

Privacy, Paperwork and Pain

If you are a Canadian tree, be afraid: be very, very afraid! That time of the year when income tax forms are fast upon us; few forests will be left as undisturbed habitat as the need for official paperwork again reaches a crescendo. Our patients will again line up for your signature on disability tax credit (DTC) forms, even though the regulations prevent most disabled persons from benefiting. While governments preach preventative medicine, the exercise and other equipment that may assist may be precluded as a medical expense. Keith Pitzel, a leading chartered accountant with Deloitte, leads us through some of the maze of regulations (page 8), and The Arthritis Society's effort in making changes to the DTC to help those in pain is also featured (page 9).

The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) now directly effects every physician in Canada—sort of. Whether you practice independently or in an institution will determine some of your obligations under the act. Of course, the federal government foists this new regulation on physicians but without any additional funds for the increased paperwork to create their clinics' privacy policy, privacy officer or, if you so choose, privacy policy consent form. Dr. Sunil Patel, president of the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) comments on the CMA involvement with PIPEDA (page 4). The Canadian Medical Protective Association (CMPA) also provides some practical help with this new administrative pain (page 5).

Northern (High)Lights features interviews with two outgoing—but not retiring—personalities: the Canadian Rheumatology Association (CRA)'s Past President Arthur Bookman and Past Secretary-Treasurer Carter Thorne (pages 11, 13). An interview with the 2004 Distinguished Rheumatologist, Watson Buchanan, also presents some interesting views of medicine and life (page 15)!

Look forward to the Summer issue which will feature interviews with the 2004 Distinguished Investigator, Rob Inman, and the 2004 Young Investigator, Rae Yeung, as well as the thoughts of President Michel Zummer, Vice-President Gunnar Kraag, and new Secretary-Treasurer Jamie Henderson.

There is news aplenty from the the CRA (page 18), the provinces of Manitoba and New Brunswick (page 22), and the campuses of Queen's University and University of Montreal (page 23). Plus ... tonnes of photos from "Louise!"

Stay tuned for the Summer issue where the *CRAJ* will announce our talent search. We don't want a "Rheumatologic Idol," but we do want to profile Canada's 10 **most interesting** arthritis specialists. This talent search has nothing to do with the ability to do Western Blots or climb the committee ladder. This has to do with the ability to do Western line dancing and climb rock faces. More to follow about the *Fickle Finger of Fame*.

Glen T.D. Thomson
Editor-in-Chief



Editor-in-Chief taking a late spring stroll in Winnipeg...