

# THE AUAR NEWSLETTER

The Association of The University of Akron Retirees

<http://www.uakron.edu/auar/index.dot>



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## ANGST AND ACCOLADES

After we have experienced angst for nearly three years, more rational minds prevailed within and without the Ohio General Assembly. You can now breathe a sigh of momentary relief, for your defined benefit pension plan remains with modifications to ensure its long range sustainability. Following the lead of Senate President Tom Niehaus (R-New Richmond) who co-sponsored SB 342 with Senate Minority Leader Eric Kearney (D – Cincinnati), the Senate voted (31 – 2) approval on May 16, 2012. Under the guidance of Representative Kirk Schuring (R – Canton), Lynn Wachtmann (R – Napoleon) and Dan Ramos (D – Lorain), the bill was approved by the Ohio House in early September and signed by Governor Kasich on September 26, 2012. Among other changes, the bill authorizes the STRS Board, without legislative approval, to change the years of service and age required for retirement, member's contribution, and the COLA. In an ideal world, this authority would permit the STRS Board to address the red ink of the balance sheet created by falling investment markets and the changing demographics in a timely manner rather than the three year delay just witnessed in the sluggish alchemy of the Ohio General Assembly. The effective date of the bill is January 7, 2013; however, it delays the implementation of this board authority for 180 days while the Ohio Retirement Study Council (ORSC) studies the ramifications of this new authority.

Although our future direction is a bit dubious as we wait for the completion of the ORSC six month study of the STRS Board's newly granted authority, potential issues may evolve that will demand your continued monitoring of your pension system activities. For a more in-depth analysis of these sweeping changes to our pension system, see Dr. Hal Williams' article in this issue of this Newsletter.

The two retiree's seats on the STRS Board occupied by James McGreevy and Robert Stein are up for election in 2013. For those who seek to run for one of these seats, petitions are available as of November 9, 2012 at the STRS Ohio Office, 1-888-227-7877. The voting for the candidates will begin in April and run through May 6, 2013. The winners will be seated for a four year term beginning September 1, 2013 and concluding August 17, 2017.

With the next issue of this Newsletter, Dr. June Burton will be sharing her thoughts with you for she will be accepting the AUAR gavel and assuming the duties of your AUAR Presidency come May 2013. Dr. Burton is most capable and will serve AUAR with distinction. I appreciate the opportunity you have given to me to serve AUAR for it has truly been an honor. Your responses to our AUAR luncheons at the Martin Center, Lobster and Suds, as well as the other AUAR activities, have been exceptional and encouraging. Your continued generous financial support of the AUAR Scholarship Fund is awesome, for only with your contributions was the scholarship fund capable of supporting two AU students this academic year.

Finally, these accomplishments and the sustained vitality of AUAR would not be possible without the dedication and commitment of your AUAR Executive Board who finds great satisfaction in collectively serving the University of Akron Retirees and the University. Without the Board Committees and the work of the respective Chairs who carry the burden, AUAR would not function. I will be eternally thankful for their work and the oversight provided these past two years.

It is also with many accolades that the members of the 2012 Successful Aging Symposium Committee are recognized for their unsung, yearlong commitment in planning, identifying and soliciting the many capable and entertaining speakers, and their flawless execution of this informative event on October 24, 2012. A job well done to all! Particular thanks are also due to Dr. Harvey Sterns for sharing his technical expertise and guidance, John LaGuardia for his positive words of encouragement and continued support, and to Michelle Smith for her warm supporting manner in coordinating the AUAR activities with Kathy Edwards and the many fine folks in the Department of Talent Development and Human Resources. Thank you!

Give the AUAR website a look! We now have a website thanks to the untiring work and commitment of our own Frank Thomas and Laura Spray, Human Resources System Administrator, and their many fine programmers.

A tip of the Hat to all!

President  
Robert Gandee



## **STRS Pension Reform – Where Do We Go From Here? — Dr. Hal Williams**

A major higher education issue of the past five years has been legislative pension and health care reform. That issue, for Ohio, has been largely put to rest by the pension reform bill, Sub. Senate Bill 342, signed by Governor Kasich September 26, 2012, which goes into effect January 7, 2013.

These sweeping changes will have a major impact on current and future retiree's benefits. Some parties may feel the reform was too much while others may feel it was too little. Given the overwhelming support in both the Senate and the House, however, it is apparent most people feel these changes will put STRS Ohio on a sound long run financial trajectory. To be sure, some of the criteria may have to be fine-tuned now and then but the basic reform package should not require large changes. Fortunately, the legislation retains the defined benefit foundation. In the long run it should, on average, provide a higher investment return than a defined contribution plan. Of course, cyclical movements of the economy and financial market fluctuations imply that in the short run there may be significant deviations from the assumed 7.75% investment return. Moreover the creation of a separate health care fund recognizes that health care and a pension are both important features of a good retirement package.

The STRS Board's newly acquired authority to increase or decrease benefit requirements (the COLA, contribution rate, retirement age and service requirements) without getting prior legislative approval, even though monitored by the ORSC, is an important change. It permits the STRS Board to adjust the criteria, including the COLA, up or down if the Board's actuary finds it does not threaten the fiscal integrity of the retirement fund. The ORSC staff recommended that the STRS Board's authority to increase the COLA be limited to a maximum of 3%.

Continued oversight of the reform changes is required of the STRS Board and advisable for all interested parties. If changes in the retirement plan become necessary there will, as always, be winners and losers. Hence, thorough study of the benefits and costs of proposed changes will be necessary to ensure the package of changes promotes the STRS funding objective with the proper blend of efficiency and fairness. This is where OCHER's advocacy group can play a positive role.

This reform package is the beginning. Both retirement and health care changes, while perhaps a lower OCHER priority for the near future, have to be continuously reviewed critically in terms of how well they are meeting the objectives. This is especially true since several legislators have indicated they will be addressing related pension and health care issues, such as double dipping, in the future. In addition, there are other State and National issues that demand watching because changes in them may adversely -- or favorably -- impact pension and health care systems of Ohio. These include not only the continuing debate over DB vs. DC retirement plans, but also Social Security reform, Medicare reform, Medicaid reform, and overhauling the entire IRS tax code. Moreover, still to be addressed is the issue of funding higher education.

## **FACULTY SENATE FALL 2012 — Neal Raber**

### **During the Fall Semester, the actions of the Faculty Senate included the following:**

- The hiring of a court stenographer, Laura Melby, to prepare verbatim transcripts of meetings which can be found on the Faculty Senate web site.
- The approval of naming the engineering building located at 264 Wolf Ledges Parkway "The University of Akron Engineering Research Center."
- The approval of a resolution affirming that the Faculty Senate will not approve any proposal to rename an academic unit or to substantially redefine its mission if the faculty members of that unit have not had an opportunity to deliberate about and to vote on the proposal.
- The approval of a resolution affirming that Faculty Senate has exclusive legislative jurisdiction at the university level over matters of academic policy, including academic advising and intervention with students to promote academic success.
- The approval of a resolution affirming that Faculty Senate would not approve any changes in the General Education Program until all concerned faculty members had the opportunity to deliberate and approve the changes.
- The approval of the name change of the Department of Geology and Environmental Science to the Department of Geosciences.
- The approval of a resolution acknowledging the many years of exemplary service of Dr. Harvey Sterns to the Senate.

# In Memoriam

**Marilyn Jean Archer** passed away November 20, 2012 at age 90. She had retired from UA.

**Charlotte Hanten**, an accomplished artist and art teacher, passed away October 7, 2012. She had taught at Rankin Elementary, Kent State University, and The University of Akron before retiring in 1983.

**Katherine Hirschbuhl**, wife of John Hirschbuhl, died September 29, 2012. She had a long career in education in Northeast Ohio as teacher and administrator, and was awarded the National Reading Association Teacher of the Year by the U.S. Secretary of Education. She fully supported her husband in founding the Computer Based Education System, and she and John were very active in university life for more than 30 years.

**David P. Horn** passed away August 22, 2012. He worked for UA for 27 years before retiring in June, 2012. As Director of the Center for Gift and Estate Planning, he expressed his love for the University.

**Dr. Allen Gent**, retired Professor of Polymer Physics and Polymer Engineering, died at his home on September 20, 2012. He was considered the foremost expert on numerous aspects of polymer science and had been recognized around the world by the many awards he received. He served on the 11 member National Research Panel that oversaw the redesign of the space shuttle's solid fuel rockets in the aftermath of the Challenger explosion. He was viewed as a visionary scientist and educator by those who worked with him.

**Lanny Glenn** died last August 13, 2012. He was stage manager at E.J. Thomas Hall for many years.

**Kathryn Motz Hunter** passed away on December 8, 2012 after a short illness. As an instructor at UA she designed and taught several ground-breaking courses, including "Women: Plan for the Second Half of Your Life" and Combining Career and Marriage" which were viewed at the time in some quarters as provocative. She was very active in the community, serving on many boards, was a Founding Trustee of the EJ Thomas Performing Arts Hall, and was on the Board of Trustees of the University of Akron from 1989 to 1996.

**Patricia Ellen Parr**, Associate Professor of Education, died September 27, 2012. She coordinated the Marriage and Family Counseling Program at the University of Akron.

**George E. Prough** died September 15, 2012 after a lengthy illness. He was a Professor of Marketing at UA in the College of Business Administration for 36 years, retiring in 2004. He would inspire and entertain people with his incredible singing voice and his hilarious jokes, always told in different dialects. He had received numerous honors including Distinguished Marketer Award and Outstanding Teacher.

**Dr. Robert Roberts** died October 8, 2012. He joined the Department of Chemical Engineering in 1966 and served as Department Head from 1969 to 1976. On leave, he served overseas as Head of the Plastic Engineering School for the Algerian Institute. After retiring in 1988 he continued teaching part-time until 1996, and remained active in many organizations.

**Dr. Louis D. Rodabaugh** Professor of Mathematics until his retirement from UA in 1983, died December 4, 2012 at age 99. He had many talents, including serving as church organist, composing musical compositions, holding a US patent for a wheeled toy, and winning an international poetry contest at age 94. He even made national news when he discovered the remains of a prehistoric animal in his own back yard when enlarging his pond. He lived a long and eventful life.

**Donald Rupert**, husband of Pamela Rupert, editor of this publication, died December 9, 2012. He was a teacher at Hudson High School before retirement in 1996, enjoyed sailing and traveling, and was known for his handyman abilities. Those of you who came to the Lobster & Suds events might have recognized him as part of the cooking team.

**Louis Russell** (Rusty/Russ Wilson III) passed away July 29, 2012. He was coordinator of academic advising at UA, Wayne College, where he worked for over 20 years.

**Chester Dante Taffi** passed away August 10, 2012. He was part of the Occupation Forces in Japan during the Korean Conflict, then followed a life-long commitment to the food industry. He served as Assistant and Director of Food Service at the University of Akron for 23 years.

**Beverly Scherba** died October 22, 2012. After working as a cataloger at both Ohio State and the University of Illinois then becoming a stay at home mom, she came back to work at the University of Akron in 1970. She later became Head of Original Cataloging, with the rank of Assistant Professor of Bibliography.

**Dr. David C. Riede** passed away peacefully on August 16, 2012. He retired as Professor Emeritus of History in 1990, where he had been a member since 1955. He had numerous honors, including Most Popular Faculty Member and Outstanding Teacher of the Year. He did not limit his teaching to the University as he was active in his church organizations and the Summit County Library. He served on many boards throughout the community, and left an enviable record as a teacher, scholar and mentor.

**John H. Ryder** passed away July 31, 2012. He retired from the University of Akron Police Department in 1989.

**Susan Whitten** (nee Popp) passed away on September 14, 2012. She worked 15 years at UA in Purchasing and later at the University radio station where she was a favorite of staff and students alike.

**Alvin Clair Wolfe** passed away July 22, 2012. He retired from the General Tire & Rubber Company as a Chemical Engineer, but also taught classes at The University of Akron.

## KEN MACDONALD: AU SPORTS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE



*Ken MacDonald*

Our own AUAR member, Ken MacDonald, will share the highlights of his career in athletics on February 15, 2013 when he will become the third administrator to be inducted into the University's

Sports Hall of Fame at the 38th Annual Banquet in the ballroom of the Martin Center. In his expression of his appreciation MacDonald said, "I am truly humbled and honored to be inducted into my alma mater's sports hall of fame,"

It is extremely interesting on how much effect fate has on each of our lives. In Ken MacDonald's case if he had not lost a contact lens during football practice in the fall of 1959, he would not have spent 30 years in the sports information profession.

That year, MacDonald and his two-month-old contact lens, was a sophomore defensive back candidate on The University of Akron football squad. While catching and returning punts he suddenly realized he had blurred vision in one eye. Despite a subsequent hunt by a number of Zip gridders, the lens remained lost. In school on the G. I. Bill, MacDonald, who served four-years (1954-57) in the U.S. Air Force as a jet mechanic on B-47's and B-52's, could not afford to replace the contact lens and hated playing with glasses, quit football.

The UA football team lost a mediocre player but gained an inexperienced football writer when MacDonald showed up at the office of the Buchtelite, the school newspaper. A short time later, he volunteered his services at the UA News Bureau with the hope of learning how to be a more competent writer. That move in September of 1959 introduced him to a career he quickly grew to love, the profession of sports information. MacDonald, who went on to earn three letters in wrestling and served as sports editor on both the Buchtelite and the Tel-Buch, continued as a student assistant in sports information until his graduation with a degree in industrial management in 1963.

He took a supervision job in warehousing and shipping at the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company in Brook Park, OH, but continued as UA's chief statistician and editor on a part-time basis with the hope of eventually returning to a job he loved. His persistence and patience were paid in dividends when MacDonald was hired as the school's first full-time director of sports information on January 4, 1965. He held that position until he retired on December 31, 1989.

During his 25-year tenure as director, MacDonald witnessed the advancement of the Akron athletic program from the college division to NCAA II, to NCAA IAA and finally to NCAA I, becoming the first school in NCAA history to do so. He saw the athletic budget grow from \$130,000 to \$5,000,000 and he saw the UA enrollment go from 2,400 as a freshman student in 1958 to become the third largest institution of higher learning in Ohio with 28,000 students in 1989. He saw the birth of women's intercollegiate sports on campus in 1973, covered 274 football games, including 259 consecutive, 809 basketball games and an untold number of other UA sports events during his 30 years in sports information. He was well respected by his peers as well as the local and national media and he survived working with four athletic directors, three head coaches in football, seven head coaches in basketball and numerous other coaches in an athletic program that grew from 11 to 17 sports.

A member of the College Sports Information Directors Association (CoSIDA) since 1965, MacDonald served on its Board of Directors in 1973 and 1974. He was fortunate to have his very first basketball brochure of 1965-66 voted best in the nation in the college division. He went on to earn CoSIDA best awards in 21 of his other sports publications all through his UA career. In 1993 CoSIDA presented him with a lifetime membership "For a lifetime of dedicated and unselfish service rendered in the field of college sport information and college athletics." In September 2002, MacDonald was in Chicago, IL to receive the Elmer "Scoop" Hudgins Award for career achievement in sports information from the All-American Football Foundation.

In addition, he also was the recipient of the Glenn "Speed" Bosworth Award for his service to baseball in 1989 by the Greater Akron Baseball Hall of Fame, was presented with the Andy Palich Award for meritorious service to sports in 1991 by the Summit County Sports Hall of Fame and on February 20, 2005 MacDonald was presented the Bill Schlemmer Award from the Dapper Dan Club for his meritorious service to athletics in the Akron area.

However, according to MacDonald, "the highlight of my career in athletics, will happen on February 15, 2013 when I become the third administrator to be inducted into the University's Sports Hall of Fame at the 38th Annual Banquet in the ballroom of the Martin Center. "I am truly humbled and honored to be inducted into my alma mater's sports hall of fame," added MacDonald.

Joining MacDonald will be fellow 2012 honorees: Michael "Shamu" Andy '81, football; Michelle Rizzo Wardle '02, women's cross country; Julie Bias Pratt '96, softball; LeShaunte Edwards '02, track; Russ Klaus '87, football and Kenny Pryor '93, soccer. In addition, UA will present the Kenneth "Red" Cochrane Meritorious Service Award to Ted Curtis, UA's Vice President for Capital Planning and Facilities Management, and the Mike Krino Varsity A Achievement Award to Karl Schwarzingler '74. On Saturday, February 16, 2013, MacDonald and the 2012 Hall of Fame Class will be presented at halftime of the Akron men's basketball game versus Bowling Green. As you might have assumed, MacDonald has been active in a number of University Committees as well as community civic and service organizations during his professional career and retirement. Of these, MacDonald is most proud of his 39-year membership on The University of Akron Varsity A Association Executive Board, served two years as its president and has been the Secretary since 2007. He was instrumental in forming the UA Sports Hall of Fame in 1975 as a charter committee member and has served as its chairman 21 times in the last 37 years. He has also served on the Summit County Sports Hall of Fame Committee for 33 years, served as general chairman for its 25th Anniversary Banquet in 1981, and was the organization's secretary for 13 years.

Additionally, MacDonald has been a member of the Akron Optimist Club since 1978 and is a past president. He founded the Akron Breakfast Optimist Club in 1985, served as president in 2000-01, '08-'09 and '09-'10, served as secretary-treasurer 2001-08 and served in 2001-03 as Lieutenant Governor in the Optimist International Ohio District, earning "Distinguished Honors" in 2002-03. MacDonald began involvement in Optimist Junior Golf in 1981 that has now reached 32 years, including the last seven as the Akron Regional Tournament Chairman and the last two as the Ohio District Optimist's Junior Golf Chairman.

A native of the Akron area, MacDonald is married to Marilyn Bowman, who is the Director of Sports Medicine at The University of Akron, and they reside in Green, OH. MacDonald has a married daughter, Jane (Peter) McInerney of Oberlin, OH, two married step children, Nicole (Alan) Gaffney of Copley, OH and Dr. Brad (Jaime) Bowman of Moscow, ID and four granddaughters, Reilly McInerney, 16, Fiona Gaffney, 11, Maeve Gaffney, 9, and Nora Bowman, 7 and two grandsons, Aidan Gaffney, 7, and Evan Bowman, 4.

## AUAR ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO TWO STUDENTS

The AUAR Endowed Scholarship has been awarded to two outstanding students for the 2012-2013 academic year. The two recipients are Melanie Estes, majoring in Nursing. Melanie is a junior with a 3.86 g.p.a; and Kenneth Smith, majoring in Aerospace Systems Engineering. Ken has a 4.0 g.p.a. To date, six students have been awarded AUAR scholarships. The four previous recipients were: Sara Vue (education), Caryn Collins (Dietetics), Angelette Bokman (Accounting), and Nicholas Krieger (statistics). We congratulate all these deserving students who have been awarded the AUAR scholarship.

As of November 2012, the AUAR Endowed Scholarship Fund has a balance of slightly over \$52,300. We are well toward our goal of raising \$100,000. Please consider making a donation during our annual drive solicited by the University Development Department or anytime throughout the year. Your support is very much appreciated. The scholarship is a way of showing that retirees care about financially assisting deserving students achieve their educational goals.



# AUAR Events

## September Luncheon Speakers Review "Ancient Kingdoms"



Luncheon speakers Martha and Mel Vye

about and saw photos depicting how life is now since the conflict, which locals refer to as the "American War", ended in the early 80's. The group also visited the "War Remnants Museum" which explores the war from the Vietnamese perspective.

One interesting aspect, unknown to many of us, was the Lu Chi tunnels – a 125-mile long underground maze where thousands of fighters and villagers hid and fought during the Vietnam War. The Viet Cong worked continuously for over 25



June Burton, Chris Gerbig and Linda Marx

years to build a vast multi-level network of tunnels that included mess halls, meeting rooms, small factories vast ammunition stores and even an operating room.

One of the photos showed Martha kneeling on a pad and offering alms to the local monks. She explained that early each morning hundreds of monks from the nearby Buddhist temples parade through the streets of Luang Prabang, collecting food offerings from the citizens and travelers who, in turn, receive prayers for their families and friends from the monks. Dressed in traditional Lao orange robes, the monks provide a fluent sense of calm and solemnity to the inhabitants of the city.

To conclude their journey, the group visited the legendary temples of Angkor Wat, covering nearly 500 acres with its extraordinary sculptures and stupas. Some

of these structures are still engulfed in the coiling roots of forest trees.

We thank Martha and Mel for helping us experience Indochina and showing us the unexpected blend of stunning pagodas and colonial architecture, colorful markets, terraced rice fields and timeless villages.

One last note – most of us enjoyed our luncheon buffet featuring some new menu items, none of which included a fruit bat, tarantula legs, or fried crickets, which Mel was adventurous enough to try! At least Martha had more sense and only tried the crispy crickets!



Hank and Arlene Netting

## Local History Author – October Luncheon Speaker



Mary L. McClure, an UA alumna, was our guest speaker in October. Mary's presentation on the High Bridge Glens and Caves summer resort along the riverbanks in Cuyahoga Falls was both informative and entertaining.

Most people are aware of the many old amusement parks that operated in Summit County over the years, but few know much about the history of the Glens. The park was located in the area of the Gorge Metro Park now known as the Glens Trail. Mary explained how a local hardware store owner, L.W. Loomis, envisioned a new park that would span both sides of the Cuyahoga River beginning at the present-day intersection of Front and Prospect Streets.

In the early 1870's the Summit County commissioners approved construction of a high iron bridge to span the river. Loomis and his partner, Harvey Parks, began to acquire property and soon the park's pavilion, trails and other attraction started to take shape. In June 1879 the High Bridge Glens and Caves Park opened to the public; and within one year its original pavilion, which was used for dances and other social events, became inadequate to handle the large crowds. A new Grand Pavilion, which was twice the size of the first one and built at a cost of \$3,500, was opened in 1880. A hotel, named the Glen House, and other attractions and rides followed. In fact, the park had one of the first roller coasters in the United States. It was built in 1884 and was a circular, gravity railway.

Mary showed us many early pictures of the river with its caves and beautiful scenery, most of which is now under 30 feet of water due to various dams that were constructed on the river over the years. Also of interest were pictures of the many park structures built by Loomis and his partners and Mary's descriptions of the promotions and attractions that lured thousands of visitors to the Glens in its hay day.

To learn more about the park, its demise and the “rebirth” of the new High Bridge Glens Park, located a few hundred feet south of the intersection of Front Street and Broad Boulevard in the “Falls”, read Mary’s book “High Bridge Glens of Cuyahoga Falls” published by Arcadia Publishing Company (2012) or catch a presentation by Mary at a local venue. It would be well worth your while, guaranteed!

## Potluck Soup & Chili Supper



It seems that every year the Soup & Chili Supper event arrives on a cold, wet and dreary evening, and November 2, 2012 was no exception. Fifty-two hearty retirees and friends enjoyed an array of salads and desserts and sampled a variety of homemade soups and chili’s, which included Arlene Nettling’s chicken noodle soup, Judy Lasher’s stuffed pepper soup, June Burton’s turkey and wild rice soup, Pam Rupert’s fish chowder, Sharon Gandee’s vegetable medley

soup, Tom Vukovich’s whistle stop chili, Neal Raber’s Cleveland chili, and Roger Bain’s Big Horn chili. Several first-timers were in attendance, including Bill & Mary Ann Hendon, Nick & Meredith Tavernaris and Dave & Laura Robinson.

After dining it was time to play bingo. It was fun to see what unusual, unique, one-of-a-kind and sometimes useful items were donated as prizes. Don’t miss out next year. The first Friday in November is already set aside for Soup & Chili 2013.



Neal Raber and Dick Henry



Soup Inspectors Arlene and Jane

## National Election – November Luncheon Speaker



Luncheon speaker Stephen Brooks

On November 14, 2012, Dr. Stephen C. Brooks, Associate Director of the Bliss Institute of Applied Politics, spoke at the AUAR luncheon, providing his analysis of the 2012 national election.

In many ways, he pointed out, this was a status quo election in which the presidency, the Senate, and the House of Representatives remained under the same party control as existed before the November contest. The country was still divided almost evenly between the major parties; only about six percent of the voters were still undecided

shortly before the election occurred.

The large sums spent on campaign advertising had little effect in changing the political divisions within the country, though they may have helped to retain those voters already committed to one of the major party candidates. Obama picked up support as a result of changing demographics (e.g. the growing number of Latinos and the smaller proportion of elderly whites) and the successful get out the vote drive that particularly targeted new members of the electorate.



Barb Jones and Nancy & John Mulhauser

## 12-12-12 Holiday Luncheon



“This one? No, This one!”

Our 2012 holiday luncheon was held on Wednesday, December 12, and the traditional gift exchange produced some interesting situations. First, there were at least two sets of Ohio lottery tickets selected by attendees as gifts, and they became “hot” items that passed through several hands during the “pirating” phase of the gift exchange. Apparently the significance of 12-12-12 was expected to bring good luck to the eventual recipients of the lottery tickets. Roger Bain even voiced his intention to split part of his possible winnings with AUAR – IF they were in the \$1,000 range. No word from Roger as of the writing of this report, but we understand that he and Leslie will be vacationing in Tahiti during the winter

months!

It was great to see George Makar and Leona Farris attend their first luncheon of the year. We also learned from Kay Reyes, daughter of Louis D. Rodabaugh, about the incredible life of her father. Dr. Rodabaugh died on December 4, 2012 at 99 years of age. Neal Raber, who early in his career worked with Dr. Rodabaugh in the Mathematics Department, added a few very entertaining stories about him.

If you were unable to attend this holiday luncheon, you missed a fun event. Don’t be left out next year! Mark your calendar now for our 2013 Holiday Luncheon.



The Rabers

## Following is a brief summary of three sessions of the AUAR “Successful Aging Symposium” held on October 24, 2012



*Speaker Jim Sage*

### **Session 1**

Jim Sage, the Chief Information Officer at the University of Akron spoke to us about emerging technologies in higher education and lifelong learning.

The following are some of the highlights of his talk

Since individuals are expecting to be able to work, study and learn anywhere the University is offering more online courses or courses that combine on campus experiences with online experiences.

Future students will expect their education to include tablets, e-readers and perhaps gaming technology. One example given was with that with the use of tablets like an iPad a student could have a visual conversation with their instructors no matter where they or their instructor were located.

Jim Sage also told us about some amazing technologies that may occur in the future.

### **Session 2**

Hrvey Sterns, Director, Institute for Life-Span Dev. & Gerontology spoke on Work in Retirement

### **Session 3**

Kelsey Loushin, President of Eldercare Professionals of Ohio spoke to us about Health and Wellness in Retirement.

Among the highlights that Ms. Loushin emphasized was that stress is linked to every long term health condition. Retirees need to reduce stress to maintain good health. In order to maintain good health retirees need to restrict calories, increase strength, and improve their quality of sleep. Social interaction is extremely important in maintaining health. Research has shown that people with good social interactions are on the whole healthier than those who do not have social interaction with other people. Kelsey also discussed Alzheimer's and other illnesses associated with aging.



*Keynote speaker Charles Bird*



*Loren Hoch and Pam Rupert*



*Speakers Sandy and Mark Auburn and*

### **Session 4**

Volunteering Opportunities with DRS. Mark and Sandy Auburn and Inese Alvarez, Mature Services

We first heard from Drs. Mark and Sandy Auburn about their numerous, individual and joint volunteering experiences. They spoke thoughtfully and joyfully about their efforts through the years to “give back” to the community and also to learn new things. Then Inese Alvarez, who presents RSVP--Retired & Senior Volunteer Program, within the Mature Services agency on South Portage Path--introduced us to a whole host of opportunities waiting out there for people 55 and over.





## Session 5

Dr. Harvey Sterns organized a group of current University of Akron retirees, which included June Burton, Velma Pomrenke and Diane & Tom Vukovich, to discuss how each of them moved from a very busy career at the University into their retirement years. June related how she was motivated to complete her book, *Napoleon and the Woman Question: Discourses of the Other Sex in French Education, Medicine and Medical Law*, take up a long-neglected love of painting and the issues she faced while selling her house and adjusting apartment living. Velma talked of extending her volunteer activities and of the stress she encountered while handling the affairs of a very close friend and later trying to settle her friend's estate. Diane & Tom both retired the same year and together extended their travel plans, found extra employment for a time and increased their volunteer activities. Diane explained how getting involved with the first Leadership Akron program for area retirees opened up even more opportunities to become involved in community activities. Tom and Diane are now mentoring two students, who attend the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Middle School that is part of the Akron Public School System.



Velma Pomrenke and Bob Gandee



Speaker Michelle Smith Q and A about retiree



## Session 6

Mary Jo Lockshin an attorney who is the Director of Development for the McDowell Law School discussed Wills and Trusts.

Ms. Lockshin emphasized how important it is to have a will or trust at any time, but especially as we grow older. She talked about probate and non probate assets, advantages of trusts, living wills, power of attorney among other things.

A great deal of information was imparted, an enormous amount of questions were generated and we all agreed that we could have stayed and listened to Mary Jo for another hour or two.

## DID YOU KNOW

The University has retiree benefits that you can access with your zip card. Among benefits that retirees can access with their zip cards are free access to the Akron Art Museum, discounts at the computer solutions store, discounted or free tickets to some events on campus. Your Zip card also serves as your University library card.

Retirees are entitled to Zip Cards. If a retiree no longer has a Zip card they can get one at a Zip Card office. For location, hours and any questions you may have about getting or replacing a Zip card call 330-972-5637.

Some retirees have let their University of Akron email lapse. If you wish to reinstate your University email contact the information technology support desk at 330-972-6888 or by email at [supportdesk@uakron.edu](mailto:supportdesk@uakron.edu).

# Route of the Maya — By Newt Engle



My name is Newt Engle and I recently retired from the University Police Department. I will be the first to admit I am a home body. My idea of a vacation is to head south for a few days in the winter. I am talking Columbus, or maybe Cincinnati if we're feeling adventurous. I have heard it said opposites attract, and my lovely wife of 33 years, Sandy and I prove it. Sandy loves to travel all over the world and has forced me to go along several times. This is probably why my sneaky friends and trip coordinators, Tom and Diane Vukovich sent the invitation to join a group going to Central America to Sandy, and not me. The trip was called "The route of the Maya" consisting of a group of 16 wonderful travelers, mostly retired from The University of Akron. The 14 day excursion presented by Overseas Adventure Travel allowed us to visit El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Belize and we visited six internationally famous archaeological sites.

When we arrived in El Salvador, we met our OAT trip leader Walter Quiñonez. From that moment on, we were lead through an excellent immersion in the Central American culture at the end of which Walter wanted us to be able to answer two important questions:



1. Where did the Mayan people go?
2. What does the end of the Mayan calendar on Dec 21

symbolize?

Our adventure started in El Salvador at the archeological site Joya de Ceren, known as the little Pompeii of Central America. Needless to say the village suddenly ceased to exist around 400 AD. But the perfectly preserved village gave us our first snapshot of how the Mayans lived. The time spend on some periodic long stints in the tour bus was barely noticed as our leader Walter presented us with a plethora of information about the countries and the local people. Crossing into Honduras landed us at the famous ruins of Copan. Even though only a fraction of the ruins have been rescued from the invasive jungle, the exposed ruins are amazing. In addition to the ruins we observed quite a bit of wildlife to include monkeys, but we brought several monkeys with us. While many of us watched,



other members of our group could not resist the temptation to actually climb the rather large Mayan pyramids. Lead by non-other than our lovely hostess Diane Vukovich. I believe even the local monkeys would have trouble keeping up with Diane. She would almost run up and down these massive structures, and then lead the charge towards the next one. Amazing! This is also where my wife Sandy discovered falling down the pyramids can be rather hazardous. The bruises have finally cleared up. To be honest, we probably could have spent the rest of the trip in Copan, but our schedule kept us moving onward.

We learned a lot from our leader and the local people, but we also learned a lot from each other. For instance retired UA Geologist



Roger Bain shared his knowledge of the local area and could not resist asking the bus driver to stop at the site of some beautiful obsidian lying along the other side of the roadway. Roger and Walter ventured outside, crossed a two lane expressway, jumped over a large cement divider, crossed two more lanes and arrived at the geologist's treasure. Did I forget to mention it was raining so hard the roadway was flooding? While crossing the road, a speeding truck put up a wave of water worthy of the title Tsunami, which covered Roger, but undaunted, Roger recovered as much obsidian as he could carry, traversed the expressway again and entered the bus soaked to the bone but with a smile from ear to ear.

OAT and Walter scheduled a wide range of experiences for us as we traversed Guatemala and Honduras to include meeting many local peoples, churches, museums, villages, festivals, farmers markets, macadamia and coffee farms, banana plantations, schools and much more. Before we left the city of Panajachel, my wife shamed me and a few others to go with her on the zip line. Yes, we climbed a mountain into the cloud forest, hooked up to a cable and took off! Not from one tree to another, but from one mountain to



another. Yes, over 800 feet across the valley! Back and forth about 8 times till we reached the bottom. What the %&! was I thinking?



Don't tell Sandy, but after the initial fear of being the stupidest man on the earth, it was really fun and the panoramic views cannot be put in words. Next was the Guatemalan city of Antigua is known as the "Vatican City" of Central America and is nestled in a valley between three rather large volcanos. One of which is active and periodically spews out smoke and rocks the size of small cars. We could barely hold Roger and his wife Leslie back, and the volcanos made my wife a little more than nervous. We celebrated Minnie Pritchard's birthday with an early morning wakeup call of



fireworks in the courtyard. This actually did sound a little like an eruption and the sight of my wife waking up from her slumber by running around our room yelling volcano will stay with me forever.

Leaving Antigua, we traveled to Tikal National Park. Yet another large archeological site which has only partially been exposed to modern day. This amazing park is also a location which could easily be a trip in itself. Diane



and her loyal band of pyramid climbers had another physical work out exploring the ancient ruins. The views, the history and remarkable abilities of the architects who developed these cities are simply astounding. After a wonderful boat ride through the bird laden jungle, we took the bus and crossed the border into Belize. While on the bus a local guide from the Belize border gave us much information about



the country formerly known as British Honduras. We talked politics, environment, people and even had the opportunity to see 5 of the 9 traffic lights in the country which is only about 1/4th the size of Ohio. But the Belizean people are justifiably proud of their very beautiful country. We were reminded the country is unbelizeable!

Walter did his job well as



by the end of the trip we could definitely answer his questions. Where did the Mayan people go? The answer is they never left! As the Europeans came to Central America, the Mayan people who survived European diseases, integrated with the European people. But because of the vastness of Central America various pockets of the original



Mayan culture have survived to exist today. And what about the calendar question? Discussed at length and actually seeing a Mayan Calendar consisting of two geared wheels turning each other, demonstrates one complete rotation of the main wheel is called a "Backtun" or approximately 394 of our years. December 21st 2012 is nothing more than the end of the current Backtun. As we all know by now, December 22 arrived with us all safe and sound in the next Backtun. It is a good thing this was not common knowledge or we would have been denied a whole bunch of entertainment about the end of the world.



All of us on this trip owe Tom and Diane Vukovich a BIG thank you for organizing this trip and putting together a wonderful group of people who had a very entertaining and wonderful trip. Even this reluctant home body had a good time. But shhh! Don't let Sandy know.





Mayan Adventurers

The AUAR Newsletter is a biannual publication of the Association of The University of Akron Retirees (AUAR), c/o Talent Development & Human Relations Department, The University of Akron, Akron, OH 44325-4730

AUAR members receive our newsletter automatically. The AUAR Executive Board meets at 10:00 a.m. on the 4th Thursday of the month at the UA Alumni Office on Fir Hill.

If you have questions about the organization or to keep abreast of events and issues pertinent to all UA retirees, visit our website at [www.uakron.edu/auar](http://www.uakron.edu/auar). The newsletter editor, Dr. Pamela Rupert, can be reached at [pamelarae2004@aol.com](mailto:pamelarae2004@aol.com) or 330-929-1810.

### Upcoming Events 2013 AUAR Luncheon Speakers

#### February 13, 2013

Dr. David Baker, UA Faculty Member  
Executive Director, Center for American Psychology  
**Topic:** "UA's Psychology Archives: Unknown Treasures"

#### March 13, 2013

Terry Bowden, UA Head Football Coach  
**Topic:** "UA Football Program: Review of the 2012 Season and Goals for 2013"

#### April 10, 2013

Mark Price, Akron Beacon Journal Staff Writer, Copy Editor & Author  
**Topic:** Book Review  
"The Rest is History: True Tales from Akron's Vibrant Past"

### Other Events

#### February 17, 2013

Coach House Theater Party  
Agatha Christie's Black Coffee

#### April 2013

Annual Road Trip  
TBA

#### May 17, 2013

Lobster & Suds Party  
Zwisler Hall  
St. Sebastian Church

### AUAR Board Meeting Schedule

January 24, 2013  
February 28, 2013  
March 28, 2013  
April 25, 2013  
May 23, 2013  
June 27, 2013

### Our Motto

People say interns and new hires are the promise of the future.  
Let's not forget that retirees are promises kept.

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