

**Bulletin-November 2011**

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Thanks to Michèle Wilson for Translation (Ed)

**Changing of the guard—well of the lawyers**

**Jim steps down and Rob steps up**

After almost a decade in the Chair of the IDRC Alumni Executive Jim Pfiefer has asked for an adjournment sine *dei*.



To recognize his long association with IDRC—from his days as 'that bright young lawyer' who helped write the IDRC Act, his years (1970-1982) as Corporate Secretary and General Counsel, and his being a founding member of the IDRC Alumni-- Jim will be our Honorary Chair.

Rob Robertson has agreed *pro tempore* to take on the Chair, making it clear that if there is anyone who is not a lawyer who would like to be the Chairman he will consider stepping down.

### **Pauline for Membership**

Pauline Robert-Bradley, one time Secretary to the Board of IDRC (1987-2001) and recently retired from the Bank of Canada has agreed to join the Executive to continue Rob's work on Membership recruitment.

### **Who's who?**

In addition to Rob, Jim and Pauline other members of the Alumni Executive are:

Claude-Paul Boivin:	Member at large
Donna Bickford:	Membership Secretary
Gerry Bourrier:	Treasurer
Kim Daley:	Liaison with IDRC
Chris Smart:	Secretary

And the way is clear for any Member to find a spot and a task on the Executive.

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### **Alumni News**

#### **Where are They Now?**

#### **The Times of Randy Spence**

At IDRC Randy Spence was Mr. Diversity. The Centre was a place where his combination of intellectual and human talents found many outlets. And now that he is retired, sort of, nothing has changed.



It began when Randy was working in Ottawa and Kenya in 1989 and became involved in an IDRC-supported project in Uganda at the end of their civil war. He says “a large group of top-flight economists (and me)” worked with a small but talented group of Ugandan economists who soon took over the project. Shortly after, David Glover asked Randy if he would like to sign on to IDRC permanently. Singapore held obvious attractions for him and about a year later a position opened up at ASRO as Senior Economist in the Economic Policy Program. He was struck immediately

by Jingjai’s knowledge of the Centre, the world, people and everything Asian. He says his early engagement in China, Vietnam, Lao and Cambodia was “unforgettable”.

When Jingjai left the Centre in 1993, Randy became the Regional Director in ASRO, a position he held for the next tumultuous seven years. His most memorable moment was being in Bangkok with Keith Bezanson when they heard (erroneously as it turned out) that the Government of Canada had “axed” IDRC. In fact the decision had been made to remove the Centre’s Crown Corporation status. Months of lobbying saved the Centre

from a closer integration into the federal bureaucracy. Randy says, “The ‘IDRC’s been axed’ evening was hilarious in retrospect, and even at the time we managed to consume more than one drink while plotting to start a consulting company.”

Randy says the work he most enjoyed was in the area of human development on the economics and social sciences side, and ICTs/poverty/human development with ICT4D, Nobel laureates and regional networks. He also lists his work with the Biotech Task Force including nanotech as exciting. It became a building block for the Innovation Policy and Science program. Other projects with immediate, sometimes unexpected and sustained impact were MIMAP, PEP and CBMS. Randy was deeply involved in these from 2000-2005 when he was Senior Program Specialist, Social and Economic Policy, living in London while his wife worked at the Commonwealth Secretariat. He says, “The management part at IDRC was important, and somewhat addictive, but I always found the program work to be what I gravitated to. With the considerable amount of independence given at that time, and I hope still, ‘senior program specialist’ was a job hard to top.”

Randy looks back with great fondness at the humour that often was part of activities with the whole range of groups and people he worked with, “even economists.” Standout events were Ray Audet’s stand-up comedy and Stephen Tyler’s rap performances.

Now living in Toronto, Randy has stayed involved in most of the same areas of interest that he had while at the Centre. He has undertaken numerous assignments with IDRC and other organizations since 2005. He’s finishing two projects in Nepal - one on federalism and the other with an economic policy institution in the ministry of finance, and is about to start some work on Asian think tanks and research institutions.

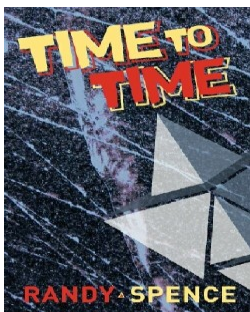
And just to demonstrate his well-known diversity, Randy has now published a novel called *TIME TO TIME* <http://www.esda-books.ca> He says “It’s great fun to be able to just make things up, which of course I never did at IDRC...”

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### Alumni In Print

#### *Time to Time* by Randy Spence

MESSAGE FROM THE FUTURE, OR THE ULTIMATE GLOBAL SLEIGHT OF HAND?



2032. When all six terrestrial deep-listening stations receive a second inscrutable message from space, only one human understands the meaning. Sandover tells Philamon, Kat and Beya - the woman of his dreams - that the message is FROM THEM SELVES, FROM THE FUTURE.

The 'Orion' message warns of a global NANO-ORGANIC SMART PLAGUE - that they must stop from happening. It gives them leads to new technologies and knowledge. It warns them that inter-place-time communication, in the wrong hands, is as deadly to humanity as the plague.

Driven by fate and fear, they are thrust into the dangerous worlds of global science, politics, economics and CORPORATE CONGLOMERATES - the most powerful and ruthless run by Édouard Moreau and his deranged son Jean Christophe, whose hate they have acquired at Merimbula.

All four have shadows in their pasts. Beya's lead them to Washington and the WHITE HOUSE, Kat's to British MI-7, Sandover's to China and the shadowy global organization PYRAMID that watches over them all. In a no-rules war for control of emerging bio-nano-AI and communications breakthroughs, can they stop a future plague and learn to speak to the past?

The answers take them on a journey with impossible odds and breathtaking frontiers. They lead to the DANCE IN NEAR SPACE – the asteroids and habitats at the top of Space Lift. They lead to the PINNACLE of Pyramid and to the bottom of the SECRETS that lie within each of them. They lead to the future and to alternative paths.

#### FIRST REACTIONS

“It slips like a shadow from macro to micro, science and politics to hopes and terrors.”..  
Bank President

“Accomplished and well written.”.. Former President, Penguin Group Canada

“There are clues, but the story is full of twists, like DNA, astonishing in the end.”..  
Nobel Laureate