February

By Nancy Wardwell

In the beginning, February was the last month of the ancient Roman calendar. It takes its name from the Latin word februare, meaning to purify.

The Romans purified themselves in February to prepare for the festivals in March - the start of the new year. Later, the Romans moved January and February to the beginning of the year, making February the second month.

A calendar measures and records the passage of time. Before the invention of the clock, people watched the sun, the moon and the stars to tell time and track the changing seasons.

The shortest unit, of course, is the solar day - but the solar year is long and difficult to keep track of, so many early calendars used the intervals between full moons. As it happens, there is a discrepancy between the two – the lunar year lasts 13 months, and the solar year was 12 months, – providing calendar confusion for thousands of years.

Early calendars usually represented some sort of compromise between the lunar and solar years – some lasted 12 months – others lasted 13 months. The variety and evolution of calendars makes for interesting Google searches, leading to the current Gregorian calendar. Devised in 1582 and named for Pope Gregory XIII, it corrected the difference by adjusting the number of days in some months and decreeing that February would have an extra day in century years that can be divided evenly by 400, such as 1600 and 2000 but not in others such as 1700, 1800 and 1900.

The Gregorian calendar is so accurate that the difference between the calendar and solar year is now only about 26 seconds.

February may be the shortest month, but it is filled with a rich variety of holidays celebrated in the United States. The first, but not the least, is Groundhog Day on the 2nd. Also on the 2nd is Candlemas, a Christian holiday named from the custom of blessing candles in church and distributing them to worshippers.

Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) is always the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent which, this year is February 14. The 14th is also the date of our most welcome Valentine’s Day. Two days later, on the 16th, those of us who practice Tai Chi – and many others - celebrate Chinese New Year. (2018 is the Year of the Dog.)

Finally, there was a time when many of us had two other February holidays. We celebrated the birthday of Abraham Lincoln on the 12th and George Washington on February 22. In 1971 the “Uniform Monday Holiday Act” changed all that and now we celebrate all U.S. Presidents at once. President’s Day is Monday the 19th.
FROM: The President

HAPPY VALENTINE’S DAY – a good time to express Gratitude

I’m taking advantage of Valentine’s Day to express OSURA’s deep appreciation for the staff of the Alumni Association (AA).

While OSURA was still housed under the auspices of the Office of Human Resources (HR), I recall the concerns expressed by a number of OSURA Executive Board members that our transfer to the AA would result in the loss of OSURA’s independence as a free-standing, self-ruled organization. After 1½ years with the AA, I would like to put aside such concerns for now and reassure all OSURA members that OSURA’s control, planning and direction remains in the hands of the OSURA Board and its membership. Interestingly, over the years (1984, 1992), the AA has come up in discussions regarding the optimal base for OSURA’s operations; each consideration was set aside for one reason or another. Move ahead to 2016, OSURA was now welcomed as a Society into the OSU-AA, although only about 35% of our members are actual OSU Alumni. The staff of the AA has been most hospitable, gracious and helpful over the past year, and I’m convinced that this same spirit and attitude will continue as such over the coming years.

We did leave behind a superb dedicated curator (Diana Lantz at HR) and $40,000 in annual support, but according to the President’s office and HR, we were slated to lose both anyway. The support staff and customer service personnel of AA have supplied the “human power” needs of OSURA, and the AA has provided substantial merit-based funding to cover many of our fiscal needs, thus allowing our membership fees to remain at a modest level of $25/year (as a deductible donation).

And so, OSURA has retained “all that is OSURA”. But thanks to the AA, we have added new and exciting ventures to our operations. A few of these include getting “first dibs” on many sporting and cultural events held both on and off campus; leadership-operations-ideas conferences; retreat-strategic planning sessions with experienced, trained staff; various lectures (e.g., Buckeye Smart); in-residence experts/specialists in many areas; and exposure to other active OSU Societies and Clubs (e.g., TBDBITL, Honors and Scholars). The AA link with OSURA has greatly widened our perspective and expanded our opportunities, entertainment and enjoyment.

The OSURA Executive Board is especially grateful for the professionalism, patience and kindness of Mr. Craig Little, the AA-OSURA liaison and Director of Alumni Societies & Regional Engagement, who always went out of his way to solve OSURA’s logistical problems (and there were many) during the lengthy complex transition from HR. Parenthetically, Mr. Little oversees and similarly assists the operations of over 40 other OSU-AA Societies.

The best Valentine’s Day gift that your OSURA Executive Board can give to all its members is a stable, happy home; our association with the OSU-AA provides just that.

Carl V. Leier
President, Executive Board

Welcome New Members!

Becky Sutherland Cornett
Edwin Christopher Ellison
Diane F. Jewell
David Simon Kraybill
Russell Hugh McVicker
Karen Lynne Rickard
Ann Maria Salimbene
Deborah A. Zabloudil
Ohio State University retirees surpassed their goal for the 2017 annual Bucks for Charity fund drive, contributing more than $66,000 to the campaign, which assists thousands of people who depend on community agencies for help. In the 2016 charity drive, retirees donated nearly $60,000 to community nonprofit organizations.

It was a great year overall for the fund drive, with the University exceeding its overall goal of $1.2 million by more than $15,000. The goal for retirees was $65,000. Bucks for Charity is a campus-wide campaign benefiting nearly 250 not-for-profit agencies in Central Ohio.

Once again, in 2017, University retirees were among the University’s top donor groups. Carl Leier, president of the Ohio State University Retirees Association, said the support of OSURA members toward reaching – and exceeding – the goal is gratifying.

“Ohio State University retirees can be depended upon for providing support to the University in many ways and for many reasons, but the motivation is easier to pinpoint,” said Leier. “We all want the University to be successful and the impact felt in the community, state and beyond.”
February 17 (Saturday)
Walking/Hiking Group
Challenge Level 2-4
Everyone welcome. Join us on the trails at Sharon Woods Metro Park, 6911 Cleveland Ave., Westerville.
Time/Place: 11 a.m., we’ll meet at the Ranger Station.
Arranger: Hallan Noltimier (Walking/Hiking SIG)

February 21 (Wednesday)
Book Club
“Hero of the Empire: The Boer War, a Daring Escape and the Making of Winston Churchill” by Candice Millard. Having failed in his foray into politics, Churchill went off in 1889 as a correspondent to cover the conflict between the British and Boers in South Africa. His capture and daring escape became legendary. As he said, “this period, could I have seen the future, lay the foundations of my later life.”
Time/Place: 1:30 p.m., Carriage Hill of Arlington Party House, Lafayette Drive. Call Lee Hill (614-459-4743) for directions.
Arranger: Lee Hill (Book Club SIG)

February 22 (Thursday)
Dinner Series: Johnny and Frank
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Enjoy a musical evening as Johnny Steiner presents the music of Frank Sinatra. Johnny will take us on a journey through the musical creativity of the legendary singer. Sinatra favorites will include “You Make Me Feel So Young,” “Strangers In the Night,” “Come Fly With Me,” and many more.
Time/Place: 5 p.m., social hour, dinner at 6 p.m. and program at 7 p.m.; OSU Faculty Club
Cost: $23 (service charge included)
Registration Deadline: Register at osura.alumni.osu.edu by February 19
Arranger: Howard Gauthier (Dinner Series SIG)

February 27 (Tuesday)
Tertulia Breakfast
Please join OSURA members and friends for breakfast and conversation.
Time/Place: 8 a.m., OSU Faculty Club
Cost: On your own
Arranger: Jerry Dare (Tertulia Breakfast SIG)

February 28 (Wednesday)
Bridge Group
Join us. We welcome new members. There is no membership fee and it costs only 25 cents for prizes the day you play. Come enjoy the fellowship, and have fun playing a good game of bridge at the same time.
Time/Place: 1 p.m., Friendship Village of Dublin, North CR
Arranger: Steve Miller (Bridge Group SIG)

Litter Pickers 2018
Monday, April 16, 2018
SERVICE MONTH
Thursday, May 17
Monday, June 18
Monday, July 16
Thursday, August 16
Join Us!
March 16 (Friday)
BalletMet – Tour de Force: A Collection of Short Ballets
Senior Dress Rehearsal
Challenge Level 1
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
See three commanding choreographers and their avant-garde works. George Balanchine’s Rubies carries a high-energy wit that matches the exuberance of Jerome Robbins’s Interplay. Edward Liang’s The Art of War presents dancers as warriors and rounds out this electrifying and imaginative production. Register at osura.alumni.osu.edu or call 614-292-2281. Credit card preferred. If by check, it must arrive by March 9. Tickets will be held at Will Call.

Time/Place: Curtain rises at 11 a.m. Seating is general, so plan to arrive early for best seats. Doors open between 10 and 10:15 a.m., Riffe Center, 77 S. High Street
Cost: $19 (admission ticket)
Registration/Refund Deadline: March 9
Arranger: Rai Goerler (Cultural Arts Committee)

March 19 (Monday)
Somalis in Columbus
Challenge Level 1
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Did you know Columbus has the second largest Somali population in the US? Enjoy a lunch of typical Somali food at the Ginevra Café while local Somali residents share how/why they came to Columbus and what life is like for them. Then we’ll visit the Global Mall, a local Somali market.

Meet by: 11:30 a.m. at Ginevra Café, 2285 Morse Road
Cost: $12; includes lunch and tip
Registration Deadline: Register at osura.alumni.osu.edu or call 614-292-2281 by March 14
Arranger: Susan Berentson (Cultural Arts Committee)
Assisted Living Options

One local assisted living facility used to advertise it was when you “needed just a little help.” I used to shout back at the radio, “When you just need a little help, you stay home.” So when is the right time to consider assisted living and what are the options?

As an article in Consumer Reports (October 2017) points out, residents in assisted living tend to be older and sicker than in the past. This is because there are more services available in the community. The average age for a move-in is 84 years old, and half of the residents have some cognitive impairment. One problem is that the assisted living facilities do not have the services and staff to help older, frail older adults—to help them “age-in-place.”

**COST:** In 2016, the average monthly cost of an assisted living apartment was $3,638. But consumers need to be aware that it is difficult to compare prices. Some facilities provide “levels of service” depending upon the number of services the resident uses. The basic services are three meals a day, some help with dressing daily, and help with bathing several times a day. Residents who need more help will pay more—sometimes up to $60,000 a year. Medicare does not pay for assisted living; there are some Medicaid vouchers available in Ohio, but not all facilities take them. Most costs are paid by the consumer and/or his family.

**REGULATION AND OVERSIGHT:** Nursing homes are regulated by both the federal and state governments, but assisted living facilities are not. The state ombudsman (http://aging.ohio.gov/Ombudsman) does take complaints and investigate them. In addition, the state also surveys residents and their families every two years about their level of satisfaction (https://www.ltc.ohio.gov/).

Things to consider before a move:

- Have the potential resident evaluated by an outside agency such as the area agency on aging (see.ohioaging.org) before any evaluation by the assisted living facility. How many services will the resident actually need? Don’t sign up for more than you need.

- Read and understand the contract, especially additional fees for services and for dementia care. Check to be sure that your long-term care insurance will cover assisted living.

- Be sure you understand the terms of discharge and your rights in an eviction. This goes both ways; with free-standing assisted living, residents may be kept there when they actually do need round-the-clock nursing home care. On the other hand, residents may be “pushed” on to nursing home care if there is a nursing home connected to the assisted living. Consumer Reports advises that you beware of mandatory arbitration clauses because they generally do not favor residents. Don’t rely on the verbal assurances of the marketing director.

- Visit a facility at different times of the day and different days of the week. How does the staff interact with the residents? Understaffing is a common problem so ask about staffing and turnover. If possible, check with state ombudsman’s office for complaints about staffing.

For more information, check the October 2017 issue of Consumer Reports.

The Listservs of OSURA

OSURA has listservs; one for cultural arts, and one for dining and learning. These listservs send notices and reminders of programs, such as lunch bunch and the dinner series, travel, and cultural events. Together, they complement events announced in the newsletter or mention cultural and educational programs of potential interest to OSU retirees.

If you are an OSURA member and not already receiving messages from these listservs but would like to receive messages from these listservs, send an e-mail and your name to Goerler.1@osu.edu and indicate the lists you would like to join. There is no charge. All addresses are accepted, including gmail, aol, att.net, etc.
I worked for the OSU Alumni Association for over 30 years before retirement in 2005. In that position, I was liaison with the Alumni Association Board of Directors and Alumni Advisory Council in planning their meetings. A part of my duties also included hosting many Alumni Association tours which offered opportunities for travel, including to such places as Patagonia and much of Europe and South America. Both of these responsibilities also enabled me to gain and maintain numerous friendships through the years.

I graduated from Hunter College in NYC in 1957 and always surprise people when I tell them that I paid $10 per semester (including books) and we went out protesting when it was raised to $15 during my senior year.

In 1961, I moved to Columbus when my husband-emeritus got a teaching job with the OSU English Department. That also enabled our family to enjoy two years abroad when he had teaching grants from the Fulbright Commission to Greece and Ireland. In today’s world of “patriotism” discussions, I still get goose bumps remembering the morning of our return from Greece on the S.S. United States, after a year away, when we saw the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor and thought of what that must have meant to all the immigrants – including my grandparents – who had the same experience.

I also have had season tickets to the OSU Women’s Basketball Team for over 25 years and belong to The Rebounders, the support group for the team.

My retirement has been enriched by continuing to be involved with the University, particularly through the OSURA Membership Committee and Book Club. I also enjoy the Lunch Bunch and dinners at the Faculty Club and have participated in several in-state tours. Although I know I’m “preaching to the choir” since those who read this are already members of OSURA, I would be remiss if I omitted the fact that I have never met such a group of selfless people as other OSURA members who give much time and caring to our group.

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**To Your Health**

**Is it a Cold – or is it the Flu?**

Colds and the flu are both respiratory illnesses but caused by different viruses – and they share several symptoms. The flu is especially severe this season and special tests must be done in the first few days to begin appropriate treatment. It is critical to know the difference between the symptoms!

*Center for Disease Control*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMPTOMS</th>
<th>COLDS</th>
<th>FLU</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEVER</td>
<td>Rare or low</td>
<td>Common-often high. 102-104 for 3-4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNEEZING</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NASAL CONGESTION</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BODY ACHES</td>
<td>Mild, if any</td>
<td>Usual, often severe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEAKNESS</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>Usual. Can last 2-3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUGH</td>
<td>Mild to moderate</td>
<td>Common. Can become severe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEADACHE</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Common and extreme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXHAUSTION</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Early and pronounced. May be prolonged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SORE THROAT</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAUSEA, VOMITING, DIARRHEA</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Occasional. More common in children than adults</td>
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The active phase of OSU’s Campus Campaign runs from March 1 to April 30, but you can start giving now and it will still be counted toward the Campaign. We hope that we can continue the tradition of generosity of OSURA members and other retirees to the Campaign. This is a good opportunity to pay forward, to touch the future, and to help someone you don’t know to do something that none of us can even imagine.

If you are over the age of 70 ½ and have an IRA, you are aware of the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). It is good to know that the recently enacted tax legislation continues to allow contributions made to charities as part of an RMD to be deductible, even if one does not itemize. Your IRA vendor can make this easy for you to do.

Also, if this is the year for you to review your estate plan, throw a little bit in there for Ohio State. There are 66,444 reasons to do so: our students.

As you think about the many gift opportunities at Ohio State, please consider giving a small part of your gift to the OSURA endowment fund 605419.