How do you summarize the events of the past five months in 4-5 minutes?

As you know, Dr. Kustra finished his third year and left the campus around June 30th. The Board found an interim president who came aboard shortly thereafter. In April the Board began a national search for a new president, appointed a search committee that worked through the summer, and completed the search the end of August. In July, they also worked in a two-day retreat, at which they spent time discussing expectations of the new president, and special issues and needs on campus.

Of this experience since April, which at times seemed surreal, I just want to comment on four things that I think would interest you.

First.  
The Board is unanimous in expressing pleasure at its choice of Dr. Eugene Hughes as interim president. Board members seek his advice, both individually and collectively, and they have appreciated his wisdom, and his encouragement, and his sense of humor. I hear the same comments from faculty and staff here.

Second.  
The Board was very pleased with the response of faculty and staff at the forums held with candidates for president. Since I am well known to ask for the faculty voice to be solicited and heard, I took some good-natured kidding about whether or not faculty would show up and fill out those evaluations. In spite of the fact the forums were scheduled the first week of classes, you did show up and fill out those evaluations. Several people also sent e-mails. Thanks.

Third.  
I think you would want to know some information about the Board during the search. During the forums with candidates, Board members were on campus for hours every day. Three members even left their homes and stayed here in motel rooms--Ernie and Cookie. The Board has both a breakfast and dinner meeting with each candidate. During the day, the majority attended the forums or watched the tapes. At other times during the day, they gathered in the Coates building to read and discuss the evaluations from faculty, staff and students as they came in. Beverly Burris typed a summary of each set of comments, but Board members sat and read all the originals. By Thursday of that week, they had read and discussed for hours on end, and for that reason, moved the final meeting time back from Saturday to Friday because they truly were ready. I was amazed and pleased at the amount of time and serious commitment they gave to finding the new president, and spent a lot of time discussing and weighing all the many roles that a president must play.

Sometimes I have to remind even myself that the Board is a lay group with other lives. We owe them a note of thanks. If you want to send them an e-mail to that effect, their addresses are on the web.

Fourth.  and last.  
A comment about our choice for a new president that should be of interest to a faculty senate. Just by luck of the draw, Pam Scholomann and I were assigned from the search committee to do reference checks on Joanne Glasser. All those people listed in the Lexington Herald on Sunday--we talked to all of them. That included Towson’s provost, the faculty senate chair, the past senate chair, the longest serving member of the faculty senate. They all said the same things: fair, collaborative, dedicated to quality, and practices the principles of shared governance. Of course, these words are music to faculty ears. And, as you know, when she came to campus, Joanne Glasser was well-received and all groups gave her an overall positive evaluation. So, president-to-be Glasser, we are looking forward to working with you in an atmosphere of collaboration, mutual respect and shared governance.