The rain could not dampen the spirit of our 24th annual Fall Conference, held September 22 at The Fawcett Center. The day opened with a Welcome video from OSU President Kristina Johnson and the excellent Keynote presentation by Katherine Sullivan. Thanks to the OSURA reporters, we are able to present summaries of every session.

Keynote Address
Soaring and Diving with the World’s Most Vertical Person

By Mary Jo Fresch

Kathryn Sullivan, geologist, and astronaut (and former president and CEO of COSI), presented an informative keynote recounting her experiences in space and to the depths of the Marianas Trench. Dr. Sullivan was on three Space Shuttle missions, including the mission that launched the Hubble Space Telescope in 1990. She was the first American woman to walk in space as well as the first woman to dive to the deepest place in the world's oceans. Dr. Sullivan gave participants an inside view of training for the Hubble installation. She likened working on the telescope to trying to change your car’s spark plugs in the Michelin Man suit and hockey gloves! To prepare for the journey and launch of Hubble, Dr. Sullivan and a NASA team practiced underwater on an exact mock-up of the telescope. Special tools were created to make installation and repairs easier. The Hubble continues to operate thanks to constant system updates. In 2020 she was invited by Victor Vescovo to join him on a dive to one of the five deepest parts of the world’s oceans, the Marianas Trench. They dove to 36,000 feet in a craft that was 5 feet in diameter and made of titanium. The walls of the vessel were 3 ½” thick. The journey to the bottom of the ocean took 4 hours, 4 hours were spent using LED lights to view the bottom, then 4 hours to return to the top. The vessel, name “Limiting Factor,” was pressurized so that no special breathing equipment or apparel was needed. Dr. Sullivan concluded her talk with pictures of the NASA ground crew and the ship’s control center that supported both trips. She credits these teams of people for making both expeditions possible.
Thank You
for Joining Us for the In-Person
2021 Annual Fall Conference
Mark your calendars for next year's
OSURA Annual Fall Conference
September 21, 2022

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Carol Lee Holdren  
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Evolution Ecology and Organismal Biology

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Karen Lynn Wiles  
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Movement vs. Exercise and Why Both are Important

Speaker: Jeff May, Jr., small business owner and entrepreneur who operates The Fitness Loft and Axon

By Brenda Hammond

This session addressed movement and exercise as a partnership to improve fitness and help us to enjoy a long and healthy life. Movement is an action that requires energy (cleaning house, doing yardwork, grocery shopping) and exercise is a planned structure (walking, running, yoga, weightlifting.) Five good goals for exercise:

1. Muscular strength (presses, squats)
2. Muscular endurance (planks, lunges, pushups)
3. Cardio fitness (jogging, swimming)
4. Flexibility and mobility (stretching)
5. Body composition (all of the above)

Suggested ways to add movement in your daily life: park further away, take elevator up and stairs down, break up yard and housework into smaller activities, bike or walk instead of driving, stretch between TV episodes, set a movement timer and every 40 minutes move your body, rake instead of using leaf blower, walk laps during commercials. Adding movement to daily routine—10,000 steps are not necessary, 7,000 steps reduce mortality risk by 50 to 70%. Best ways to track steps: Fitbit, iPhone app or pedometer. If there is one item suggested to purchase it is a foam roller to be used before and after exercise.

Suggestions to help get you moving: Neck roll and stretch, arm circles, chair squats, pull and dive, calf raises, hip rotations, chair march, seated hip stretch, spinal rotation, chest stretch, upper back stretch and always end with three deep breaths.

Do what you love doing without overdoing. Set small goals, take it slow—one day at a time.
Traveling with OSURA

Speaker: Alabelle Zghoul

By Donna Lamb

Alabelle joined OSURA after retirement and joined the travel Committee where she has been Chair since 2013. She shared anecdotes from some of the three categories of trips she has organized and travelled with. There are three different types of trips available: Day, Overnight and International. Some Day trips she discussed were the Christmas Story House in Cleveland, Cuyahoga Scenic River Cruise, the Newport Aquarium, Oglebay Festival of Lights, Malabar Farms, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Overnight trips included Nashville Adventure, Pacific Northwest, New York City, Berea Kentucky, Williamsburg, and the Upper Peninsula. International trips included Tuscany in the Spring, Springtime River Cruise in Holland, Heart of Russia River Cruise, England, Scotland, and Wales; the Canadian Rockies including a glacier walk, and Croatia. During one of these trips, a group from the host country gave a birthday celebration dinner for Alabelle. Covid has suspended trips since March of 2020, but traveling has resumed for OSURA. 50 people participated on the August 19th Ohio River Boat cruise with a waiting list of several people. On September 15 a group traveled to the Underground Railroad in historic Ripley, Ohio. December 10th, a La Comedia Dinner Theatre Day trip is being offered. The October 3rd Exploring Greece trip had 5 members from OSURA partnering with another tour group. She hopes to offer the Greece trip again in a year or two.

Watch the newsletter for information on this and other trips. She works hard to negotiate with various travel businesses to get the best prices she can for our members, and she also likes to pair other side trips with the main trip whenever she can. She concluded by welcoming everyone’s ideas for future trips and to take advantage of the varied and affordable trips OSURA has to offer and enjoy camaraderie of OSURA members and friends really enhances the experiences.

Aging With Attitude

Speakers: Jenny Campbell

By Diane Selby

“Aging is all about attitude. It is better if you can laugh and best if others laugh with you!” Jenny Campbell, talented, humorous, author and illustrator, entertained an appreciative audience with her life experiences and how she finds inspiration for her widely syndicated cartoon strip, “Flo and Friends.” Beginning as a journalist, Jenny soon followed her dream to illustrate children’s literature. Working for Blue Cross Blue Shield, numberless K-4th grade textbooks, and illustrating Highlights for Children mounted to 33 years quickly. She has illustrated 25 children’s picture books, her favorite being Lazy Daisy. Her love for cats and dogs led to designing Ohio’s Pet Plate License – second only to OSU in demand.

Somewhat on a whim in 2002 she joined John Gibel working on his cartoon strip. He did content and she illustrated. He became ill and sold her the rights to the cartoon for $10 or a cup of latte. She continued the work after he and co-worker Rosie passed away, leaving Jenny to contemplate the future. On advice from cartoonist Charles Schultz’ widow, Jenny decided to take full charge of the cartoon strip, creating “Flo and Friends” featuring a 55-year-old lady who is aging – not old. Much inspiration came from Jenny’s Mom who once quipped, “I thought you came to visit me but now I know you are doing research!”

We learned Jenny keeps a daily diary of ideas and everyone is fair game! Her program featured video presentations of various cartoon strips which brought laughter and recognition from the packed audience. (My favorite cartoon shown was about Wonder Woman – the lady who wonders why she went upstairs and wonders where her keys are?) Questions and answers showed she has a genuine following for “Flo and Friends” and understands becoming part of her own demographic group.
An introduction to robotic assistants was presented by Dr. Yuan Zhang, the Ohio State University Winbigler Designated Chair Professor of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department from 2004 until 2017. He is currently developing robotic devices for the company he founded, ZiiROBOT, which is a part of Rev 1 Ventures, located in the OSU Research Park on West Campus.

The first robot was invented at Stanford University in 1951 for industrial automation and since then the United States has led the world in research and development although due to labor costs, production has shifted to Japanese, Swedish, or German companies. The automobile industry has been driving development for automating production but more recently the military’s interest in legged robots has refocused research.

Service robots could be the answer for an aging population desiring to maintain a fulfilling quality of life as well as enabling the physically challenged to be contributing citizens. Designing robots to mimic normal human function is complicated, development is slow, and consumer cost is high. For example the exoskeleton used to enable movement of the lower extremities requires a 60 lb. battery to be carried in a backpack, a second person to assist in attaching the device to the lower body, and the cost is in the range of $80,000.

ZiiROBOT has developed a self-propelled walker, which through a lightweight harness, will move the legs in a walking motion allowing an increase in walking distance for individuals with neuromuscular weakness. This device folds for ease of transport, has a battery weight of 40 lb., can be put on by the user without assistance, and the cost is in the range of $1600. Another project is developing a scooter that is lighter, foldable, has increased battery power, and is more affordable.

Jessica Roshon is a Certified Elder Law Attorney with Taps and Sutton LLC. She presented an excellent lecture providing an 11-page handout, which she discussed during her 45-minute breakout session. Of the 27 issues presented she emphasized the need to prepare certain documents, which express your desires among these being Durable Financial Power of Attorney (DFPOA), Health Care Power of Attorney (HCPOA), and a Living Will Declaration. The DFPOA document permits you to name a person who acts on your behalf with respect to your financial assets. This document usually goes into effect once it is signed. The HCPOA document lets you name a person who makes medical decisions on your behalf if you are unable to do so yourself. This document, unlike the DFPOA, does not go into effect until you are unable to make your own medical decisions. The Living Will is important because it communicates your end-of-life wishes to your family and physicians. One should also note that a declaration of desired funeral arrangements should be documented. Jessica handled some very difficult issues with great assurance. Her session was very well attended, and well received. One last comment that was threaded through the entire presentation was failing to plan is a plan to fail.
Images from The Museum of Biological Diversity

By Mary Jo Fresch

Ardine Nelson, Professor Emerita of the Department of Art, shared her extensive photographic career with participants. She began by explaining what “visual research” was and how she creates images. As an example of being selective in choosing that “final shot” Ardine showed Dorthea Lange’s Migrant Mother. This familiar picture, of a dust bowl family, was only one of many shots. After seeing the series that Lange took, participants could see the special elements of the final selection. She then shared various cameras and the pictures they can make. The “Diana” from the 1960s allows Ardine to create images by combining two frames. The seamless combination gives interesting results. Ardine shared the use of the “pinhole” camera. Various pictures were viewed, along with her description of how audience members could replicate the process. She shared what she considers one of the best-kept secrets on campus: the Ohio State Museum of Biological Diversity. By special permission she viewed and photographed three collections at the museum. Ardine showed how she shot the specimen jars and drawers of birds and insects. She shared the large, framed photographs shown in two local galleries: Hopkins Hall and Fort Hayes. The presentation was only part of Ardine’s long career. She exhibited nationally and internationally, received the Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in Photography, Ohio Arts Council and Greater Columbus Arts Council Individual Artist’s Fellowships, was a GCAC visiting artist in Spain in the early 90s and visited Slovakia to teach alternative camera workshops. Her work is included in numerous public collections including the Columbus Museum of Art, John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary.

Silent But Not Silenced: The OSU Men’s Glee Club directed by Robert J. Ward

Surrounded by music, the retirees were treated to a program of lively and inspirational selections by approximately 50 members of the OSU Men’s Glee Club. The club survived during the pandemic with connections via Zoom, practices in private and alone, then by computer programs learning and putting together a virtual performance. Quoting Dickens, Director Bob Ward said, “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. Today we focus on the present and sing together wearing masks in live performance for the first time since March 2019.”

The audience greatly enjoyed the presentation of “Shout for Joy,” and “How Can I Keep from Singing” which expressed the excitement felt in the return to live music making. Guest performer, OSU’s new professor of oboe, Dr. Abby Held, accompanied the group, then performed an amazing solo. Another special guest was Dr. Tim Best, president of the Men’s Glee Club Alumni Society (1600 strong), who had an idea to celebrate their alumni who served in the armed forces. The resulting video featuring these men accompanied by the patriotic music was stirring.

Future plans include two concerts, so the group shared excerpts from pieces they are working on: A piece from Russian Orthodox Liturgy, and “Musica” that celebrates “music, the gift of the supreme God.”

Closing the session, Director Ward affirmed their mission to honor the past, provide for the present, and plan the future. He shared a beautiful visual tour of the OSU Campus in the video created while in pandemic lockdown featuring the combined OSU choirs singing “Carmen Ohio.” An appreciative audience joined in the singing. Departing students could be heard thanking the enthusiastic audience for providing the opportunity to sing again in person!
Seeking Truths in the Chinese Exemplars: from premodern prisons to the pandemic lockdown

**Speaker:** Dr. Ying Zhang, Associate Professor of History at OSU

Dr. Zhang started out by showing us a Danish cartoon of the coronavirus showing particular and universal perspectives. Emotions are universal. One needs to study both state-society relations & emotions as well as historical and cultural literacy. She then noted some exemplar prisoners. The autobiography of Yang Jisheng (1516-1555) documented his torture and suffering during his time in prison, and it was later adapted as an opera – an example of prison literature moving to the stage. He was deified as a prison deity.

Fang Fang’s Wuhan Diary honors exemplary doctors. One was Li Wenliang, who was disciplined by the police. He later died of COVID, and there is now a wailing wall where people can go to remember him. It is not just what happened in China, but universal. There is a complexity in the relationship between state and society in China. People’s feelings are really affected by social media. Religion is very important to them. The government is guided by science. They cannot change people’s religious beliefs. Culture is very powerful. First cases of COVID were in Wuhan, and people jumped to conclusions. You need to be transparent. The government has to work with people in some way, preferably through negotiation.

A Good Time is Guaranteed for All: OSU Student Life in the Sixties

**Speaker:** William Shkurti, OSU Vice President for Business & Finance, Emeritus

Bill began by outlining what he would be talking about:
- Party Time
- Places we remember
- Fashion Revolution
- Anachronisms
- Beginnings of the culture wars
- World turned upside down

Theme parties were quite prevalent at OSU, such as Toga Parties. At the end of the theme party culture came loud music, intoxicants, and “have a good time.” Some of the places pictured that we remember were the Varsity Club, Bier Stube, Larry’s (a campus counter culture scene at 2040 N. High), and the Burger Boy Food O Rama at Ninth & N. High. The Fashion Revolution from 1959-1969 saw the evolution of skirt length and the changing of the concept of the well-dressed male.

Anachronisms noted were in the music of the period with many students listening to WCOL. OSU had concerts with washed-out rock & roll groups (such as Gary & the Hornets), but later “got it” and started getting musicians such as Ravi Shankar and Jefferson Airplane.

In the culture wars, movies became a generational statement, such as “Bonnie & Clyde,” “The Graduate,” and “Easy Rider.” A cultural tsunami hit when shortly before The New Christy Minstrels concert at OSU on February 21, 1964, the Beatles appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show and “folk music went out the window.” Barry McGuire’s “Eve of Destruction” was a popular protest song and the Association’s “Never My Love” was very fashionable.

He showed a video of a 1964 New Christy Minstrels concert and pointed out the enthusiasm of the audience, which was almost all white and very clean cut. Then he showed one of a 1968 Strawberry Alarm Clock concert where it appeared anything goes on the dance floor – a real difference in 4 years.

He concluded by mentioning The Sundial Humor Magazine, which made fun of OSU’s agricultural roots by such material as a Big Farm sweatshirt and OSU organizational chart with 4-H Club President at the top. R. L. Stine was editor of this publication, who later was the author of the Goosebumps books.
Calendar of Events

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

November 2
Benefits Committee
Time: 9:30 a.m.
Place: Longaberger – Arizona Room

November 9
Board Meeting
Time: 9:30 a.m.
Place: Longaberger – Mount Room

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

November 3 (Wednesday)
Lunch Bunch
Join us via Zoom and welcome Keith Myers, Vice-President of Construction Planning, when we will learn about the decisions that are made regarding Campus Construction. Keith will give us information about the current construction and plans to enhance the campus area.

Time: 11:30 a.m.
Contacts: Steven D’Ambrosio (Steven.dambros@gmail.com) & Elenore R. Zeller (zellerej@prodigy.net – Social Committee)

November 11 (Thursday)
Photo Society
Program: The Impact of Photography on Poetry and Poetry on Photography presented by Ron Laymon and Gus Brunsmen
Members’ Theme: Combine a poem (yours or someone else’s) with one of your photos.
Time/Place: 5:30 p.m. dinner; 7 p.m. program; OSU Faculty Club. You MUST make reservations for dinner by calling 614-292-2262 by November 8.
Cost: on your own
Arranger: Nancy Verber (nwenber@gmail.com – Photographic Society SIG)

November 20 (Saturday)
Walking/Hiking Group
Challenge Level 2-4
Everyone welcome. Join us on the trails at Highbanks Metro Park, 9466 Columbus Pike (U.S. 23), Lewis Center.
Time/Place: 10:30 a.m., we’ll meet at the Nature Center.
Arranger: Hallan Noltimier (noltimier.2@osu.edu – Walking/Hiking SIG)

Book Club
A You Are There play format will feature The Body by Bill Bryson (the author of A Short Story of Everything). He takes us on a tour of the human body’s various intricate parts and functions, with their idiosyncrasies and foibles, in a factual and humorous way. A fun owner’s manual—think Gray’s Anatomy Lite! No in-person meeting this month.
Arranger: Lee Hill (hill.30@osu.edu – Book Club SIG)

December 2 (Thursday)
Lunch Bunch
Join us via Zoom for a Football Rally OSURA Style when Jeff Logan, former Co-Captain of the OSU Buckeyes and TV sports color analyst, will present a spirited commentary about football immediately before the play-offs. Look for a bit of Holiday Cheer thrown in.
Time: 11:30 a.m.
Contacts: Steven D’Ambrosio (Steven.dambros@gmail.com) & Elenore R. Zeller (zellerej@prodigy.net – Social Committee)

After the sessions some members loaded on a bus for a tour of Waterman Agricultural and Natural Resources Laboratory.

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. Your registration is not complete until payment is made, so have your credit card ready. Checks are no longer being accepted.

2. Registrations NOT requiring payment:
Registrations will be made through the Arranger’s email provided in the description of the event.

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.
**UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS**

**November 4 (Thursday) Amish Adventures**
Dennison, Sugarcreek and Millersburg, OH
Challenge Level 2
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
We’ll have a guided tour of the Dennison Railroad Museum (dennisondepot.org), boxed lunch at the Dutch Valley Market (http://www.dutchvalleymarket.com) and visit the Guggisberg Cheese Factory (www.babyswiss.com).

Meet by: 7 a.m., Tremont Center (Tremont Road, opposite Upper Arlington Library)
Return: approximately 5:30 p.m.
Cost: $59; cost includes museum admission, guided tour, lunch, motor coach transportation, snacks, tips.
Registration/Refund Deadline: Register at osura.osu.edu or call 614-292-2281 by October 25.
Arrangers: Cindy Giles and Alabelle Zghoul (cgileslab@aol.com – Travel Committee)

**November 19 (Friday) OSU Veterinary Medical Center Tour**
CANCELLED
Arrangers: Ron Currin (rcurrin6209@gmail.com – Cultural Arts Committee)

**November 29 (Monday) Rose Bowl Requiem**
Join us with the Varsity O Society via Zoom as author Bill Shkurti and journalist Todd Jones mark the 60th anniversary of the controversial 1961 decision when the Faculty Council turned down a Rose Bowl invitation, ending the Buckeye’s undefeated season.

Registration: Go to https://osu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_a5ltyRdDQPi_2kE71zvCOQ
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Contacts: Tom Levenick (tom@powerplaycorp.com – Varsity O) & Gemma McLuckie (mcluckiegemma@gmail.com – OSURA)

**December 10 (Friday) La Comedia – A Christmas Story**
765 West Central – Springboro, OH
Challenge Level 2
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
A buffet luncheon followed by the classic play A Christmas Story (www.lacomedia.com)

Meet by: 9 a.m., Tremont Center (Tremont Road, opposite Upper Arlington Library)
Return: approximately 5:30 p.m.
Cost: $75; cost includes, buffet lunch, the show admission, motor coach transportation, snacks, tips.
Registration/Refund Deadline: Register at osura.osu.edu or call 614-292-2281 by November 9.
Arrangers: Jessica Pritchard and Alabelle Zghoul (alabelle.zghoul@gmail.com – Travel Committee)

**December 11 (Saturday) BalletMet – The Nutcracker**

**NEW**
Challenge Level 2
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
This holiday classic is a journey from reality to fantasy and back again. Sparkling snow, charming characters, and wonderful surprises come to life as you participate in a magical experience you won’t soon forget.

Time/Place: Curtain rises at 12 noon. Seating is general, so plan to arrive early for best seats. Doors open at 10:30 a.m., Ohio Theater, 39 E. State St.
PLEASE NOTE: CAPA policy: “Ticket holders 12 years of age and older will be required to provide proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test along with a valid ID before attending a performance.”
Cost: $24.50 (admission ticket)
Registration/Refund Deadline: Register at osura.alumni.osu.edu or call 614-292-2281 by December 2. Credit card preferred. Tickets will be held at Will Call.
Arranger: Marilyn Blackwell (blackwell.4@osu.edu – Cultural Arts Committee)
The Impact of the Great Lakes on our Region and Beyond

Dr. Christopher Winslow, Director of the Ohio Sea Grant and The Ohio State University’s Stone Lab, presented a talk about the impact of the Great Lakes on our region and beyond. The Ohio Sea Grant College Program is funded through NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). Ohio State University owns Gibraltar Island, where Stone Lab is located. The Ohio Sea Grant and Laboratory hosts over 40,000 people per year who visit the island for field trips, research and outreach. All levels of education (K to Gray) is provided by the Ohio Sea Grant and Stone Lab – introductory, upper level and professional development. Stone Lab has received over $10.5 million in grants, with 24 funded (of 28 submitted).

Lake Erie is shared by 4 states, and provides drinking water for over 11 million people. It is the “walleye capital of the world.” Stone Lab is collaborating with many partners to manage and improve the quality of water in the lake. Dr. Winslow stated that “We can’t manage what we don’t monitor.” Lake Erie needs to be healthy and communities are spending more to clean water. They are looking for solutions that are “win-win” so that we can slow the nutrients going into the lake from runoff water, but not at the risk of adversely affecting agriculture and jobs.

Dr. Winslow outlined the 6 critical issues facing Lake Erie:

1. **Recent history of harmful algal blooms** – health and economic effects of blooms and the cost of removing toxins from drinking water
2. **Sediment and dredging issues** – 1.5 million cubic yards of dredging per year
3. **Aquatic invasive species** – Asian carp and other species
4. **Dead zones in the lake** – lower oxygen levels in the lake
5. **Climate change** – affecting water levels and erosion
6. **Historic contaminants, pharmaceutical and personal care products and micro plastics** – still working on cleaning contaminants from prior years

The key to this program’s success is the collaboration with Federal, state, foundations, agencies, educational institutions and commissions. The EPA has asked Stone Lab to set criteria for what should be measured regarding harmful algal blooms and the living creatures that should be expected when reporting on the health of Lake Erie.

To find out more about Stone Lab and the Ohio Sea Grant, or to plan a visit to Gibraltar Island, visit this website: https://stonelab.osu.edu/.

Orton Hall: The Magic is in the Details

By Mary Jo Fresch

Dr. William Ausich, Academy Professor of Earth Sciences and Director Emeritus of Orton Geological Museum, shared the unique architectural characteristics of Orton Hall. Opened in 1893 and named for the first president of The Ohio State University, the building houses the School of Earth Sciences, the Orton Memorial Geological Library, and the Orton Geological Museum. Built in 1893, the building was placed on the National Historic Registry in 1970. The bell tower houses 12 bells donated by the classes of 1906-1912. The bells chime every quarter hour and bong on the hour. The stone on the building are in the stratigraphic order of Ohio rock (oldest being at the foundation to the most recent near the top). The bell tower has 24 hand-carved grotesques that depict ancient organisms that may have roamed Ohio. In the lobby, each column is different, representing the major stones present in Ohio at the time of the building. Pictures of the Memorial Library of Geology has a Reading Room that many do not know about. It is a beautiful and serene room. The building houses one of the largest collections of geological art (such as a painting of the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius) and the largest geological library in the United States. The Museum has three functions: 1. as a museum to help researchers, faculty, and paleontologists from around the world, 2. it is used by classes from across Ohio State campus (everything from Art to Zoology), and 3. it is a major venue for outreach. There are many public displays that are free to visit. Finally, Dr. Ausich showed the installation of the Jurassic period dinosaur Cryolophosaurus Ellioti, discovered in Antarctica by Ohio State faculty member, David Elliot. The audience enjoyed viewing the secrets and magic of Orton Hall!
John Brooke gave the first part of the program, on Smallpox in Colonial, Revolutionary, and Civil War America. A diagram put historical pandemics in context, with the size of each virus proportional to the number of resulting deaths. COVID-19 ranks well behind some diseases in history. The spread of smallpox, while deadly, was limited by the low population density of early colonial America, but growth in the 18th century facilitated its spread. The difference in death rates between Native Americans and the white population was appalling, and inoculation was expensive. In New England smallpox was controlled by strict regulations, but in the Mid-Atlantic and the South by immunization, which was too expensive for common people, who suffered during smallpox outbreaks. The use of police powers to control the spread of disease generated pushback, producing “smallpox riots;” modern controversies are not new. A massive outbreak of smallpox coincided with the Revolutionary War. Washington ordered his troops to be inoculated, keeping it secret so the British would not discover that his soldiers were in recovery mode. Edward Jenner’s vaccine, developed from cowpox, was effective, and the death rate from smallpox in the years before the Civil War was comparable to the modern death rate from flu.

The second part of the program, Black Death, 1918 Flu, and AIDS, was given by Jim Harris. These three classic diseases have now been joined by COVID-19 as a fourth, but the scale of the COVID pandemic is very different. The 1918-1919 flu infected about 500 million people worldwide, with about 50 million deaths, while HIV/AIDS has killed 25 to 35 million.

(COVID deaths are below 5 million.) The 1918 flu (which probably originated in Kansas and was called the Spanish flu) was carried to Europe by U.S. troops. People were urged to wear masks and some pushed back. The rate of infections in 1918-19 came in waves, similar to COVID-19, with a small outbreak in summer 1918, a big wave in autumn 1918, and a resurgence in February 1919 before receding, apparently a result of herd immunity. Previous pandemics struck primarily the very young and very old, but in 1918 it was the 20- to 35-year-olds who were at high risk. Columbus avoided superspreader events, closing schools, churches, and theaters, while OSU canceled classes except for ROTC for a month. In 2000, there were four known types of corona viruses, mostly producing colds, but three more (SARS, MERS, and COVID-19) have joined the list in just the last two decades. Our modern world seems capable of generating these germs at a much faster rate.
Social connections are important for an older person’s mental and physical well-being, studies show. Renew your Annual Membership to maintain those all-important connections. Join with fellow Buckeyes through OSURA’s creative programming. Dues for your 2022 renewal are still only $25.

The preferred submission date is December 1, 2021. If you have questions, email osuramembership@gmail.com or call Sandy Bell, Membership Chair, at 740-625-9716.

READY TO RENEW NOW?

It’s easy!

THERE ARE MANY OPTIONS:

- Go to OSURA.osu.edu and hit “Renew Membership” to make your $25 annual donation to Fund #315499 via credit card.

- Give Engagement Services your credit card information at (614) 292-2281 or (800) 762-5646. Tell them it is for Fund #315499.

- Send checks payable to The Ohio State University Foundation to PO Box 710811, Columbus, OH 43271 (note OSURA Fund #315499 in the memo line). Be sure to mail your check by December 15 to allow time for receiving and processing by December 31.

CONTINUE YOUR Joy BY RENEWING

An OSURA Annual Membership helps you relish life

Richard Lewis Barlow
September 4 | Political Science, 95

Jean Grover Bauman
September 29 | OSU Extension, 84

John Mac Cassady
September 29 | Pharmacy, 83

Franklin DeMana
September 29 | Mathematics and OSURA, 83

Werner Haas
September 30 | Germanic Languages and Literature, 93

Georgia Mae (Douglas) Hill
September 2 | Dining Services, 88

James William Marquand
September 12 | OSU Extension and OSURA, 96

William L. Marsh
August 27 | Pathology, 74

Donna Jean Maruschak
September 15 | OSU Extension, 74

John S. McDonald
August 27 | Anesthesiology, 83

Wyma Milton
September 27 | Veterinary Medicine, 90

Patricia Polczynski
September 6 | Natural Resources, 74

Charles E. Pugh
September 20 | Athletics, 89

Randall Reed
September 6 | Animal Science, 100

Frances A. Ridenour
September 27 | OSURA, 92

Jacqueline Rollins
September 11 | OSUMC, 67

Robert Earl Roth
September 3 | Environmental and Natural Resources and OSURA, 84

Donald R. Smith
September 4 | Environmental Engineer, 80

John Vimmerstedt
September 3 | OARDC, 90
OPERS Healthcare and Benefits Updates

**Speaker:** Kevin Blann, OPERS

Kevin Blann, Education Representative at the Ohio Public Employee Retirement System (OPERS), gave an update on the OPERS healthcare benefit changes for 2022 through a live webinar. He presented a blended program describing changes to OPERS healthcare benefits for both pre-Medicare members and for members age 65 and older. Kevin explained that the purpose of the changes starting in 2022 is to allow OPERS to preserve healthcare benefits for current and future retirees. Members who retired before 1/1/2022 will continue to have a healthcare reimbursement allowance (HRA), but the base amount will be reduced from prior years.

Effective 1/1/2022, age and service requirements will be implemented for retirees eligible to receive an HRA. Starting January 1, 2022 OPERS has made significant changes to the HRA base amount and percentages, so it is very important that members read OPERS newsletters to become familiar with these changes. There are a number of webinars available on the OPERS website that provide details and examples of the benefit calculations depending upon a member’s age at retirement and years of qualified service. The base allowance amount for Medicare-eligible retirees will be lowered from $450 per month to $350. For pre-Medicare members the base allowance will be reduced to $1200 from $1380. See this chart to review allowance percentages and HRA amounts: (https://www.opers.org/healthcare/allowance.shtml.)

Dental and Vision Care coverage can be purchased through OPERS or through the open market. VIA Benefits can assist members with finding the best fit for their situation. It is important that members review their prescription drug plans during open enrollment to evaluate the cost and medications covered by their existing plan. Members must go through VIA Benefits (phone # 844-287-9945) to make changes to their health and/or prescription drug plans.

Open enrollment begins on November 1, 2021 and continues through December 15, 2021. OPERS offers many webinars, both live and recorded, through their website. See this web link for educational opportunities: (https://www.opers.org/retirees/education/index.shtml). OPERS also has a General Questions Webinar every Wednesday at 8:30 am. For specific answers to questions, contact OPERS at: 1-800-222-7377.
OSURA News

FROM: The Benefits Committee

STRS

By Jerry Newsom

Sometimes anticipated events just don’t happen. The Ohio Retirement Study Council indicated it would study “intergeneration equity” at its September meeting, presumably searching for a reasonable remedy for having pensions of current retirees being subsidized in part by active teachers. For unknown reasons, the subject never came up in the September meeting. The next anticipated event is the scheduled presentation by consultants at the October STRS Board meeting on possible ways to provide financial relief to both retirees and active teachers.

Just as retiree organizations from some Big Ten schools exchange their newsletters, so too do state pension plans compare plans and policies. This can be a useful reality check and it provides pressure for each plan to conform to the herd, such as having assumed rate of return on investments similar for nearly all public pension plans. States across the country have been lowering their assumptions, so when STRS did the same, it just kept STRS at the median of public pension plans. There is some effort to find new investment strategies in search of better returns.

The STRS health insurance plan continues to do very well. The STRS contract with the insurers requires that a certain percentage of STRS’ payments be used to pay claims, and since claims continue lower than expected during the pandemic, the insurance companies have to rebate some of the payments to honor the contract. STRS is likely to rebate premiums retirees paid to the STRS health plan in the form of a $300 tax-free addition to their pension in November (or December if paperwork is delayed).

A TIAA survey found that 70% of workers say they’d choose to work for a company that offered guaranteed lifetime income (read “defined benefit plan”) over a company that did not, with 73% saying such plans offer a sense of financial security.

OPERS

By Darian Torrance

The OPERS Board met on October 20, 2021 to consider a number of agenda items and to discuss important changes and updates to benefits, particularly for Health Care 2022 benefit changes.

The Board reviewed and approved the health care investment return assumption, based on the results of the Five-Year Experience Study performed by OPERS’ actuarial firm Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Company (GRS). The current health care investment return assumption is 6.00%. The GRS study recommended between 5.50% and 6.00% as the new investment rate of return assumption for the health care portfolio. After discussion, the Board approved the new rate of 5.75%. As of 10/15/2021 the Health Care Fund balance is $14.31 billion, per an Investments Market Update provided to the OPERS Board.

HEALTH CARE UPDATES

• Effective January 1, 2022, there are significant changes to OPERS health care plans, especially for pre-Medicare members. The OPERS website https://www.opers.org/ includes details of these changes, as well as many educational webinars and recorded presentations for members.

• Pre-Medicare members can make an appointment with a Via Benefits Licensed Benefit Advisor for support to understand options for enrolling in a new medical plan. Timeslots are available during the open enrollment period (Nov. 1 – Dec. 15). In-person appointments are available each day between 8:30 am and 3:30 pm. Virtual appointments are available Via Zoom from 9:00 am to 7:30 pm. Members should review details of changes to the healthcare plan on the OPERS website and make an appointment through their OPERS online account or call OPERS at 1-800-222-7377. Open Enrollment general question webinars are also available on Friday afternoons. Retirees must “opt in”
with Via Benefits to receive Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) contributions and have access to that money to be reimbursed for eligible expenses since Via Benefits is the HRA administrator. Via Benefits can be reached by calling: 1-833-939-1215.

- Medicare-eligible members should review their medical and prescription drug plans to make sure that they provide the best coverage options, considering any changes in health or prescriptions. To continue receiving monthly HRA deposits, members must be enrolled in a Medicare medical plan through Via Benefits. Members should contact Via Benefits between Oct. 15 and Dec. 7, 2021 by calling 1-844-287-9945.

- Re-employed Retirees (employed in an OPERS-covered employer) who have enrolled in a medical plan through the OPERS Medicare Connector will receive monthly HRA deposits in a re-employed accumulated HRA. Members will not be able to receive reimbursements from the HRA while they are re-employed. However, when they are no longer re-employed, they will be able to receive reimbursements from the HRA.

- Members should carefully read all communications from OPERS to fully understand changes to their health care benefits. General questions are addressed by OPERS in a weekly webinar each Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. Members can register for the webinar at https://www.opers.org/.

OSURA Spotlight

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:
Leslie and Harry Holler

Let’s meet the Hollers. We are Harry and Leslie, who reside in Newark. Our roots are from Massachusetts and New Jersey, and our paths crossed at a wedding. Prior to marriage, Leslie worked at Montclair State University and SUNY Albany. She was an assistant professor in Physical Education, Women’s Swimming and Diving coach, and Women’s Athletic Director.

We moved to Ohio for a job opportunity. Harry worked as an engineer for Owen Corning Fiberglass for over 35 years. He also taught mathematics at COTC in Newark for 9 years, and the Physics Labs for OSU-Newark for 2 years.

Moving to Ohio enabled Leslie to be a full-time mother. While raising three children, she volunteered with several organizations. She served on the Board of Directors of the Licking County American Red Cross and the Licking County Family YMCA.

When the kids enrolled in high school, she had the opportunity to return to teaching at OSU Newark. Leslie served as adjunct professor for several years. She taught in both the Physical Education and Health Education Departments. In 2004 the job of Health Education Coordinator was created. Leslie took this part-time position while continuing to teach Physical Education until her retirement in 2011. She feels grateful to have worked with such a dedicated adjunct faculty that helped the Health Education program.

At the retirement of Leslie, we joined OSURA. We had reached a point in our lives when we wanted to travel outside the United States, with Europe being our priority. Our first trip organized by the Travel Committee was to Switzerland and Austria. Seeing the Alps and other regional attractions would be a childhood dream come true. With a little nudging we signed up for the trip.

Our experiences with OSURA also led us to join the Hiking Group, while continuing to travel. Hiking provides us with the opportunity to meet up with the regular walkers and to meet new people while enjoying the beauty of nature. After the walks, we often have lunch with friends.

We have missed these activities this past year but expect to be back soon. The pandemic put a squash to many of our plans. We did manage to explore new opportunities like removing and organizing the “stuff” from the house (the kids are thrilled), trying new recipes, meeting neighbors on our daily walks, and welcoming our newest grandchild in January. Zoom has kept the family in touch.
Have you used the OSURA online Directory to get phone numbers or email addresses of other members?

The link to the online Directory is on the OSURA website.

OSURA.osu.edu