It’s About LIGHT!

Since ancient times Winter Solstice has been a time for bonfires, torches, candles, and by now, every size, shape, color and twinkle of electric lights – all to chase away the darkness and encourage “the turning of the sun”. Throughout history, cultures have celebrated with feasts, festivals, and holidays.

Much can be learned gleaning from Britannica and history.com.

As far back as 217 BCE Winter Solstice was celebrated in Rome with Saturnalia banquets, candles, gifts and revelry. The Feast of Juul was a pre-Christian festival observed in Scandinavia. A Yule or Juul log was brought in and burned on the hearth in honor of Thor. In England, Germany, France and other European countries the Yule log was burned until nothing but ash remained. The ashes were either strewn on fields as fertilizer or saved as charms.

Christmas and Hanukkah are not the only holidays that can be traced back to ancient solstice celebrations. St. Lucia’s Day is a Scandinavian festival of lights. It was incorporated with earlier Norse traditions after many Norsemen converted to Christianity around 1000 A.D. St. Lucia was one of the earliest Christian martyrs. Her feast day blended naturally with traditions of lighting fires to scare away spirits on the longest night of the year. Girls wear white dresses with red sashes and wreathes of candles on their heads as homage to Lucia.

The Chinese celebration Dong Zhi (winter arrives) occurs six weeks before the Chinese New Year and may have begun as a harvest festival. The most traditional food for this celebration are the often brightly colored rice balls cooked in sweet or savory broth.

On the longest night of the year Iranians all over the world celebrate the triumph of the sun over darkness with Shab-e Yalda (Night of Birth). People gather together, burn fires, and perform charitable acts. Friends and family make wishes, feast on nuts and pomegranates, and read poetry.

For the Zuni of western New Mexico the winter solstice signifies the beginning of the year. It is celebrated with a ceremonial dance called Shalako. Twelve 12-foot high kachina clowns join the already dancing Shalako. The Hopi, since ancient times of the Anasazi, take a keen interest in the sun’s movement. At the setting of the sun at the eve of the solstice the Soyal celebration is an all-night ceremony including kindling fires, dancing and sometimes gift-giving.

In Japan it is an especially sacred time for farmers. Bonfires are lit to welcome the return of the sun. Huge bonfires burn on Mount Fuji each December 22. Toji is said to be less a festival than a traditional practice centered on starting the new year with health and good luck.

More familiar festivals are the Feast of St. Nicholas, begun in the Low Countries and brought to North America by Dutch immigrants, and the Jewish festival of Hanukkah that is a remembrance of an effort to restore the Temple in Jerusalem. Faithful Jews found only enough oil to light the temple for one day – but the flame burned for eight!

Since the Middle Ages the birth of Jesus, Christmas, has been celebrated by many on December 25. Scholars pretty much agree that the celebration has been moved from the actual date to the time of the year when light is celebrated – speaking again to the power of the season.

Kwanzaa, the most modern holiday, is the African-American and pan-African celebration of family, community, and culture. Candles are very much used to illuminate the celebrations.

On December 21, if you would like to experience the Winter Solstice from the same position as the American Indians who built Fort Ancient, be there at 7:30 a.m. and celebrate with other members of the Ohio History Connection.

It’s about light!
FROM: The President

Happy Holidays

I hope you had a pleasant and enjoyable Thanksgiving.

For many, Thanksgiving represents the start of a busy holiday season. If you were adventurous enough to join the manic crowds during “Black Friday”, I hope you made it through the day unscathed and intact. Of course, I need to mention that my wife starts holiday shopping around September 1 (in her words, “for those cute grandchildren”). Many radio stations are blaring holiday tunes in early- to mid-November; commercial holiday ads start appearing on television in early November to compete with the annoying political ads and election issues (e.g., Issue 2!!); Christmas-themed movies are available on cable TV in July-August!!; and stores (and Amazon) are placing holiday decorations and pushing holiday sales long before Thanksgiving. Goodness, before we know it, the holiday season will morph into a 6-month event, not unlike the ever-expanding professional basketball, baseball and hockey seasons.

It is not a coincidence or accident that organizations, colleges, charities, etc. request your donations during this time of the year. When do we feel more charitable, warm and fuzzy (and also more confused and separated from reality) than around the holiday season? Oh yes, I need a few more tax deductions before January 1, 2018.

This leads me to this message: If you haven’t done so, RENEW your annual membership now!

And if you itemize deductions on your tax forms, the dues (now designated “donations”) are tax deductible. Membership renewal is easy and is available online at our Website, osura.osu.edu. If this is cumbersome for you, call 614-292-2281 or 800-762-5646 and pay by credit card (for security reasons, the Alumni Association will NOT retain the card number in its files). Lastly, you can also make out a check to the OSU Alumni Association (memo: OSURA acc’t 605419) for your deductible payment. [Needless to say, lifetime members (requiring a single $500 donation) can ignore this adjacent, aforementioned message; we’ll be talking to you later about the OSURA scholarship fund.]

How about this consideration? Why not give the membership donation with all the OSURA benefits, activities and events to an OSU retiree who is not yet a member of OSURA or renew the membership for someone who is? What a wonderful gift for $25.00. [Depending on your tax bracket, this deductible gift actually will only cost you $16.00 to $22.50.]

Have a wonderful holiday season and until we converse again next month, I remain joyfully yours,

Carl V. Leier
President, Executive Board

We Need Your HELP!

Carl Leier, President of OSURA, had this description of the September 20, 2017 Fall Conference: “Judging from facial expressions and many favorable comments, the attendees of the OSURA Fall Conference had a good time learning something new, visiting with old colleagues, and meeting new friends.”

Would you like to join the dynamic and interesting group who will plan the 2018 OSURA Fall Conference? Please contact Rachael Turner at Turner4931@live.com or call her at 740-881-1088.
**Welcome New Retirees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Becky S. Cornett</th>
<th>Diane F. Jewell</th>
<th>Russell H. McVicker</th>
<th>Ann M. Salimbene</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared Services</td>
<td>Cancer Hosp &amp; Research Institute</td>
<td>Harding Hospital</td>
<td>Graduate School Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwin C. Ellison</td>
<td>David S. Kraybill</td>
<td>Karen L. Rickard</td>
<td>Deborah A. Zabloudil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Agric Envrn &amp; Dev Econ</td>
<td>Schottenstein Center</td>
<td>EHE Educational Studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OSURA MEMBERSHIP – DEADLINE DECEMBER 31!**

**WHY RENEW?**

**THERE ARE MANY REASONS TO JOIN OSURA BEFORE THE DECEMBER 31 DEADLINE.**

- Our monthly Newsletter offers interesting general articles and a listing of events. In addition, it contains important updates on pensions and healthcare.
- The annual Directory provides contact information, plus data about OSURA and its administration.
- We have told you about the dozens of OSURA educational and social activities. You can meet old friends and establish new circles – a critical aspect of happiness in retirement, current research tells us.

Renewal is as close as your computer or phone. Go to [OSURA.osu.edu](http://OSURA.osu.edu) and click JOIN to make your $25 annual donation or $500 Life Member donation (both tax deductible). Or you can call Customer Service, **614-292-2281** or **800-762-5646**.

**RENEW NOW AND GET READY FOR 2018!**

---

**In Memoriam**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Richard Lee Blagg</th>
<th>Cynthia C. Downer</th>
<th>Larry J. King</th>
<th>Marilyn W. Polihronopolos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 15</td>
<td>October 1</td>
<td>October 2</td>
<td>October 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wexner Medical Center, 57</td>
<td>OSU/COTC, 59</td>
<td>Wexner Medical Center, 66</td>
<td>Neurophysiological Chemistry Lab, 81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herman R. Bobbitt</th>
<th>Ruth Fisher</th>
<th>Nancy Lynn Marsh</th>
<th>Calvin Prine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 22</td>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>November 5</td>
<td>October 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCOB Mgmt &amp; Human Resources, 79</td>
<td>Ophthalmology, 80</td>
<td>Wexner Medical Center, 75</td>
<td>Biological Sciences, 88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>James J. Buffer</th>
<th>Harry Robert Gorman</th>
<th>James E. Meeks</th>
<th>Kenneth S. Rinehart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 12</td>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>October 26</td>
<td>October 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and OSURA, 80</td>
<td>Electrician, 73</td>
<td>Law and OSURA, 78</td>
<td>OSUE County Operations, 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Louise B. Campbell</th>
<th>Burdette Green</th>
<th>Arthur Milligan</th>
<th>John A. Stottlemeyer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 23</td>
<td>October 17</td>
<td>October 28</td>
<td>October 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nisonger Center and OSURA, 87</td>
<td>Music and OSURA, 89</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>Finance and OSURA, 84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elsbeth M. Connaughton</th>
<th>Michael A. Jarvis</th>
<th>Mary C. Morgan</th>
<th>Ernest D. Svensson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 28</td>
<td>September 22</td>
<td>October 17</td>
<td>October 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchasing, Travel and University Mail Services, 82</td>
<td>Computer Operator, 60</td>
<td>School of Dentistry, 78</td>
<td>Dentistry and OSURA, 89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Becky S. Cornett</th>
<th>Edwin C. Ellison</th>
<th>David S. Kraybill</th>
<th>Karen L. Rickard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared Services</td>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Agric Envrn &amp; Dev Econ</td>
<td>Schottenstein Center</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**December Book Club**

We are taking a break to celebrate the holidays. On our return, January 17th, we will discuss: ”The Hamilton Affair” by Elizabeth Cobbs. With a backdrop of the American Revolution and featuring a cast of legendary characters, the novel tells the sweeping true story of Alexander Hamilton and Elizabeth Schuyler from the passionate, tender beginnings to its end in the fateful famous duel with Aaron Burr.

**Arranger:** Lee Hill (Book Club SIG)

---

**December Lunch Bunch**

No program this month. Hope to see you at the Holiday Buffet on December 4. Then on January 18th, come find out what programs COSI has planned.

**Arranger:** Elenore Zeller (Social Committee)

---

**December Dinner Series**

No program in December, see you January 25th with another exciting, thought-provoking presentation.

**Arranger:** Howard Gauthier (Dinner Series SIG)

---

**Committee Meetings**

**December 5 (Tuesday)**

**Benefits Committee**

**Time/Place:** 9:15 a.m., Longaberger Alumni House, 2200 Olentangy River Road

---

**December 12 (Tuesday)**

**Board Meeting**

**Time/Place:** 9 a.m., Longaberger Alumni House, 2200 Olentangy River Road

---

**Monthly Activities**

**December 14 (Thursday)**

**Photo Society**

**Program:** “Depth of Field: From the elementary to the advanced, including the circle of confusion and hyperfocal distance; dependence on aperture, focal length and sensor size; and the mysteries and many benefits of tilt and shift”, presented by Ron Layman.

**Member Theme:** Take three photos of the same place, person or thing where you vary in some combination distance to subject, perspective and focal length. Try to capture the essence of your subject. Think documentary. When done, carefully examine the depth of field of each of your photos. Send digital files to jhuston1@columbus.rr.com or mail files to (J. Huston, 4095 Fenwick Rd., Columbus OH 43220), or bring prints to the meeting. New members welcome.

**Dues:** $10 is due at this time

**Time/Place:** 5:15 p.m., cocktails; 6 p.m., dinner; 7:00 p.m., program; OSU Faculty Club. You MUST make reservations for dinner by calling 614-292-2262 by December 11.

**Cost:** On your own; ranges from $10-15

**Arranger:** Jack Nasar (Photographic Society SIG)

---

**December 16 (Saturday)**

**Walking/Hiking Group**

**Challenge Level 2-4**

Everyone welcome. Join us as we explore and walk the trails at Inniswood Metro Gardens.

**Time/Place:** 11 a.m., Inniswood Metro Gardens, 940 South Hempstead Road, Westerville, OH

**Arranger:** Hallan Noltimier (Walking/Hiking SIG)

---

**Challenge Levels**

1. **Light** – may include a few stairs.
2. **Moderate** – may include a few sets of stairs.
3. **Moderate +** – may include climbing many stairs and/or uneven terrain.
4. **High** – may include lots of walking, climbing stairs, hilly walkways and/or extended weather exposure.
Registration Instructions

1. **Registrations requiring payment:** Registrations can be made by going on-line to osura.osu.edu or by calling 614-292-2281 or 1-800-762-5646. You can pay by credit card (preferred), or if you mail in a check make it payable to OSUAA. Put the name of the trip in the Note/Memo section of the check and send or drop off to:
   
   Customer Service  
   c/o OSURA  
   Longaberger Alumni House  
   2200 Olentangy River Road  
   Columbus, OH 43210  
   The reservation is not made until payment is received.

2. **Registrations NOT requiring payment:** Registrations will be made through the Arranger’s email provided in the description of the event, or if you do not have computer access call 614-292-2281.

**December**

**Tertulia Breakfast**

No gathering in December.

**Arranger:** Jerry Dare (Tertulia Breakfast SIG)

**December**

**Bridge Group**

Keep those fingers warm and nimble for when we meet again in January.

**Arranger:** Steve Miller (Bridge Group SIG)

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

**December 4 (Monday)**

**Holiday Buffet**

Amelita Mirolo Barn  
**REGISTRATION NOT REQUIRED**

Don’t miss our holiday buffet! No need to register; just come for good fellowship, delicious food, and exciting entertainment. Bring a favorite dish (with serving utensil) to share and a non-perishable food item to donate to the food pantry. Tableware will be provided.

**Time/Place:** 11:30 a.m., The Amelia Mirolo “Barn”, 4395 Carriage Hill Lane, Upper Arlington.

**Arrangers:** Elenore Zeller and the Social Committee

**December 8 (Friday)**

**Christmas at Malabar Farm**

Lucas, OH  
**Challenge Level 1**  
**REGISTRATION REQUIRED**

Tour Malabar Farm (malabarfarm.org). Learn about Louis Bromfield’s life before and after his arrival to Pleasant Valley in 1939. See where Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall spent the night during their honeymoon. Experience the beautiful Christmas light that flows through the country home.

**Meet by:** 3:45 p.m., back parking lot at Kohl’s, 3360 Olentangy River Road  
**Return:** approx. 9:30 p.m.  
**Cost:** $58; includes admission, Der Dutchman Buffet dinner, motor coach transportation, and tips  
**Registration/Refund Deadline:** Register at osura.osu.edu or call 614-292-2281 by December 6  
**Arrangers:** Jessica Pritchard and Alabelle Zghoul (Travel Committee)

**January 26 (Friday)**

**2017 Income Tax Seminar**

Tax experts will discuss Federal and State income tax issues for 2017. Pre-registration is not necessary.

**Time/Place:** 1-3 p.m., Sanders Lounge, Longaberger Alumni House, 2200 Olentangy River Road  
**Cost:** No charge  
**Arranger:** Hallan Noltimier (Benefits Committee)

**April 25-26 (Wednesday, Thursday)**

**Frank Lloyd Wright and American Art: Fallingwater and More**

Greensburg and Farmington, PA  
**Challenge Level 3**  
**REGISTRATION REQUIRED**

Tours include: Frank Lloyd Wright’s architectural masterpiece Fallingwater, Kentuck Knob, and Westmoreland Museum of American Art. We’ll stay at historic Summit Inn (1807) with breakfast, heated indoor pool, exercise room, no elevators; dine at historic Stone House Inn (1822).

**Meet by:** 8:15 a.m., Wednesday, April 25th at Kohl’s, 3360 Olentangy River Road  
**Return:** approximately 10 p.m. Thursday, April 26th  
**Cost:** $290 double; $350 single. Cost includes motor coach transportation, 3 museum tours, one box lunch, hotel & breakfast, one dinner, snacks, and tips  
**Registration Deadline:** Register at osura.osu.edu or call 614-292-2281 by January 26  
**Refund Deadline:** February 16  
**Arranger:** Odette Blum (Cultural Arts Committee)

In October Richard Steckel, OSU historian, discussed the effects on slave children and the later implications in post-emancipation experiences.

**In October Richard Steckel, OSU historian, discussed the effects on slave children and the later implications in post-emancipation experiences.**
The recent hurricanes and wildfires in California highlight the importance of being prepared BEFORE an emergency or natural disaster. Below is a checklist that can help you prepare.

**Household Emergency Checklist** *(from Gerontological Society of America)*

**STAYING AT HOME**
- Food and Water for at least 3 days
  - Non-perishable food (canned or dried)
  - Three-day supply of special dietary items
  - A manual can opener
  - Drinking water (3 quarts per day per person)
  - Water for washing
  - Check and replace these items every 12 months

**Emergency Survival Items to Have on Hand**
- Flashlights with spare batteries
- Radio with spare batteries
- Warm and waterproof outer clothing
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- First aid kit and at least three-day supply of medications
- Pet supplies
- Toilet paper and trash bags
- Disposable face and dust masks

**EMERGENCY GETAWAY KITS**
- Radio and flashlights with spare batteries
- Hearing aids with spare batteries, glasses, and mobility aids
- Extra supplies of dietary items
- First aid kit and at least three-day supply of medications (have list of medications, too)
- Change of clothing and warm/waterproof outdoor clothing
- Toiletries including toothbrush, toothpaste, towel, soap, sanitary items, and toilet paper
- Pet supplies
- Trash bags
- Disposable face and dust masks
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Important documents
  - Identification including driver’s license and passport
  - Insurance information
  - Family photos
- Before you leave, turn off water and electricity. Take pets with you.

---

**MEMBERS SPOTLIGHT:**
**Ronald Jones**

Ronald Jones had both teaching and administrative experience over 35 years at The Ohio State University. He taught vision science and did basic research on binocular vision and eye movements. Also for nine years he served as associate dean of the College of Optometry.

His primary pastime was sailing, and he was active in the Alum Creek Sailing Club. On many summer weekends he could be found participating in the catamaran races on the lake.

After he retired in 2006 he worked part-time for Pearson Education, grading the subjective examinations given to students throughout the country. This employment was undertaken primarily to secure additional Social Security service credit in order to qualify for Medicare.

Prior to retirement he developed an interest in old iron and early steel truss bridges and attempted to help preserve them by confirming their locations. This involved visiting the bridge location to document its existence. Most of this travel was done on motorcycle guided by an early GPS program on a pocket PC. A web site was established to disseminate this information. At its conclusion more than 1000 bridges were documented. These bridges are located in most of Ohio’s 88 counties.

Unfortunately, Parkinson’s Disease set in about six years ago and the disease has limited his ability to type, write, and speak. Driving is limited and riding a motorcycle is out of the question. The website was taken down several years ago, as he was no longer able to maintain it. However, portions of these web sites are still available at www.oldohiobridges.com/bridgelist.htm and www.oldohiobridges.com/ohba.

What interesting avocations!
In 2012 STRS decided that the 1% of salary that employers had been contributing to the Health Care Stabilization Fund (HCSF) for retirees was needed instead for the pension fund, ending the only source of income for the HCSF. Since then subsidies that STRS applies towards health insurance have been paid from earnings and gains from investments, which is not sustainable for the long term. At their October meeting, the STRS Board agreed on how to limit subsidies starting in 2019 to extend the fund’s solvency. For those under age 65, the STRS subsidy will not increase, meaning non-Medicare retirees will pay the entire increased cost of health care each year. For Medicare recipients, STRS will continue to pay their proportionate share of any cost increases up to a limit of 6%. Hence, as long as health care costs don’t increase by more than 6%, the present policy for subsidy for Medicare retirees is unchanged. These changes are projected to keep the HCSF solvent until 2047 and are close to the changes advocated by the Healthcare and Pension Advocates (which represents current and retired teachers from public institutions in Ohio, including those in OSURA). Note that STRS retirees no longer receive COLAs for their pensions but their premiums for health care (if participating in the STRS plan) are likely to increase starting in 2019, so take-home pension checks will likely drop each year.

Last spring the STRS Board adopted an assumed increase from future investments of 7.45% per year, but the actual return in the fiscal year ending last June 30 was over 14%. The question was asked whether, in light of the improved return last fiscal year, there’s a chance of a cost of living increase in the next few years. In my opinion, this seems unlikely. There is much uncertainty over the future and the Board is aware that any COLA in the near future would increase the chances that an even deeper cut would have to be made later if investments have a lower return than assumed.
Live for Today While Planning for Tomorrow

Experience life at First Community Village, just minutes from Columbus. Enjoy independent living today, with the peace of mind of knowing that assisted living and memory care are available, if ever needed.

Schedule a tour with one of our retirement counselors at 888-467-0618 or visit FirstCommunityVillage.org.