

# Retirement more than neutral

by Richard Desjardins

For most people, retirement means putting your mind in reverse gear, but for 66-year-old Rajo Vuksanovich, it's just the beginning of a lifelong dream to obtain a university education. "Everyone can obtain success," he told the Gateway. "We must get over the attitude of 'I can't do it.'"

From his room on the 10th floor of Henday Hall, Rajo Vuksanovich reminisced about

Communists took Serbia, and Rajo remained in Europe, working in various countries until 1948.

Immigrating to Canada in 1948, Rajo obtained work in Kapuskasing, Ontario, clearing brush. "You couldn't enter Canada in those days unless you signed a contract for hard work," Rajo said. After living in B.C., Rajo started off to Quebec where he met friends in Jasper who talked him into staying and getting a job with the CNR, where he stayed for 25 years.

With the confident look of a man seeing his ambitions realized, Henday Hall's oldest resident beamed while explaining he had "hoped one day during my work at Jasper to see another side of life. I wanted to use my intellect. When I first came here, if you had a job and left it, it was hard to find another."

Surrounded by photos of his career in the army, newspaper clippings of the Queen and John Diefenbaker, as well as Loughheed campaign posters, Rajo proudly points out to visitors the Merit Award presented to him last week by the Lister Hall Students' Association.

As well, prominently displayed on his desk is an award from fellow students on the 10th floor of Henday Hall Residence. "Students are very kind. Wherever I go, people respect me," Rajo told the Gateway. And he added his praise for today's youth. "I go to their dances and enjoy them very much," Rajo said.

With a heavy courseload consisting of English literature, French, Spanish and Russian, Rajo devotes most of his time to his studies as well as penning the

odd letter to the Gateway. "Professors have treated me fairly, just like the others, there's no difference at all," he quipped.

Life in residence can be lonely at the best of times, but for Rajo it means a double adjustment: His wife lives in Jasper and he doesn't get a chance to see his six children as much as he'd like to. With a glint in his eye, Rajo asserted that young people of today express themselves differently. They really love to

live. They want to be free, they want to achieve something without being told.

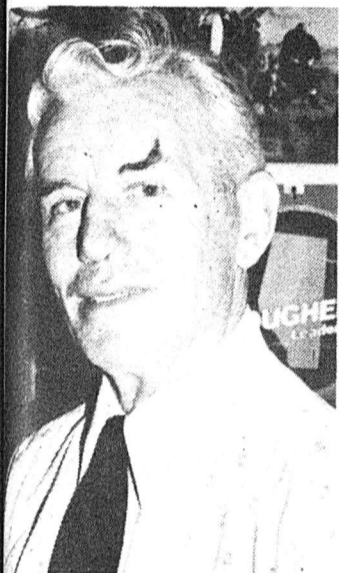
"But," he added, "the love of parents is still there. I see the boys and girls bringing cookies from home."

A staunch supporter of the provincial and federal Conservatives, Rajo credits John Diefenbaker as the "only man who put through legislation in Parliament protecting immigrants' rights." Fiercely proud of his Canadian

citizenship, Rajo displayed his certificate of citizenship which he obtained in 1953.

Perhaps the best insight into this man's philosophy of life can be obtained from an entry in his daily diary:

"Our chief talent is the power of suiting ourselves to different ways of life. To be tied and bound by necessity to one single way is not to live but to exist. Life is an unequal, irregular and multiform movement."



RAJO VUKSANOVICH

his youth, during a Tuesday interview. Born in Montenegro, Yugoslavia, he became a lieutenant in the Serbian army and was a German prisoner-of-war from 1941-45. "Life was terrible, and we had to fill in a lot of time, but we had the will to live." When liberation came in 1945, the



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