



Emeriti News

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

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<http://www.wmich.edu/emeriti/newsletters>

Fall 2020

EMERITI COUNCIL OFFICERS:

Gary Lawson ~ *Chair*, Donna Oas ~ *Vice Chair*, Phil Caruso ~ *Secretary and Treasurer*

EMERITI COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND REPRESENTATIVES:

Nominations Committee (Louise Forsleff, Dave Houghton), *Representative to OLLI Advisory Board* (John Geisler), *Newsletter Editor* (Paul Yelsma and Gary Lawson with assistance from Darryl Salisbury), *Wednesday II Committee* (Joe Buckley, Barbara Hemphill, Gary Lawson, Barbara Rider), *Faculty Senate Representatives* (Jody Brylinsky, Sandra Glista, Peter Krawutschke), *Social Events Committee* (Louise Forsleff, Peter Kobrak, Barbara Rider).



Message from the Chair: Gary Lawson

Moving Forward During a Pandemic

The *Emeriti Newsletter* seeks to inform members of the Emeriti Council, members of the Emeriti at large, and the Western Michigan University community, about the Council's activities toward the accomplishment of its mission.



The mission of the Emeriti Council is to implement programs, events, and activities which enable emeriti to be effectively involved in the life of the Western Michigan University community. How has the COVID-19 pandemic influenced the projects and programs that contribute to the accomplishment of our mission?

Projects and Programs

The bulleted list below is from a March 2019 paper on the Emeriti Council website. It shows projects and programs recently used to accomplish the Council's mission:

- Supported the Medallion Scholarship by assisting two or three students per year with an Emeriti Council endowment
- Offered a monthly speakers' program called "Wednesday II"
- Created a book scholarship fund with awards to students on an annual basis
- Published an Emeriti Council newsletter on a biannual basis
- Created two emeriti social events: BreakFest (a breakfast held just before the beginning of the academic year) and a new year party (held in the early spring)
- Supported OLLI

- Supported Phi Beta Kappa students at WMU

In addition to these projects and programs, the Emeriti Council has traditionally met in-person in most months of the year and one or more Council members participate in the platform party for graduation ceremonies when invited to do so.

The Emeriti Council continues to support **Emeriti Medallion Scholarships** and **Emeriti Book Scholarships** with emphasis on Emeriti Medallion Scholarships. Hopefully, our ability to do so will be unaffected by the pandemic. Please continue to make donations.

The **Wednesday II events**, typically preceded by refreshments, are offered on the second Wednesday of most months. They have long been one of our most visible, and for some, one of our most enjoyable undertakings. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we began cancelling these events along with other in-person meetings starting with the April, Wednesday II in 2020. Over time it has become clear that the end of the pandemic is unknown. Although the in-person nature of the Wednesday II programs is preferred, the plan is to begin offering programs as virtual events in 2021. Doing so presents a challenge for those of us who have not worked with virtual presentations.

Although the Council has traditionally published two **newsletters** per year, the spring newsletter for 2020 was cancelled due to the pandemic. Obviously, the newsletter is back for Fall 2020. This publication provides an opportunity to inform others of the revised list of Council members, officers, and activities during the pandemic and to preserve, supplement, and highlight the Council's history. Not having a webmaster will influence content, and distribution will be limited to those for whom we have email addresses.

Under the able leadership of Peter Kobrak, **two social events** were planned for 2020, but those events were cancelled due to the pandemic. The cancelled events were the **BreakFest** scheduled for the second Wednesday in August and the **Spring Fling** intended to replace the holiday party. The **Spring Fling** for 2020 was to be a promising event featuring emcee D. Terry Williams, honoree Garrard Macleod, cabaret singer Janice Lakers, and bass player Mike Stoline. Although approximately 70 people registered, the event had to be cancelled. In-person social events were deemed untenable during the pandemic. Hopefully, this event can be rescheduled at a future date.

The Emeriti Council played a role in starting the **Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)** and continues to encourage support for its mission. Our current representative to the OLLI Advisory Board is **John Geisler**. Ideally, the Council can be helpful to OLLI and OLLI can be helpful to the Council. Historically, we have encouraged membership in OLLI and participation in lifelong learning events. OLLI provides learning events and registration for them on a WMU web page.

In 2019, the Emeriti Council assisted five WMU students with expenses associated with participation in the **Phi Beta Kappa induction ceremony at WMU**. The pandemic has not interfered with our continuing support of these students.

Because of the pandemic, five new Emeriti Council members have not had the opportunity to attend an in-person meeting of the council or to meet each other face-to-face. As an at-risk group, the Council will not continue its in-person meeting schedule or enjoy in-person social events until it is safe to do so. The Council does plan to experiment with offering Wednesday II events virtually in the coming year. Those who have input on ways to improve the

accomplishment of our mission are encouraged to submit ideas to gary.lawson@wmich.edu . Your ideas are always welcome.



Emeriti Council Transitions in 2020 (Submitted by Louise Forsleff)



Don Nelson, Judith Halseth, Darryl Salisbury, and Phil Vander Weg left the Emeriti Council in 2020. Each of these individuals contributed substantially to the success of the Council. Don served as webmaster and treasurer and made certain that a projector was available for Wednesday II events. Darryl served as editor of the Newsletter, showing special expertise and the ability to produce a product on time (he continues to assist the new council with production of the newsletter). Phil Vander Weg and Judy Halseth managed nominations and elections with Phil leaving the Council early for personal reasons. Judy played an invaluable role in the success of the Council because of her previous service as president, her knowledge of the group's history, and how the Council has functioned. The Council is grateful for each person's contributions to the Emeriti Council and to Western.

Louise Forsleff and Peter Kobrak were elected to a second two-year term of service, ending in 2022. They, along with Barbara Rider, constitute the Social Events Committee. Louise, having served on the Nominations Committee earlier, is leading the efforts to encourage new candidates to apply for service on the Emeriti Council.

New members of the Council, effective July 1, 2020, are Jody Brylinsky, Joe Buckley, Barbara Hemphill, Dave Houghton, and Paul Yelsma. These members have not had the advantage of attending an in-person meeting of the Council or the pleasure of meeting its other members face to face. These members will serve a two-year term.

Emeriti who are interested in being part of the Emeriti Council are encouraged to communicate their interest, preferably by March 15, 2021, to Louise Forsleff at lforsleff@yahoo.com . New members take office in July each year and it is helpful to know that new persons are interested well before May, when there is a vote for our candidates.



Emeriti Scholarship Program (submitted by Phil Caruso)



Western has a long-standing Medallion Scholarship Program. Many Emeriti will recall the beginnings of that program, and indeed, may have participated in a process for evaluating candidates. The Medallion Scholarship amounts to \$15,000 per year, and is renewable for up to eight consecutive semesters of undergraduate work. Over the years, the Emeriti Council has continued to encourage donations to this program. As of August 2019, that fund totaled \$1,144,603.64. Each scholarship requires an endowment of \$400,000.

Donations may be made to the Emeriti Council Scholarship program or the Emeriti Book Scholarship program at www.mywmu.com/emeriti. Add "Emeriti Medallion Scholarship" or "Emeriti Council Book Scholarship" to the form to indicate the fund being supported.

Alternatively, a printable form for use in making donations for these student scholarships is attached to this newsletter.



Emeriti Council Merit Scholars – Update

Eboni Nichelle Brown (2018 Emeriti Medallion)



The fall semester of 2021 marks the beginning of my career as a registered nurse! I am thankful for the scholarship bestowed upon me by the Emeriti Council. I am also grateful for all of the opportunities that I have been fortunate to experience. At the beginning of March 2020, I was able to study abroad in Costa Rica for a week. During this time, I was able to experience their culture and healthcare system. Later in March, I was scheduled to travel to the Capitol in Washington, D.C., for the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Student Policy Summit, to speak to politicians about current health policies. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the policy summit was cancelled. Nevertheless, it was an honor to be selected as one of two students from Western to attend. The pandemic also altered my plans to volunteer in Poland over the summer to teach adolescents English. Rather than sulk, I decided to use my skills and work in a hospital. Throughout the pandemic, I worked at

Ascension Borgess Hospital here in Kalamazoo as a nurse intern! I learned so much and was able to contribute to the field during a time of need. I continued with my studies and research and have persevered through. This hard work did not go unnoticed. I was selected as one of two students from the Bronson School of Nursing to present my research. Depending on the circumstances, come March 2021, I am honored to present my research at the 45th Research Conference for the Midwest Nursing Research Society.

Joe Zynda (2019 Emeriti Medallion)

I am a sophomore majoring in Aviation Flight Science and currently working on my Instrument Flight Rating. I currently have about 100 hours of flight time and have loved every hour in the aircraft, which has been made possible by the privilege of being chosen as a 2019 Medallion Scholar supported by the WMU Emeriti Council. It has been such a great help for my academics throughout my time here at Western Michigan University. It has been my dream to become a pilot since I was very young as I have always been passionate about aviation. Being in the College of Aviation adds significant cost to tuition, which the Emerita Medallion Scholarship reduces immensely. This has allowed me to worry less about finances and focus more on achieving my dreams and making a positive impact on campus. During my time here at Western Michigan University, I have been on the Dean's List for my first academic year and facilitated the organization of a therapy dog event on campus for all WMU students. Seeing the smiles on student faces as they bonded with the therapy dogs was such a gratifying sight. I also am a Resident Assistant in my Sophomore year with the goal of



helping new students have the greatest first year they can have. All of these achievements and experiences have been possible thanks to the WMU Emeriti Council, so my deepest gratitude to all of these retired faculty members for their generosity.

Rebecca Jane Fraley (2020 Emeriti Medallion) Since accepting admittance to WMU, I knew



this was the University for me. As a Direct Admission Student into the Bronson School of Nursing and a Medallion Scholar, I have been able to see how there are so many amazing people who want to help others and our community. Without the Emeriti Medallion Scholarship, I would not have even been able to attend Western Michigan University. Before receiving the scholarship, I planned to attend my local community college due to it being a more affordable option. Because of this scholarship, I not only attend my dream college but do so without the constant stress of student loans, without having a financial income. The Emeriti Medallion Scholarship also introduced me to an amazing group of

fellow Medallions who are hardworking, determined, and amazing colleagues and friends. Together, we have been able to start and work on multiple projects to prevent climate change and spread awareness in the Kalamazoo community. This scholarship has been a huge blessing to my college career, and I couldn't be more grateful for the WMU Emeriti Council.



Coming Wednesday II Events (submitted by Gary Lawson)

Wednesday II offerings are typically engaging programs on a variety of topics in literature, history, current events, local or global events, physical science, biology, health sciences, human services, poetry, performances of plays, monologues, musical events, etc. Wednesday II events are traditionally offered on the second Wednesday of the month. The programs cancelled in 2020 are being rescheduled as virtual events **starting at 2 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month in 2021**. Program dates, topics, descriptions, and presenters are listed below. Watch for program announcements in the *Western News*. To facilitate the success of these virtual events, at least one training session will be scheduled for January 2021. Prior to each Wednesday II program, one will need to contact Gary at gary.lawson@wmich.edu to request the session code needed to sign up.



February 10, 2021: On Soundscapes: Listening to Stories of the Environment

~ Virtual medium to be determined

~ Presenter: Sharon Gill, Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Western Michigan University

Soundscapes reflect the combined sounds of the environment, connect us to nature, and help build memories of time and place. As humans change the environment, we risk degrading not only our experiences in nature but those of animals that rely on natural areas. In this talk, Dr. Gill will discuss research investigating effects of environmental change on soundscapes and animal sounds, as well as a project merging art and science to explore human experiences of our changing environment.

March 10, 2021: Historical Causes of Central American Migration and Refugee Exodus to the U.S.

~ Virtual medium to be determined

~ Presenter: W.F. Santiago-Valles, Visiting Professor at University of Michigan-Dearborn and National University of Senegal

This presentation focuses on the economic and military histories informing (a) the flight of migrants, refugees, exiles, and asylum seekers; (b) the public policies that push them out; (c) who profits from those public policies inside the U.S.; (d) the assumptions they [migrants, refugees, exiles, asylum seekers] bring here; and (e) the impact of their presence on the health and education systems on the receiving end.

April 14, 2021: Poetry Readings

~ Virtual medium to be determined

~ Readers: Dasha Nisula, Professor Emerita, World Languages and Literature, Western Michigan University; Professor Daneen Wardrop, Professor Emerita of English, Western Michigan University

Professor Dasha Nisula, an enthusiastic supporter of the humanities, will read from her two recently published books of poems (*Exile Editions*, 2019). The poems are translations from Croatian of two south-central European poets, Vesna Parun and Slavko Mihalic. The title of Parun's book is, *You with Hands More Innocent*, in which Parun gives us poems about love from a woman not as an object, but as a subject. She points out that, "It is love that makes and keeps us human." Mihalic's book titled, *Music is Everything*, in which he attempts to overcome the absurdity of life with his ardent belief in the humanistic role of the poet. He was considered outstanding among poets of his generation and remarkable among poets on the Continent at large.

Professor Daneen Wardrop has authored four books of poetry: *The Odds of Being*, *Cyclorama*, *Silk Road*, and *Life as It*. She is a recipient of the Independent Publisher Book Award, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Poetry Society of America Winner Award. Her work has appeared in *The Iowa Review*, *AGNI*, *Michigan Quarterly*, *The Kenyon Review*, and elsewhere. In addition, she has written several scholarly books, mostly about Emily Dickinson. She will read poems from her own works.

May 12, 2021: Come Rain or Come Shine

~ Virtual medium to be determined

~ Performers: William (Arnie) and Deborah (Debby) Johnston

Arnie and Debby are recipients of the Kalamazoo Civic Theatre's Larkin H. Noble Award in recognition of their outstanding service and lifetime achievement toward the interest of the Kalamazoo Civic Theatre. Arnie is a past chair of the Emeriti Council. Arnie's and Debby's 45 minute one-act play follows Frank and Dorothy, 1949 graduates of a Midwestern college, through selected notes and letters that trace their joys, sorrows, and never-quite-connecting over fifty years of living. The two maintain their relationship despite everything until, at their 1999 class reunion, they find themselves face to face and free to be together at last.

September 22, 2021: Turning Points (A New Set of Original Monologues)

~ Virtual medium to be determined

~ Performer: Stanley Robin, Professor Emeritus, Sociology, Western Michigan University

Since his retirement, Professor Robin has performed in several theatrical productions and has created and performed a substantial number of original monologues. He notes that, "We never know when we'll encounter a turning point after which life goes in a different direction. The course change may be large or small, but life is different afterwards." The individual monologues, "Turning Points," are: *Scotty MacGregor*, *The Speech*, *Down for the Count*, *Slither*, *Comeuppance*, *The Blue Car*, *Rabbi David*, *Acrophobia*, *The Great Man*, and *The Middle*.



In Remembrance (submitted by Sandra Glista)

A moment of silence was observed at the 2020 meetings of the Faculty Senate for the persons who had recently passed away. Those individuals are honored by listing them, again, here:



- ~Fredrick Brail, Education and Professional Development;
- ~Roy Groulx, Industrial Engineering;
- ~Mary Ida Hunt, Speech, Language, Hearing Science;
- ~Eugene Kirchherr, Geography;
- ~Tom Pagel, Communication;
- ~Trudy Stauffer, Former Faculty Senate Administrator;
- ~Wendy Cornish, Dance;
- ~Robert Eisenburg, Biological Sciences;
- ~Ronald Flaspohler, General Studies;
- ~David Lewis, Sociology;
- ~Richard Passero, Geology;
- ~Robert Spradling, Music;
- ~Patricia Klein, Science Studies;
- ~Frank Jamison, Teaching and Administrative roles;
- ~Ellen Brinkley, English;
- ~Jack Michael, Psychology



Final Notes...

The end of the pandemic remains to be seen. Watch the **Western News** online for announcements about Emeriti Council programming. Attached is an important form. It is for your contribution to the Emeriti sponsored scholarships. When you do contribute, please note which Emeriti sponsored program should be the beneficiary: The Emeriti Book Scholarship or The Medallion Scholarship. Your support is vital in keeping this tradition moving forward.

Thank you for your support!

**The Emeriti Council wishes each of you and yours
a healthy, hopeful, and rewarding 2021.**



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

EMERITI COUNCIL GIFT GIVING FORM



Name(s) _____

Home Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____ Telephone (____) _____

Email Address _____

I support the continued excellence of Western Michigan University with the following pledge or gift:

Is there another individual who should also receive credit for this gift? Yes No

Individual's title: Mr. Mrs. Ms. Dr. Captain Other _____

Individual's full name _____

This gift is for The Emeriti Book Scholarship The Emeriti Medallion Scholarship

- I have enclosed a matching gift from my employer or my spouse's employer I
- have included WMU in my will or estate plan
- Please send information on how to include WMU in my estate plan
- I would like to mentor a student

GIFT INFORMATION

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other \$ _____

This gift shall be paid in the form of:

- Check enclosed, payable to the **WMU Foundation**
- Electronic transfer (instructions will be sent)
- Credit Card payment; please charge my gift to: Visa Master Card Discover

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____ CCV# _____

Signature _____

MULTI-YEAR GIFT

Please complete the section below if you are making a multi-year pledge to WMU:

I would like to make a multi-year pledge of \$ _____ to be paid over _____ years
in the amount of \$ _____ per year. This pledge will be paid via:

- Check made payable to the WMU Foundation
- Major credit card (see credit card payment information above)
- Electronic transfer (instructions will be sent)
- I would like a reminder sent to me during the month of _____
- I do not need a reminder sent to me

Important Tax Statement:

We acknowledge that you will not receive any goods or services in return for your contribution.

Please consult your tax advisor regarding gifts.

For information, please call (269) 387-8700. Return the entire page to Gift Processing:
WMU Foundation, 1903 W. Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5403