elder college through a cousin who was a director at Edmonton Elder Institute.

"I got thinking about it and asked if I could have a leave of absence," she said. Her objective didn't fit the criteria of personal professional development, but to Cunningham's surprise, education for seniors turned out to be a top priority of Kwantlen College administration.

Cunningham spent six months researching programs in B.C and Alberta and attending Institute for Learning in Retirement conventions in Utah and Washington, DC.

"I was looking for a way to do it," she said. "I learned that everyone has a different way and everyone thinks their way is the best. That was a break for me because I didn't have to follow a certain model."

When Cunningham made a presentation to the administration at Kwantlen, "They said it was a great idea but we have no money - and there never has been," she marvels. "Kwantlen has always found a way through different budgets."

In rapid succession, a steering committee was formed and called a community meeting, advertising in the local newspaper and using the Elder Hostel mailing list. More than 100 people attended.

"Everyone was willing and excited about it." Cunningham recalls. "It just took off from there."

"My big thing was that I didn't want it to be 'my' organization. I wanted it to be theirs. I really felt it was important that it belonged to them."

But, she adds, "I hung around for a long time."

One of the highlights over the years was facilitating a cultural diversity series that included history, music, art, cultural traditions and food.

Although interest in the series was high, increasing cultural diversity in course attendance and gender balance is an ongoing challenge and Cunningham wonders if perhaps there needs to be "arms" of TALK with courses offered in other languages as well as more male-oriented classes.

Course offerings have steadily increased over the years and Cunningham believes there has been a shift in focus. When she attended a conference in Washington an instructor predicted that Baby Boomers - the "me generation" - would be less interested in academics and want more "things that relate to them" such as health issues, travel and investments. "That has proved to be a trend," she said.

Cunningham credits the success of TALK to the unwavering support of Kwantlen, generous instructors who teach without remuneration and a long list of dedicated volunteers. She is concerned, however, that volunteer numbers are shrinking and that at some point it may become necessary to hire a part-time programmer.

"Trying to get volunteers is getting harder and harder and that's a shame. It's an ideal volunteer job for men because they get to use their skills and I think it's interesting. They're learning and it's not that much work."

"I hope TALK will continue to grow I hope we can interest more people."

To volunteer with TALK contact

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Third Age Learning
at Kwantlen

Third Age Learning at Kwantlen Newsletter

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