Message from the President

Fall is approaching, and yes, I can say truthfully, I am ready for some “neo” normal activities with EFA as soon as it is safe to gather again. I hope you are all faring well as we continue to experience “Corona fatigue.”

As you know, we are in the midst of what feels a little like a cave-dwelling time for all of us. The Psalmist David was well acquainted with those moments; in fact, he apparently spent a great deal of time journaling. Much of what we read in the Psalms attributed to him was written in caves where he poured out his heart to God and wrote about the good, the bad, and the ugly. As we find ourselves waiting in these days of the global pandemic, I have found the Psalms to be especially helpful.

Here’s a bit of a confession: I hate to wait! Consequently, I think that may be why I so often find myself in that very position. Drive-through lanes at the bank, supermarket checkout choices, the prescription pick-up at Walgreens—invariably I seem to always choose the wrong line. Waiting frustrates me and seems like such a waste. I am guessing that I am not alone. Those between moments in life prove to be some of the most challenging in life for many of us.

As we all know this has been a unique, unusual past few months of learning how to maneuver with the “new normal” of social distancing. I know that I am ready to return to a different kind of normal but still feel safe. The Executive Committee and Board of Directors of the Emeritus Faculty Association have continued to have lengthy discussions via Zoom concerning the return to our EFA activities. As a retired population, we will be very cautious as we move forward in this decision-making process. We will follow the guidelines of the CDC, the State of Oklahoma, the City of Edmond and, most importantly, the University of Central Oklahoma before we resume activities such as Kaffeklatsch and our outings as a group. Stay tuned for emails from Jan Tuepker. I know that I am ready to visit with my EFA colleagues and catch up.

Our Fall Brunch has been cancelled, but Jan has sent you bylaw changes for the EFA. We hope you agree with our changes to ensure the organization continues to thrive. We have engaged several new members and are looking forward to having an opportunity to meet them soon. The current officers will remain for 2021 since we have not had the opportunity to fulfill our roles due to the pandemic. Therefore, I will remain as president for 2021, Dr. Sasser will remain as president-elect, etc.

I want to express a deep appreciation and thanks to Dr. Sue Lynn Sasser and Jan Tuepker for the continuation of emails of funny stories, great memes and links to great entertainment, and great recipes. I enjoy reading them each week. I thoroughly enjoyed receiving these emails and experienced some laughter and enjoyment with each email. Thank you so very much for thinking of the membership during these most different times and brightening our day.

I want to extend a sincere word of appreciation and thanks for allowing me to serve as your president this year, even as we experience a different kind of year, and I thank my dedicated Board and Executive Committee for their commitment to ensuring our organization meets the needs of retired faculty, staff and administrators. If you haven’t renewed your dues, please reach out to Dr. Fred Grosz to do so. Thank you for being part of EFA, and I look forward to seeing you at future EFA events! Don’t miss out on the fun when our fun resumes!

Gayle A. Kearns-Buie
The UCO School of Design Has a New Home
(submitted by Tim Bridges)

UCO now has a new, or should I say, repurposed facility. About five of us [including Tim Bridges and Karl Nelson from UCO] spent the month of April moving St. Mary’s church out of the building across University Drive from Mitchell Hall. The church has been renting the facility from UCO for the last three years after UCO purchased the building using cash and a land swap for property on North Broadway, north of Covell. The church is building a facility on that Broadway property.

The UCO School of Design will operate in the old church facility beginning in the fall. They will have five classrooms upstairs and at least five downstairs with a large conference room, large hall for gatherings, and a large area that was the sanctuary when a church. They have no money to do any major renovations on the property at this time, but with the exception of a few cosmetic items, they can be functioning very quickly this fall. The front of the facility was built in 1973 with the back part of the building completed in the early 90s. The newer section of the building is in excellent shape. The following is a picture of the cleared sanctuary (can’t wait to see what the Design folks do there) and a picture of the large gathering space.

Broncho Lake

Broncho Lake was originally the site of Central's first football stadium, called Central Field. When Wantland Stadium was built, Central Field was demolished, leaving an open space called Central Park. Broncho Lake was created as part of a university capital improvements project in 1996.
(From “Centralities,” March 27, 2020)
Helping UCO Students

COVID-19 Emergency Fund

After receiving numerous requests for financial assistance from students, the UCO Foundation established the COVID-19 Emergency Fund in March of this year. The fund is designated to offset short-term financial need created by the pandemic. The Emeritus Faculty Association donated $2500 from its operating funds to this relief effort on behalf of our membership. A number of individuals have donated as well.

As you can imagine, many students still need assistance. If you are able to donate to the fund, please do so. To make an online donation, go to https://give.uco.edu/project/20485, or mail your donation to UCO Foundation, 100 N. University Drive, Edmond, OK 73034. Be sure to indicate that your donation is for the COVID-19 Emergency Fund (ID S20727).

Pantry Parade

UCO’s Central Pantry held a “Pantry Parade” food drive on July 1-2. Several EFA members dropped off food and/or toiletry items at that time.

As noted above, many students are in need of assistance. If you would like to make a monetary donation to the pantry, you may do so online at https://www.centralconnection.org/donate (Central Pantry ID S20517) or mail a check to UCO Foundation, 100 N. University Drive, Edmond, OK 73034. Be sure to indicate that your donation is for Central Pantry (ID S20517).

What We’re Doing During the Pandemic (Pretty much the same as at any other time.)

If you have done anything unusual, learned a new skill, or been brave enough to travel, we would love to have a brief write-up and/or pictures for the next newsletter. Send them to jtuepker@cox.net.

If you want to know what society’s going to be like in 20 years, ask a kindergarten teacher.
– Clifford Stoll, astronomer and educator
In Memoriam

Richard Dana Walts (March 2, 1947-April 3, 2020) was born in Shelbyville, IN. He was an adjunct instructor at UCO. Leroy Coffman (March 19, 1935-May 18, 2020) served on the UCO Foundation Board and was generous with donating to student scholarships and the ON project. President Betz named a room in ON after him. Carrie Cook Hill (June 19, 1975-May 28, 2020) was born in Okla. City. She was the assistant chairperson of the Department of Theatre Arts for the past seven years. John Brothers (Aug. 10, 1926-June 2, 2020) was born in Grimes, OK. He taught school administration courses at UCO. John’s wife, Sandra, served as director of student teaching and taught at UCO. Also David Ford’s mother, Bill Winters’ brother, and Pat LaGrow’s brother.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Even though EFA is not holding in-person activities during the pandemic, emails are being sent to members on a regular basis. If you are an EFA member and are not receiving these emails, please contact Jan Tuepker at jtuepker@cox.net.