Message from the President

Greetings, all!

COVID got us all down this past year, but there is a light at the end of the tunnel as most of us should have received our vaccination by now. If not, please reach out to any of us to get ideas where you might sign up for a shot. I did find that Walmart.com is doing their own thing so you don’t have to deal with the confusing website of the Oklahoma Health Department. Hopefully, we will be able to resume our Kaffeeklatsch the first Thursday of the month by May or June—keep your fingers crossed. It is a great time for fellowship and fun! If you need a ride or assistance, please contact me. We would love to have you join us in the near future. Again, we are hopeful that we will be able to resume some of our planned activities in the near future. Once we get the information from UCO, we will send out emails to give you an opportunity to join us for coffee or an activity. We also have a fantastic book club that meets on the first Monday of each month (more information in the newsletter).

As always, EFA continues to promote campus and community involvement of retired faculty and staff through educational, service, recreational, social, wellness, cultural and travel events. We have identified several specific goals for 2021: 1) Scholarship. Continue to increase the scholarship fund to meet $50,000 over the next three years, which will fully fund two scholarships annually in the amount of $1500 or greater. Thanks to many generous donors for continuing to support our scholarship fund. 2) Advocacy. Continue to advocate on behalf of EFA members. 3) Increase Membership. Continue to recruit members and maintain connections to EFA. Invite to KK and other EFA activities. Celebrate birthdays at Kaffeeklatsch to honor and inform members. Send quick “glad to see you” notes after new members attend a function. Send “welcome” notes to new members. Provide meaningful and fun diversified excursions for membership. 4) Encourage your friends to join and let the Executive Committee members hear your ideas for other ways EFA might enhance our retirement experiences.

I want to extend a sincere word of appreciation and thanks for allowing me to serve as your president for the past year and thank my Board and Executive Committee for their dedication and commitment to ensuring our organization meets the needs of our retired faculty, staff and administrators. 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—COVID vaccines will hopefully allow us to gather again soon.

Gayle A. Kearns-Buie
“Bring Warm Clothes”  
Submitted by Mark Kinders

My first professional job out of college was in Bismarck, ND. The city’s unofficial motto is “44 below keeps the riff-raff out.” The highlights of eight winters:

- Three times it got to 44 below. With the wind chill, it got to -109.
- Once it got to -43 with a wind chill of -110.
- They set a record of 45 days where the temp never got ABOVE ZERO. A friend at the Weather Service said they got threatening phone calls four days short of when the record would have been broken when the sun came out and the wind stopped blowing. They wisely declared the high for the day to be zero. The callers said they had to put up with so much that they earned a new record. Or else.
- I covered cops and the FD for the newspaper. Once a week there would be a kitchen fire. People would drain the oil from their cars at night and reheat it on the stove to pour back into their engine blocks in the morning. Some forget about it, and the oil would catch fire.
- They had a biathlon every February that was a 6.2 mile run and 1K swim. The water sport was in the indoor Y pool, but after running at temps around 30 below you were a floating ice cube for the first half of the swim.
- If you went a half mile out of town, you better have blankets, heavy clothes, snacks, a tin pie pan and a candle. The last two were to melt snow to drink as you might be stuck for a day. Crank your car over for 15 minutes every hour, but check the tail pipe to make sure it was clear. Never leave your car. People who saw lights in a nearby farm house would get lost and freeze to death in ground storms with extreme blowing snow.
- Snowflakes freeze into ice particles. Ground storms were very unpleasant to exposed skin.
- Before indoor plumbing, farmers would run a rope from the house to the outhouse as guides so they wouldn’t get lost.
- Within 12 hours of any snowstorm, you would have an Alberta Clipper come barreling out of the Arctic Circle and drop the temps to minus 20-30 degrees for days on end.
- It can snow at -25. A lot.
- I once told an Air Force friend I felt sorry for the B-52 crews in Minot and Fargo that had to pre-flight their aircraft in that weather. He reminded me that they had Air Force security crews patrolling the wire in Jeeps around all the Minuteman silos on 8-hour shifts.
- One of the more popular history books contained letters from Norwegian farmers to their family members who were considering migrating. The title? “Bring Warm Clothes.”

After that, living in Wisconsin was a breeze. Oklahoma is a cake walk. Where’s my shorts, flip flops, and sun screen? Time to go golfing.

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New Book

Sheldon Russell, emeritus faculty member from the College of Education and Professional Studies, has a new book out: “Time and Again,” published by Sunbury Press. To read more about the book, go to www.sheldonrussell.com; to contact Sheldon, email him at sheldonr68@gmail.com.
The Psychology of Retirement (submitted by Jerry Legere)

The UCO Benefits Department of People and Culture, in conjunction with the EFA, sponsored a presentation by Jerry Legere entitled “The Psychology of Retirement.” The 53-minute presentation was recorded on Dec. 10, 2020 and presented on Zoom for about 25 participants. It covered topics such as retirement facts, fears and concerns, money moves to consider, legal documents needed, expenses often overlooked, common mistakes, 11 figures for a secure retirement, the retirement countdown checklist, and eight topics to tackle in discussions with your spouse.

The link, the video and power point are located on the inter page for People and Culture, the Hub. EFA members can access it utilizing their UCO emails. https://ucok.sharepoint.com/sites/PCIntranet/SitePages/Monthly-Benefits-Series.aspx

EFA Book Club 2021 Reading List

For the time being, the EFA Book Club will continue to meet via Zoom at 1:30-2:30 p.m. on the first Monday of each month with the exception of January and August. An email notice with the Zoom link to the meeting will be sent to EFA members a few days prior to each meeting. The books selected for the remainder of 2021 are listed below.


2021 Officers
President – Gayle Kearns (gkearns@uco.edu)
President-elect – Sue Lynn Sasser (ssasser@uco.edu)
Past President – Diane Jackson (jacksondhj@yahoo.com)
Secretary/Treasurer – Tim Bridges (timothy.bridges21@gmail.com)
Standing Committee Chairs: Activities – Pam Kuzminske (pkuzminski@cox.net); Advocacy, Benefits and Service – Evelyn Wilson-Martin (mwa@cox.net); Courtesy – the chair position is open; Membership – Pat LaGrow (plagrow@cox.net) and Jerry Legere (oklegere@gmail.com); Publicity/Association History – Jan Tuepker (jtuepker@cox.net)
Liaison to Faculty and Staff Senates – Jerry Legere (oklegere@gmail.com)
Book Club Coordinator – Pat Couts (buckspalpat@gmail.com)

Board of Directors
Bill Radke (wradke680@gmail.com)
Dave Ford (profford51@gmail.com)
Candy Sebert (csebert@uco.edu)

NOTE: We are in need of a chair for the Courtesy Committee. If you are interested in serving in this role, or on any other committee, please contact Gayle Kerns-Buie.
In Memoriam

Richard “Dick” Mitchell (June 11, 1930-Nov. 24, 2020) was born in Ponca City, OK. During his tenure at UCO (1966-1996), Dick served as a professor in the College of Education and Professional Studies and as a vice president. Jerry Lou Zielny (Sept. 20, 1934-Nov. 29, 2020) was born in Britton, OK. She worked as a library technician at UCO. Hall Duncan (Jan. 27, 1924-Nov. 30, 20230) was born in Okla. City. He taught advertising, design, and cartooning for many years, as well as working internationally to promote education. Elizabeth Farris (Feb. 28, 1934-Dec. 1, 2020) taught music at UCO for 20 years and was the organist at Edmond’s First United Methodist Church for over 30 years. William “Billy” Stumbaugh (Jan. 27, 1947-Dec. 9, 2020) was born in Guthrie, OK. He worked in the Print Shop from 1979-2003. J.W. Weatherford (Aug. 18, 1936-Dec. 15, 2020) was born in Pauls Valley, OK. From 1972-1999 he taught in the College of Education and Professional Studies as well as serving as a department chair and director of student teaching. Kathy Pritchard (Oct. 3, 1955-Jan. 18, 2021) was a long-time employee in the Accounts Payable office. David Noel (Jan. 20, 2021) served as the network manager and professor of management information systems in the College of Business from 1993 to 2019. James Alvin Bryan (June 21, 1923-Jan. 20, 2021) was born in Frederick, OK. He taught accounting for several decades before retiring in the 1980s. Kathe Regina Eastman (March 5, 1951-Feb. 4, 2021) was born in Midwest City, OK. She served as an adjunct instructor in the Nursing Department. Also Mack Wedel’s wife.