OSURA COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Annual Reports 2021-2022

The OSU Retiree Association runs on the efforts of many volunteers. Nine standing committees have important roles in creating a community for OSURA’s 2,360 Life and Annual members. The committees ensure gatherings run smoothly, organize monthly and large yearly events, keep the association’s finances healthy, monitor local, state and national issues vital to retirement, and many other details. The Executive Board admires the committees’ consistent creativity and success. We thank each and every committee leader and member.

Benefits Committee

Committee Members: Carol Newcomb-Alutto, chairperson, and Marie Taris, vice-chair; and Sandy Bell, Jerry Dare, Sally Dellinger, Evie Freeman, Donna Hobart, Doug Jones, Joan Leitzel, Hal Moellering, Jerry Newsom, Meg Teaford, Darian Torrance, and Nancy Wardwell. Ex-officio members: Gemma McLuckie and Hal Noltimier.

The Benefits Committee met on the first Tuesday of each month throughout the year either via zoom or face-to-face depending on the threat of the Covid infection. Many of the committee members prepared reports to help keep us informed on topics related to benefits for, or issues facing retirees. These reports included updates from the two primary public pension systems, the Ohio State Teachers’ Retirement System (OH-STRS) and the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS). We also heard monthly reports from the University Faculty Compensation and Benefits Committee (FCBC), the OSURA Membership Committee, the Conference Planning Committee, the Ohio Council on Higher Education Retirees (OCHER), and Public Employees Retirement Inc. (PERI).

The Supplemental Retirement Accounts (SRA) Working Group, a subcommittee of Benefits, has kept the committee abreast of the rollout of information about the University’s redesign of the SRA program. Chairperson Hal Moellering and the other working group members have been evaluating the Fee Structures, Transparency, and Fiduciary Responsibility aspects of this information on the OSU/HR Retirement website.

Besides these direct impacts on OSU retirees, we also reviewed and discussed the financial and economic environment of the state and country and how these can affect retirees. This included reviewing relevant economic statistics and studies.

We routinely heard reports on issues facing older adults, in what we call our Eldercare focus.

The committee offered its annual tax seminar in January, again by zoom.
Besides sharing important information from the various sources named above with the OSURA Board, the committee tried to keep the membership of OSURA informed by routinely authoring articles for the monthly *OSURA News*.

**Bylaws Committee**

**Committee Members**: Gerald Newsom, Gabby Reissland, Elenore Zeller, and Marie Taris, chairperson. Ex-officio members: Gemma McLuckie and Hal Noltimier

**Activities During 2021-22**: At the Board Meetings in February and March of 2022, the Bylaws chairperson invited the OSURA officers and the chairpersons of all other committees to identify concerns with or ideas to improve the OSURA Bylaws. No suggestions were brought forth.

The Bylaws Committee held one meeting this year, via zoom, on March 15, 2022. Although we did not receive any suggestions to amend the Bylaws from OSURA officers or committee chairpersons, the members of the Bylaws Committee did discuss some potential areas of concern that we might want to consider in the future. Since none of those concerns needed immediate attention, the committee decided to not to recommend any amendments for consideration in 2022.

**Goals for 2022-23**: To continue to promote effective governance for the Association by monitoring and recommending amendments to the Bylaws.

**Conference Planning Committee**

**Committee Members**: Sally Dellinger, chairperson; and Mary Jo Fresch, Brenda Hammond, Donna Lamb, Joan Leitzel, David Lincove, Shirley Fields McCoy, Liz McPherson, Jerry Newsom, Hal Noltimier, Diane Selby, Marie Taris, Meg Teaford, Darian Torrance, Doug Torrance

The Conference Planning Committee mission statement is to plan, coordinate, promote, and conduct the annual OSURA conference. The committee determined that after two years in a virtual format, the single-day event could be held again at the Fawcett Event Center.

OSU President, Kristina M. Johnson presented opening remarks via video, while Kathryn Sullivan, geologist and astronaut, gave the keynote address, “Soaring and Diving with the World’s Most Vertical Person.” Her three Space Shuttle missions included launching the Hubble Space Telescope. Later she became the first woman to dive to the deepest place in the world’s oceans, and served as president and CEO of COSI.

Some of the conference slides may be viewed by going to [osura.osu.edu](http://osura.osu.edu), select “About”, then “Presentations” where one can find “OSURA Annual Conference, Sept. 22, 2021/Welcome Video from President Johnson and Slide Presentations.” In addition, the November 2021 *OSURA News* contains summaries of the sessions: [https://osura.alumni.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/267/2021/11/OSURA-Nov21-FINAL.pdf](https://osura.alumni.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/267/2021/11/OSURA-Nov21-FINAL.pdf)
There was a total of 241 registrants (of these 42 were no shows). There were seventeen sponsors, including retirement communities, senior resources and opportunities, financial services, medical services, and commercial

Finance Committee

Committee Members: Jerry Newsom, chairperson, and Jerry Dare, Nancy Ingold, Shirley McCoy, Chuck Miller, Gabby Reiss, Diane Selby, Bill Shkurti, Ex officio members: Gemma McLuckie and Hal Noltimier

With reduced cultural arts and travel events, OSURA has had a smaller budget in FY 2022 than it had in pre-pandemic times. The main fiscal event (although perhaps not part of the Finance Committee’s responsibilities) was the establishment of the student food-insecurity endowment, thanks to donations totalling over $100,000 by March 2022. As authorized by the Board, the Finance Committee donated $3,460 from our checking account to the food endowment to make sure we reached the goal before the end of March.

Bill Shkurti proposed a policy to guide the committee in the future on how much cash to keep readily available, and following this policy, the committee approved moving $5,000 from our checking account to the quasi-endowment in September. Our endowments continue to grow, producing income to offset the slowly decreasing dues income. Sponsor funding for the fall conference has been strong, partially offsetting the lack of advertising in the newsletter. Building up advertising revenue in the newsletter is the largest financial challenge for OSURA at present.

The Committee plans to approve a FY 2023 budget at the May meeting, for presentation to the Board in June.

Friendship Committee

Committee Members: Sally Dellinger, chairperson, and Barbara Nelson, vice chair and secretary; and Rose Hart, Mary Anne Herbst, Margaret Hickle-Grimm, Gemma McLuckie, Nancy Wardwell, and Deb Zang

The Friendship Committee mission is to provide leadership and assistance in carrying out the interpersonal, caring responsibilities of OSURA. With this come the tasks of monitoring the passing of The Ohio State University retirees, sending condolence and benefit cards, conveying get well messages when notified, mailing thank you cards to those who have contributed to the endowment fund, and serving as greeters at some OSURA special events.
Since July 2021, the Friendship Committee has:

- Sent condolence and benefit cards to 203 Ohio State retirees and OSURA members. Deb Zang and Margaret Hickle-Grimm continue to work as a team to ensure the completion of these mailings.
- Sent 14 get well/thinking of you cards. Rose Hart continues to have the major role making sure our members receive well wishes.
- Continued to work on sending appreciation notes to those who contribute to OSURA

The committee would like to thank all who notified us of our retirees’ needs. We encourage you to continue to communicate those needs to the committee.

**Membership Committee**

Members: Sandy Bell, chair, and Mary Ann Anderson, Henry Canello, Rai Goerler, Brenda Hammond, Don Larson, Jerry Newsom, Diane Selby, Marie Taris, and Diane Whalen. Ex-Officio: Gemma McLuckie and Hal Noltimier

**Data**

Total members (lifetime and annual, retirees and spouse/partners) as of 11 April 2022: 2363. On 12 April 2021, total members were 2433, a drop of 70 members (56 Life Members and 14 Annual Members).

**Membership Recruitment**

Statistics show that OSURA Membership numbers are declining about 3% each year. One of our main goals each year is to look at ways to increase membership in OSURA. We have done several things to help reach this goal:

- We held a Fall Membership Drive to remind annual members to renew their membership for 2022. We made 162 renewal reminder calls; of those 162 calls, 100 (62%) renewed their memberships.
• We continue to hold a Quarterly Coffee Hour via zoom to introduce recent retirees to OSURA. Seven prospective members attended, with six of the attendees joining.
• We continue to send a Congratulations Packet to all newly retired OSU employees to invite them to become a part of OSURA.
• We updated the OSURA Brochure to reconnect with prospects who did not join OSURA after retirement.
• We have instituted a process of re-inviting OSU staff and faculty who have not joined OSURA at least six months after retirement.
• We created an OSURA Business Card for members to give to retirees they know who are not currently a part of OSURA.
• We did a survey of the OSURA membership to help us determine if there were activities people would like to see which we are not currently offering. We found that there is a lot of interest in the programs that we offer, but also that we need to provide information on those programs. There is also a great interest in Community Service opportunities as well as cooking and gardening programs.

Other Items

We are partnering with other committees to plan an event especially for new and former members to showcase the various ways to participate. Our hope is that this event will inspire attendees to become active and help lead the organization into the future.

We continue to provide a Member Spotlight article for the monthly OSURA News. The articles introduce a current OSURA member, illustrating what others are doing in retirement.

For FY2023 we look forward to collaborating with other leaders in OSURA to promote program opportunities for our members. We will also be conducting a survey on OSURA communication tools to better use these tools to reach current and prospective members.

Social Committee

Committee Members: Elenore Zeller, Chairperson, and Steven D'Ambrosio, Vice-Chairman; and Jerry Dare, Mary Anne Herbst, Paula Hook, Jerry Newsom, Shirley McCoy. Ex-officio members: Gemma McLuckie, and Hal Noltimier

The purpose of the OSURA Social Committee is to plan and organize a series of luncheons with a speaker for the continuing education, information, enlightenment, enrichment, and enjoyment of all OSURA members.
Due to the pandemic we had a virtual meeting via Zoom in October. Our speaker was Keith Meier, VP of Construction Planning for OSU. He gave us a very informative program of current construction on the Columbus campus and on High Street, plus future construction involving Lane Avenue.

In March, we held our first in-person luncheon in two years. Our speaker, Steven D. Ambrosio, told us about his trip to northern Canada to see the polar bears. We had 56 members in attendance.

In April, we learned about black holes and other interesting things about the universe from our speaker, Kris Spanek, professor of astronomy at OSU. Ending the year was a delightful and beautiful program in May about the first Cherry Blossom Festival in Columbus with Marlinda Iyer, an OSURA member, and Eric Neubauer, of the International Volunteer Organization described how the event came to be.

**Special Interest Groups (SIGS)**

**SIG leaders:** Lynne Boneberger, SIG coordinator; and Mary Cull, Jerry Dare, Lee Hill, Steve Miller, Carol Newcomb-Alutto, Hal Noltimier Rod Tomczak and Nancy Verber

Many of OSURA’s nine special interest groups were on hiatus during 2020 and 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Of those that began meeting again in FY 22, some gathered in person and others met via video conferencing or email for all or part of the year.

**Total attendance 445.** (Note that while most of the groups are now on summer break, numbers are not yet available for some that plan to meet later on in June.)

**Individual attendance, with group leaders:**

Book Club (Lee Hill): 94  
Bridge Club (Steve Miller): 31  
Craft Group (Mary Cull): 43  
Dinner Series (Carol Newcomb-Alutto): 105  
Health and Wellness Group (Rod Tomczak): Did not meet  
Litter Pickers (Mary Cull): Did not meet  
Photo Society (Nancy Verber): 84  
Tertulia Lunch (Jerry Dare): 54  
Walking/Hiking Group (Hal Noltimier): 34
Looking ahead, several leaders plan to step down, and the future of those groups is uncertain. Other groups are considering changes in frequency and/or format.

OSURA hopes to explore ideas for new groups and areas of interest. Suggestions are welcome.

**Travel and Cultural Arts (Combined)**

**Travel Members:** Alabelle Zghoul, Chair (January 2013-Present) and Jessica Pritchard, Vice Chair (January 2014-Present); and Betty Hriesik, Norma Harper, Margaret Hickle-Grimm, Cindy Giles, Judith Brandt and Darian Torrance

**Cultural Arts Members:** Susan Berntson, Marilyn Blackwell, Ron Currin, Regina Harper, Evelyn Freeman and Marlinda Iyer

**Achieved Goals for 2022**

1. Learn steps for organizing events. Committee members reviewed the process of arranging trips, how to do the budget and how to submit forms for the *OSURA News*.

2. To recruit new members. Three new members joined the committee

157 total participants

**One-day trips within Ohio, 156 participants**
Tour of Marietta and Ohio River by Riverboat, 50
Underground Railroad in Ripley, Ohio, 36
Amish Adventures, 28
La Comedia “A Christmas Story,” 42

1 International Trip, 1 participant
Exploring Greece and Its Islands, 1