

OSURA News



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

January 2022

2200 Olentangy River Road, Columbus, Ohio 43210
614-292-2281 • 1-800-762-5646 • osura@osu.edu • osura.osu.edu

It's That Time of Year – It's about light!

By Nancy Wardwell

At present, besides Hannukah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa there are at least 21 other December festivals worldwide, and all include the celebration of light and hope.

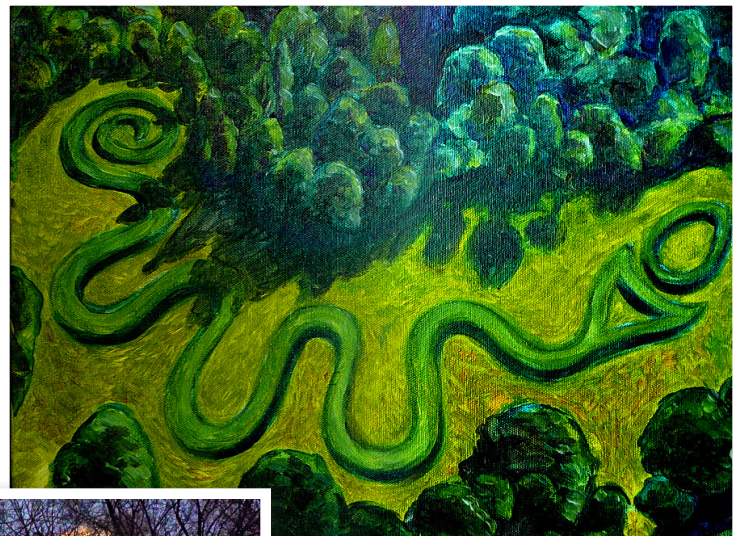
It is no wonder there are so many festivals and celebrations this time of year, and they have been happening for thousands of years. Since before history, the Winter Solstice has been a significant time in many cultures – marking the death of the dark and the rebirth of the sun.

The existence of solstice celebrations is attested to by physical remains in sites of late Neolithic and the bronze age. Well-known to us are Stonehenge in England and Newgrange in Ireland. At Mayan and Aztec temples, buildings and other structures mark the moment the sun rises into the new cycle.

We are discovering sites in North America also. Some are quite near to central Ohio.

Cahokia Mounds, the largest archaeological site in the United States, is near the Mississippi River along I-71 just before St. Louis. Archeologists have uncovered a circle of wooden posts referred to as "Woodhenge" that mark the winter and summer solstices and the two equinoxes.

Even closer to home is The Great Serpent Mound near Peebles, Ohio. It is the largest serpent effigy in the world and believed to have been built by Adena Indians about 2,400 years ago. In 1987 archeologists discovered that the serpent's head points directly toward the sunrise of the Summer Solstice – and the end of the coiled tail exactly toward the Winter Solstice.



Above: The Great Serpent Mound, Peebles, Ohio. Left: Winter Solstice, Chadwick Labyrinth Garden.

In the Northern Hemisphere the winter solstice happens when the earth's north pole reaches its maximum distance from the sun – and when sunlight begins to increase and warm the earth toward spring. Yes, it bodes four months of

winter, but more importantly the days become longer, and the darkness shorter. If you are reading this on January 10, 2022, we are enjoying a full 20 minutes more of daylight than we did at the Solstice, December 2021!

*May you enjoy the light and hope,
health and joy that 2022 will bring!*

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OSURA Endowment Fund

Number – 605419

OSURA Fund to Combat Student

Food Insecurity – 316596

osura.osu.edu

FROM: The President



Gemma McLuckie

Happy New Year,

My parents, raised in eastern Kentucky and reluctant immigrants to Cincinnati, insisted that our family share the Christmas holiday with our kin. After opening our toys, we had to choose only one to take to Granny's house. That was tough, especially the year my brother, sister and I found new bikes under the tree.

I have received two terrific gifts under my life's tree, and I didn't have to leave either behind. The first was the polio vaccine. One of my earliest memories is 1955, lining up

in the school cafeteria with the other six-year-olds for our Sabin vaccine. Little did we know that within our lifetimes, polio would be reduced to fewer than 600 cases worldwide! The new memory is from 2021, lining up in the Schottenstein Arena for my dose of the Pfizer vaccine. As I left the arena, I felt as if I were on that red Schwinn, flying down the road to freedom.

Almost at the moment of freedom, however, tears came to my eyes at the thought of the hundreds of thousands who had suffered before this miracle came to them. I have been sorry since then hearing how Americans are leaving their versions of my red Schwinn under their life tree. They refuse to even unwrap this lifesaving gift. Others ignore health experts' advice, which often sounds like a broken record – masks and shots, masks and shots, masks and shots – but is so essential.

By this time, you may have celebrated the holidays with your kin, whether in eastern Kentucky or the other side of the country. If you're like me, the two years of separation made my family strangers. Then I gave a gasp of recognition as we began the business of again blending our lives.

A friend recently told me that he had lost the impulse to gather with others, but he realized the value of close relationship. Maybe that's another gift -- the opportunities to relearn the pleasures of friendship and kinship.

I love our association because it's like Santa's bag, full of pleasures listed each month in the OSURA News calendar. May you investigate the bag and find your own red bike to ride into 2022.

Gemma McLuckie
President of OSURA

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The theme and date for the
OSURA 25th Annual Fall Conference have been set!

Firm Friendship
September 21, 2022

Another great one – count on it!

Welcome New Retirees

Marla Jayne Bastian
James Cancer Hospital

Anna E. Bernard
OSU Extension

Barbara Ann Besancon
Ross Heart Hospital

Mollie M. DeGiralomo
James Cancer Hospital

Teresa Irene Delahunty
Medicine

Warren Keith Emptage
Natural and Mathematical
Sciences

Tracy Linette Gabriel
University Hospital

James Carl Garwood
University Hospital

Linda S. Good
OSU Extension

Constance L. Gruenler
James Cancer Hospital

Alan Dean Hampton
Social and Behavioral
Sciences

Pamela Gale Hill
Marketing

Sandra Kay Jenkins
James Cancer Hospital

Suseela Lingham
University Hospital

Mark Steven Mathews
Health System Shared
Services

Marion Eusebio Millan
University Hospital

Irene L. Miller
University Hospital East

Victor Julio Mora
Student Academic Success

Joseph Steven Petry
Chief Information Officer

Monica C. Ralph
James Cancer Hospital

Laura L. Richter
Social Work

Laura A. Rohlf
OSU Extension

Karla Marie Rusk
Ross Heart Hospital

Kristin L. Short
University Hospital East

Nina Lyn Sigler
University Hospital

Kristin Lane Smith
Student Life

John Robert Snyder
Lima Campus

Melinda Sue Willis
Ross Heart Hospital

Longya Xu
Engineering

Drudy Robin Yoakam
OSU Extension

Melanie Jane Yutzy
Social and Behavioral
Sciences

Check it out!

Rai sent to the cultural arts list serv the web page
for the OSU Libraries Digital Exhibits.
It is access to fascinating collections.



From the 150 Years of Ohio State University Exhibit!

Digital Exhibits at University Libraries

Explore some of the fascinating digital exhibits that are displayed on the University Libraries website. Explore exhibits that range from "150 Years of The Ohio State University" to "Dancing with Devils: Latin American Mask Traditions" to "Digital Exhibits from the Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum."

See https://library.osu.edu/digital-exhibits?utm_source=sfmc&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=umar_faculty-staff-newsletter_fy22_oncampus-today-20211209&sfmc_id=40240893

Calendar of Events

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

January 4 (Tuesday) Benefits Committee

Time/Place: 9:30 a.m., Longaberger

January 11 (Virtual) Board Meeting

Time/Place: 9:30 a.m.

January 24 (Monday) Cultural Arts/Travel Meeting

Time/Place: 10 a.m., Longaberger

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

January 13 (Thursday) Photo Society

Program: *Bird and Wildlife Photography* by Kathryn Cubert

Member Theme: Three of your most challenging wildlife shots
NOTE: All entries to the annual photo contest are due no later than January 13.

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 January 10.

Cost: on your own

Arranger: Nancy Verber (nwverber@gmail.com – Photographic Society SIG)

January 15 (Saturday) Walking/Hiking Group

Challenge Level 2-4

Everyone welcome. Join us for a brisk walk through Blendon Woods, 4265 E. Dublin-Granville Rd., Westerville.

Time/Place: 11 a.m. – at the Nature Center

Arranger: Hallan Noltimier (noltimier.2@osu.edu – Walking/Hiking SIG)

January 20 (Thursday) Lunch Bunch – All-Sky Automated Survey for Supernovae (ASAS-SN): Big Science with Small Telescopes

Innovative ideas can lead to major advances. Learn how OSU astronomers developed a simple but powerful way to help understand some of the most violent events taking place in the heavens.

Time/Place: 11:15 a.m., MCL Cafeteria, Kingsdale

Cost: On your own, order through cafeteria line starting at 11:15 a.m., program at approximately 12 noon.

Contacts: Elenore R. Zeller (zellerej@prodigy.net – Social Committee)

January 27 (Thursday) Dinner Series: Covid Update

Susan Koletar, MD, Director, OSU Division of Infectious Diseases, will be updating us on Covid and OSU response to this disease.

Time/Place: 5:15 p.m. reception, 6 p.m. dinner, 7 p.m. lecture; OSU Faculty Club

Cost: \$35 (service charge included)

Registration Deadline: Register at osura.osu.edu or call 614-292-2281 by January 24.

Arranger: Carol Newcomb (newcomb.28@osu.edu – Dinner Series SIG)

Book Club

January's book *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett is an ambitious meditation on race and identity. Identical twin sisters, age 16, run away from a Southern Black community. One returns home, and the other "passes" as white, only to have their lives intersect through their daughters' years later. All members, near and far, are encouraged to participate by email in the *You Are There* Play discussion format we are using in lieu of in-person meetings during COVID-19.

Arranger: Lee Hill (hill.30@osu.edu – Book Club SIG)

SPECIAL EVENTS

January 13 (Thursday) – Virtual Coffee Hour for New Retirees

Time/Place: 9-10 a.m.

Arranger: Sandy Bell (sib9716@outlook.com – Membership Committee)

NEW

January 28 (Friday) 2021 Income Tax Seminar – VIRTUAL

Truepoint Wealth Counsel of Cincinnati will discuss Federal and State income tax issues for 2021. OSURA Registration link – https://osu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_f90fhLmAR2ycip0eaMiP3w

Time/Place: 1-2 p.m.

Arranger: Hallan Noltimier (noltimier.2@osu.edu – Benefits Committee)

February 11 (Friday) BalletMet – Giselle

765 West Central – Springboro, OH

Challenge Level 2

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Witness a love story that has captivated hearts for centuries. This timeless ballet features classical elements as it tells the haunting tale of a peasant girl's quest for love. Edward Liang's *Giselle* reimagines and reinvigorates this beloved work.

Time/Place: Box office opens at 9:30 a.m. Seating is general, so plan to arrive early for best seats. Performance begins at 11 a.m., Davidson Theater, 77 S. High 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: \$22.50 (admission ticket) plus \$2 surcharge

Registration/Refund Deadline: Register at osura.alumni.osu.edu or call 614-292-2281 by February 3. Credit card preferred. Tickets will be held at Will Call.

Arranger: Marilyn Blackwell (blackwell.4@osu.edu – Cultural Arts Committee)

Registration Instructions

1. Registrations requiring payment:

Registrations can be made by going on-line to osu.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.



The OSURA Craft Group participated in the 4th Annual Snowflake Movement, joining with other community groups to “create a snowstorm of beautiful, colorful snowflakes” at Nationwide Children’s Hospital.

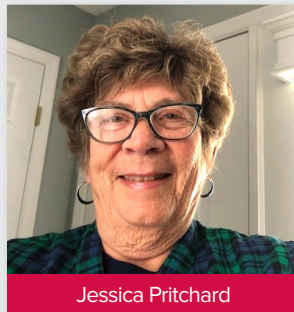


OSURA Spotlight

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Jessica Pritchard

I lived in a small town, Lynchburg, OH, in Highland County. After graduation I came to Columbus to attend Columbus Business University. I met my husband Tom at The OSU campus. We were in the US Army for three years; he was stationed in Thailand, then Fort Meade, Maryland. After moving back to Columbus and raising our three sons, I started working at OSU in June 1989. My first position was in the College of Pharmacy. I had never been on campus and was so afraid I would get lost that I hardly left the building. A couple of employees took me to lunch at the hospital cafeteria which sort of broke the ice for me to get around a little. My next position was on The Agriculture Campus in the Department of Communications and Technology. I felt much more comfortable on the Agriculture Campus than I had felt on main campus. Having lived in a small community growing up, this seemed to be a better fit for me.

After 6 years or so, I left OSU and purchased a floral shop in Westerville. I soon discovered I did not like owning a business and took a position at the Fraternity and Sorority Manager's Association to plan events for the Fraternities and Sororities at Ohio State. I truly loved that position. It was great working with the students. However, I left there after a couple of years, since



Jessica Pritchard

they did not furnish health care insurance, and I returned to OSU in the Department of Human Nutrition. I retired from there in 2005.

Since retiring from OSU I have been very active volunteering. My first volunteering activity was working in the gardens at Chadwick Arboretum and helping with the plant sale where I was “Wizard Coordinator” for several years. I worked in the gardens and at the plant sale for many years and I also volunteered at Inniswood Gardens in Westerville, OH. I

volunteered at Picnic with the Pops as the gate’s coordinator at Chemical Abstracts and also when they moved downtown for around 10 years.

In 2008 we took our first trip with OSURA and I have been on the Travel and Cultural Arts committee since then. Our first trip was Focusing on Ford in Michigan. I will never forget it and it convinced me to join the committee. I love planning where to go. There are so many great places to see. The committee plans day trips, two-day trips and one international trip every year.

I live in a condo at the Woods at Polaris and stay quite active by serving on the Clubhouse, Social and Landscape Committees. The Landscape committee purchases and plants flowers in all the common areas. When the pandemic hit, I was lucky to have gardens to work in to keep me busy. Travel and Cultural Arts is starting trips back up and hopefully by 2022 it will be safe to go anywhere.

I feel very fortunate to be part of OSURA. It is very rewarding to me when our attendees tell me what a good trip it was and how much they enjoyed it. I hope OSURA members and guests will join us on a trip in 2022. We are planning some great ones you won't want to miss.



FROM: The Benefits Committee

STRS News

By Jerry Newsom

The last STRS Board meeting made the front page of the Sunday *Dispatch* on 5 December. In a surprise addition to the Board's agenda, one former and two current Board members proposed a very different and complex way for STRS to do its investing. Proponents of the plan are convinced it would produce much higher returns with much lower risk, but if details are spelled out publicly, then other pension funds might find out and grab the opportunity before STRS did. The basic outline is STRS would sell its stocks, use the proceeds to buy U.S. Treasury bonds and loan out the bonds (while still getting the interest the bonds pay) to get cash to buy stock index funds, collecting other fees along the way. A very large financial institution (whose name could not be revealed) would guarantee the plan. But without knowing the details, it's hard for the Board, STRS staff, and consultants to evaluate the proposal. If it works, STRS could dramatically cut the contribution by active teachers while restoring COLAs to retirees. It's fair to say the proposal was met with much skepticism, with worries it could end up right up there with Bernie Madoff's legacy. Proponents suggested a much smaller investment as a test case to see if it works, but it will take a lot more convincing before the Board is likely to buy in. An advisory group to the STRS Board, the Healthcare and Pension Advocates, is being asked for its opinion. HPA represents organizations with an interest in STRS, which includes such organizations as the American Association of University Professors, the Ohio Education Association and the Ohio Federation of Teachers, school administrators, and of course STRS retirees (including OSURA through the Ohio Council of Higher Education Retirees). I would be surprised if HPA endorsed the plan unless investment consultants are enthusiastic about it.

OPERS News

By Darian Torrance

The OPERS Board met November 16 - 17, 2021.

Some key reports are:

OPERS Service Levels and Organizational Performance – Mike Heale, CEM Benchmarking, Inc. provided an annual, detailed report of OPERS service levels and organizational performance in comparison to peer organizations. This included:

- Pension administration cost per member – OPERS is at \$55 per member per year, which is just below the median cost, and \$22 below the peer average of \$77. The average FTE

of front office staff is at 1.5 per 10,000 members, which is 1.1 FTE lower than the peer average of 2.6. The total pension administrative cost for FY 2020 was \$64.6 million, excluding the cost of administering healthcare and optional and third-party administered benefits of \$7.6 million.

- Service scores by activity level – OPERS average weighted score for FY 2020 is 82 vs. peer average of 77. Web activity has increased substantially (59.7%) from 2013 to 2020, while one-on-one, call and mail volume has decreased. Members are relying more on information from the OPERS website than from personal contact.
- Service areas to improve or reduce cost – OPERS service level fell from 87 to 82 (out of 100) for the period 2018 to 2020 mainly due to undesired call center outcomes. Average call wait time increased from 82 seconds to 206 seconds. Changes in healthcare announced in January 2020 increased the number of calls. Insufficient staffing, as well as the Covid-19 pandemic, also affected this score.
- Overall service score in comparison to peers – OPERS is considered a low to medium cost administrator with high service levels. The service level for 2020 is higher than peers (rated 77). Investments Benchmarking Results – Mike Heale, CEM Benchmarking Inc., presented the Investments benchmarking results for the calendar year 2020, with the following key points:
- Total Policy Return and Asset Allocation Differences – OPERS 5-year net total fund return was 9.9%, above the US public median of 9.6% and equal to the peer median of 9.9%. The two best performing asset classes for the 5-years ending 2020 were stock – U.S. and Stock Emerging.
- Net Value-Added by Staff – Net Value Added (NVA) is computed by subtracting the Policy Return (9.54%) from the Total Net Return (9.91%). OPERS NVA before internal costs over 5 years equals .41%. Five-year Internal Cost equaled .04%, resulting in the NVA of .37%.
- Total OPERS Investments Cost vs. the Benchmark Cost – OPERS investment costs for 2020 were \$447.5 million, or 43.3 basis points (bp), which was lower than its benchmark of 47.1 bp (cost savings of 3.8 bp).
- Total Risk of the Investment Portfolio – OPERS asset risk was 11% for 2020, which is slightly above the U.S. public median of 10.7%.

Investment Returns – 2021 – The OPERS Direct Benefit plan investments have received approximately 13.5% return as of mid-November 2021. The Health care fund, which is invested 100% in the public market, has received approximately 14% to date. Next year's investment returns are expected to be a lot more challenging than this year.

✿ In Memoriam ✿

George Blozis

November 21 | Dentistry, 92

Edwin Boyer

November 4 | Engineering, 84

Richard Finn

November 16 | Athletics, 88

Tony M. Forshey

November 26 | Veterinary Medicine, 69

Harry L. Graber

November 18 | Medicine, 90

Evelyn Harris

November 26 | Facility Services, 106

Walter B. Hull

November 17 | Medicine, 84

Ronald Jones

November 17 | Optometry, 77

Harold V. Lechler

November 21 | Athletics, 85

Patricia Long

 November 20 | County Extension
and OSURA, 90

George Mass

November 18 | Psychology, 81

Ruskin Donald Moore

November 17 | Agricultural Economics, 95

Gladys Morrison

November 15 | 90

Karen Park

November 27 | OSUMC, 65

Ada Jeanette Sexton

 November 27 | Music Education and
OSURA, 97

Michael L. Smith

November 3 | Business, 77

Sigel Stocker

November 5 | ATI and OSURA, 89

Robert E. Swihart

November 19 | Mathematics, 84

Eileen Evelyn Tatman

November 26 | OSUMC, 78

Pearle M. Tingley

November 27 | Residence Hall, 103

David Wells

November 19 | Accountant, 92

Manfred Winnewisser

November 22 | Physics, 87

Barbara A. Wookey

November 24 | Research, 77

FROM BENEFITS COMMITTEE | ELDER CARE

By Meg Teaford

Caregivers

A 2017 article in *The Journals of Gerontology: Social Sciences* about a longitudinal study of older caregivers. The six-year study looked at changes in activities and engagement among spousal caregivers. Researchers at the University of North Carolina were interested in whether the subjects maintained their activity levels while caring for a spouse. Higher levels of physical and social activity have been linked to health and well-being as we age. We already know that caregiving is more likely to limit roles outside the home and to increase the risk of depression and health problems among some older caregivers (but not all).

The authors looked at five categories of activities: physical, social, passive information processing, novel information processing, and self/home care. A total of 37 activities were studied. The more passive included watching TV or listening to music. Novel information processing included reading or using the computer.

The physical included walking and exercising and the social were communicating with family/friends via letters, phone,

or e-mail, and visiting others in person. Data was drawn from four waves of national Health and Retirement Study between 2007 and 2013.

Results: Not surprisingly, more women than men identified as spousal caregivers (61.69%). Their average age was 66.26 years. The majority reported caregiving in only one wave of the study, but 14% were caregivers in three or four waves. The primary change was in the reduction of time spent in physical activity and this was truer for women than men. However, as the authors point out, caregiving often involves a "certain level of physical activity and previous research suggests that caregivers are physically active, but tend not to report their activity as exercise."

In addition, all older adults reported more time on self/home maintenance activities as well as passive information processing, but there was not a significant difference for caregivers. These changes may be due more to aging than to caregiving demands. There were no differences in social activities.



**The Ohio State University Retirees Assn.
Customer Service**

Longaberger Alumni House
2200 Olentangy River Road
Columbus, Ohio 43210

from **The Membership Committee**

Notices to renew dues sent out recently to annual members of OSURA were in some cases addressed to the spouse/partner of a retiree instead of the retiree. Some members were understandably put out by that. We need to explain how our membership list is kept.

In 2016, OSURA was moved from Human Resources at OSU to the Alumni Association. In HR, OSURA had its own membership list, with a half-time person who, among other things, maintained membership records. At the Alumni Association, our records were merged with a database of alumni; we no longer have a dedicated list. The alumni database was designed to handle the needs of the Alumni Association and is not always compatible with the needs of OSURA. For instance, members are counted differently. OSURA counts annual members as those who are not lifetime members who have paid at least \$25 in the last year. The Alumni Association counts annual members of OSURA as those who have paid at least \$25 in the last year. If a lifetime member makes a donation to the account where dues are collected, the Alumni Association lists that person as both a lifetime and an annual member. Each month we get a report saying how many lifetime and annual

members we have (minus the annual members who are also lifetime members), along with two different lists of all members. Virtually every month, the number of members on the two different lists are different from each other and different from the count showing numbers of members. When we request lists of names and addresses for annual members for dues renewal, we take what they give us, knowing there are likely to be discrepancies. The staff at the Alumni Association who help us with these things are anxious to do the best they can, but their budget has been cut, they are short of staff, and they have to cope with an increasing workload. It's the world we live in.

