



Emeriti News

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

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

Spring 2021



Happy Spring
2021

from

your

Emeriti Council



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 Kobra, Barbara Rider).



Message from the Chair: Gary Lawson

Continuing to Move Forward During a Pandemic

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

The Council had a recent change in its source of administrative support from



Western. A letter in late February 2021 from Dr. Kahler Schuemann, Chief of Staff and Secretary to the Board of Trustees, and a letter in early March 2021 from Dr. Jennifer Bott, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, stated that administrative assistance to the Council would be provided by the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. With help from Megan Way, the Council has made good progress on updating its web pages and planning for communication with emeriti through future emailings of the *Emeriti News*.

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. Although the COVID pandemic challenged the Council's ability to offer projects and programs, the Council continued its efforts to accomplish its mission. Some suggest that energy pent up during the pandemic will explode into action in its aftermath. Our hopes are that emeriti will continue to support Western and will expend some energy through the Emeriti Council to that end.

Projects and Programs

Although the Council's projects and programs have evolved over time, much of what the Council does is similar to what it began to do a couple of years after it began in 1975.

The Council had to cancel its traditional **Wednesday II** offerings in 2020, but it began to offer virtual **Wednesday II** presentations in February 2021. The dates of these presentations changed and a recent list of program descriptions is shown below under **Wednesday II Presentations**. Our hope is to return to in-person offerings as circumstances permit. The social interaction associated with these events is important to attendees.

Members of the Emeriti Council continue to support **Emeriti Medallion Scholarships** and **Emeriti Book Scholarships** with gifts. Other emeriti are encouraged to do so as well.

The Council continues to publish two newsletters per year, one in the fall and one in the spring. 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. Distribution will be limited to those for whom we have email addresses.

The Council is grateful for the past support of the Office of the President and more recently for the support of the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Recent support has helped the Council to make progress in regaining its ability to communicate with Emeriti via newsletters and web pages.

Under the able leadership of Peter Kobrak, two **social events** were planned for 2020, but had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. The cancelled events were the **BreakFest**, scheduled for the second Wednesday in August (2020), and the **Spring Fling**, intended to replace the holiday party. Hopefully, we will be able to enjoy **social events** again in the months ahead.

Because of the pandemic, five new Emeriti Council members still 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.

Those who have input on ways to improve the accomplishment of the Emeriti Council 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)



John Geisler and Barbara Rider will leave the Emeriti Council at the end of June 2021. John has served as the liaison between the Council and OLLI, and Barbara has served on the Social Events Committee. Phil Caruso, Donna Oas, and Gary Lawson have served as officers for the Council, and Gary has managed the **Wednesday II** events. Although their terms on the Council end in June, all three have volunteered to continue their efforts supporting the mission of the Council and assisting the Council in its transition from pandemic mode to in-person mode. The Council is grateful for the friendship of all five of these individuals and for their contributions to the Emeriti Council and Western.

Louise Forsleff and Peter Kobrak were reelected to a second two-year term of service, ending in June 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 1 July 2020, were 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 two-year terms. Like Sandra, Jody and Joe represent the Council on the Faculty Senate, and may serve longer terms.

Emeriti interested in being part of the Emeriti Council are encouraged to communicate that interest as soon as possible to Louise Forsleff at lforsleff@yahoo.com. Emeriti who want to nominate other emeriti for service on the Council should submit the nominee's name and contact information to Louise as well. New members take office in July each year, and it is helpful to have information on nominees before May, when possible, at which time new members are announced. New members are potentially nominated each year.



Emeriti Scholarship Programs (submitted by Phil Caruso)

Although Western has a long-standing Medallion Scholarship Program, some Emeriti still recall its beginnings. Emeriti Council members continue to donate to the program and encourage donations from other emeriti as well. Currently, each Medallion Scholarship amounts to \$16,000 per year, and \$64,000 over four years.

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 these donations for these student scholarships is attached to the end of this newsletter.

Emeriti Council Merit Scholars – Update

Eboni Nichelle Brown (2018 Emeriti Medallion) graduated on 1 May 2021, and plans to begin her nursing career this year. A new Emeriti Medallion Scholar will be announced some time this summer.

An update on our two current Emeriti Medallion Scholars follows:



Joseph Zynda (2019 Emeriti Medallion): Hello all. This year was a very busy one for me, but a great one for my growth as a student, and for my workload management. I worked as a Resident Assistant in the Honors/Engineering dorms. This job entailed a desk receptionist shift, duty shifts, and constant connections with all students. I also became an instrument rated pilot and passed my commercial ground school class. My plans for this summer are to continue flight lessons toward my commercial license along with working part-time.

Rebecca Jane Fraley (2020 Emeriti Medallion)

This past year at Western has been very new and exciting. Even with all of my classes being online, I have still been able to meet new people, become involved in campus organizations, and overall embrace the college experience. I joined both the Alpha Lambda Delta Honors Society and the Alpha Xi Delta Panhellenic Sorority. These organizations have given me the opportunity to attend many volunteer activities, meet influential and amazing people, and gain peer support in my online classes. This summer I will be working part-time at a retirement home in order to gain more experience for my nursing major.



Coming Wednesday II Events (submitted by Gary Lawson)

Wednesday II offerings are typically engaging programs on a variety of topics. These events are traditionally offered on the second Wednesday of the month. The programs cancelled in 2020 were rescheduled as virtual events **starting at 2:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month in 2021**. Although the dates for most of these events have passed, the program dates, topics, descriptions, and presenters are listed below. Program announcements were published in the *Western News*. To facilitate the success of these virtual events, individual learning sessions were scheduled for some programs. Prior to participating in **Wednesday II** programs, participants were asked to contact Gary at gary.lawson@wmich.edu to request the session codes needed to sign up.

The schedule for the past events and those to come in the fall follows:

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

~ Virtual medium

~ 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 also those of animals which rely on natural senses. In this talk, Sharon 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

~ Presenter: W.F. Santiago-Valles, Visiting Professor at the 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, and asylum seekers] bring here; and (e) the impact of their presence on the health and education systems on the receiving end.

April 24, 2021: Poetry Readings

~ Virtual medium

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

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." In his book, *Music is Everything*, Mihalic 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.

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 Fellowship in Poetry, 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.

Special Note: Dasha Nisula expanded and presented her own portion of the program in memoriam to Daneen Wardrop who had passed away, or as stated in her obituary, “graduated from life,” several days before the date of the poetry readings.

May 12, 2021: Come Rain or Come Shine

~ Virtual medium

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

Arnie and Debbie 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 Debbie’s 45 minute one-act play follows Frank and Dorothy, 1949 graduates of a Midwestern college, through selected notes and letters which 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.

The following Wednesday II events are scheduled for fall presentations:

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

~ This program will probably be cancelled if it cannot be done in an in-person format

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

Since his retirement, Stanley 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 afterward.” 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.*

October 13, 2021: Global Engagement for Emeriti

~ Virtual medium

~ Presenters: Michelle Metro-Roland, WMU Fulbright Scholar Liaison and Lee Penyak, Director of Study Abroad in the Haenicke Institute for Global Engagement.

The WMU Study Abroad program welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with WMU emeriti. The J. William Fulbright program offers opportunities for faculty and emeriti to research, teach, and/or consult in more than 130 countries worldwide. The guest presenters will describe and respond to questions about the Fulbright opportunities and other similar opportunities for global engagement.



In Remembrance (submitted by Sandra Glista and Jody Brylinsky)

Since the Fall issue of Emeriti News came out, we have learned from the Faculty Senate that the following individuals have passed away. The Senate took a moment of silence to remember and honor those who have departed, and we honor them again by listing them here:



- ~ James (Jim) Bosco, Educational Technology, former Emeriti Council Chair
- ~ Tenho Connable, Computer Science
- ~ Lowell Crow, Marketing
- ~ Ellen Brinkley, English
- ~ William Combs, Jr., English
- ~ Daniel Hendriksen, Languages and Linguistics
- ~ Norma Hungerford, Education
- ~ Don Iffland, Chemistry
- ~ Rachel Inselberg, Education
- ~ George Miller, Education
- ~ James D. Neill, Counseling Center
- ~ Charles Osborn, Music
- ~ Chester (Chet) B. Rogers, Political Science
- ~ Quentin Smith, Philosophy
- ~ Daneen Wardrop, English
- ~ Karen Wicklund, Music



Final Notes...

At some point, the Western Michigan University community will begin to change how it responds to the pandemic. Watch the Emeriti Council website for announcements about Emeriti Council programming.

Attached below is an important form. It is for your contribution to the Emeriti Council sponsored scholarships. When you do contribute, please note which Emeriti Council sponsored program should be the beneficiary: The Emeriti Council Book Scholarship or the Emeriti Council Medallion Scholarship. Your support is vital in keeping this tradition moving forward.

Thank you for your support!





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