



Newsletter

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May 2009

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In last month's column I warned of potential long-term threats to our pension systems. This month I give some details.

Defined Benefits (DB) plans like ours are losing favor and are under frontal attack even though it is clear that participants in Defined Contributions (DC) plans generally fare much worse than those in DB plans. Still, however, some legislators support DC plans to replace DB plans like ours. The reasons for this were explained in my April newsletter message. In the last Ohio legislative session HB 645 was introduced in the House by Rep. Larry Wolpert (R., Hilliard) to require all new state employees to be enrolled in a DC program. That bill would have seriously lessened the flow of the necessary new funds to our systems. It didn't pass, but a similar bill will likely be introduced again. We must watch and react.

One reason behind these attacks is that on a cultural level we face pension envy. Retirees in well-run DB plans such as STRS Ohio and OPERS have become the envy of others because we are faring much better than most of those in inferior plans. Consequently, some think that our benefits are not deserved and should be shared. Besides, they are "taxpayers' money." That's pension envy. It is a product of the current rising class warfare and distribution of wealth mentality in our society. That is evident in the federal stimulus bill just passed in which everyone gets some tax relief except those in state and private DB plans and those with very high incomes.

Although not yet mentioned explicitly this year, a major threat comes from the federal level for mandatory Social Security. Note that powerful people, among them Senator Baucus (D., Montana, Chairman, Finance Committee) and Peter Orszag, new Director of the Office of Management and Budget, favor mandatory Social Security. It is not clear what they have in mind, but it could happen in several ways. It could be phased in by replacing part of our pension plans with Social Security for new employees. Although that would decrease the liability of our pension plans several decades in the future, it would immediately lessen the necessary cash flow to our pension funds.

Most extreme, and perhaps less likely, would be the nationalization and confiscation of our state pension funds and those in other states. That would be an immediate and total disaster for us. The reason cited is that those funds are needed to mitigate the coming Social Security disaster. However, that is just a political excuse for a power grab supported by pension envy because all of the states' pension funds together wouldn't make a noticeable dent in the massive Social Security deficits.

Our health care subsidies are the immediate concern. HB 315 introduced in the last Ohio legislature by Rep Scott Oelslager (R., North Canton) would have provided long-term funding. It did not pass, but it will be introduced again this year. Without it the health insurance premium subsidy for STRS retirees is in question in the medium term. Your letters, etc. to support that are needed now.

These and other political threats are the reason for these columns because retirees can take action to prevent long-term damage to ourselves and especially to our younger colleagues. OSURA cannot lobby as an organization. However, for its part OSURA will keep you

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OSURA News

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Bucks for Charity-

Penelope F. O'Neil

Faculty Compensation and

Benefits Committee-

Richard M. Hill

Ohio Council of Higher Education

Retirees-

Louis P. DiOrio and

Thomas A. Willke

Staff Compensation and

Benefits Committee-

Judith A. McMahon

Historian

Fern E. Hunt

Office Manager

Kathi Hess

FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, April 14

The OSURA column in the current *Resources* issue features Tom Rockwell's material on long-term care insurance (LTCI). It made the first page of this publication which goes to all currently employed faculty and staff.

Gifts to the OSURA Endowment continue to come in at an increased rate over last year. How to better promote the OSURA Endowment Fund is on the continuing agenda of the Endowment Committee.

The Membership Committee has been reviewing the OSURA membership categories (their proposal will be discussed with the Bylaws Committee for final language, then reported back to the Board).

Current membership is 3,205: a natural cycle over the calendar quarters causes this total to fluctuate.

The Nominations Committee reported the following slate for 2009-2010: For President-Elect, Marie Taris; for Treasurer, Tom Ridenour; for Members-at-Large (3 to be elected), Odette Blum, Don Cooper, Howard Gauthier, Ora Levert, Joe Lipsky, and Jim Tootle.

OSURA/FACULTY CLUB PARTNERSHIP

OSURA members are offered sustaining membership in the OSU Faculty Club.

This is a 40 percent discounted rate in the usual initiation fee and monthly dues and both retired **staff** and **faculty** are eligible (but you must be a member of OSURA). See the April issue of this newsletter for details. (If you don't have your paper copy, you can read it on the OSURA web site – hr.osu.edu/osura, click on "Newsletter.")

WELCOME NEW RETIREES

We congratulate our colleagues who retired from The Ohio State University in March 2009.

Anderson, Linda D., Minority Affairs * **Barile**, Kathleen G., University Hospitals * **Colegate**, Bradford G., Student Health Services * **Edmond**, Kenneth A., Facilities Utilities * **Gump**, Elizabeth A. * University Hospitals * **Hoffelt**, Mary A., Communications and Technology * **Key**, Marilyn S., Internal Medicine * **Lauridsen**, Kathryn R., Rio Operations Headquarters * **Leppert**, Ellen M., Rio Operations Headquarters * **Makarich**, Joseph A., Student Health Service * **McKinstry**, Eva M., Family Medicine * **Mears**, Deanna R., Physics * **Moody**, Judith A., Corporate Services * **Mumaw**, Elizabeth A., OSUE County Operations * **Orr**, Carol A., University Hospitals * **Pass**, Ronald D., OSU Family Practice Services * **Rittinger**, David A., University Hospitals * **Rodrigo**, Indrani S., University Hospitals * **Scholl**, Rosemary I., Finance * **Thomas**, Henry D., Mansfield Campus * **Veno**, Mary J., Office of the President * **Walls**, Robert L., Rio Operations Headquarters * **Witten**, Ewana C., Computer Science and Engineering

Help welcome our colleagues to retirement and OSURA. Call those you know, encourage them to return their OSURA membership application, and invite them to attend an OSURA event with you.

LUNCH BUNCH NOW AT BUCKEYE HALL OF FAME CAFÉ

Reminder that the monthly lunches are now being held at the Buckeye Hall of Fame Café, 1421 Olentangy River Road, on the third Thursday of every month. A reservation is required by noon of the Monday preceding the lunch. Please notify the OSURA office. The charge is \$10, payable in cash at the Café.

OSURA Calendar

See "Description of Events" later in this newsletter for details.

- May 12 Board Meeting, 9:00 a.m., Longaberger Alumni House
May 14 Photo Society, 5:15 p.m., cocktails; 6:00 p.m., dinner; 7:30, program at Faculty Club
May 20 Book Club, 1:30 p.m., Carriage Hill Party House
May 21 Lunch Bunch, 11:15 a.m., Buckeye Hall of Fame Cafe, 1421 Olentangy River Road – REGISTRATION REQUIRED
May 26 Tertulia Breakfast, 8:00 a.m., Faculty Club
May 27 Bridge Group, 1:00 p.m., Friendship Village, Dublin
Jun 3 Kingwood Gardens and Malabar Farms, depart Fawcett Center, 7:30 a.m. – REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Jun 9 Annual Meeting, 4:00 p.m., Faculty Club – REGISTRATION REQUIRED FOR DINNER
Jun 24 Summer Picnic, 11:30 a.m., Park of Roses Shelter House
Jun 30 Tour of Nationwide and Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center and Chadwick Arboretum and Learning Gardens, carpool from Fawcett Center, 12:40 p.m. – REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Jul 24 A Touch of Portsmouth Tour, depart 8:00 a.m. from Fawcett Center – REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Sept 15-19 Best of Michigan: Frankenmuth, Mackinac Island, and Upper Peninsula, depart 7:00 a.m. September 15 from Fawcett Center – REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Notes:

- Bold font indicates that the event is new and listed for the first time.
- Arrive at the Fawcett Center 15 minutes earlier than the time of departure listed.
- Call the OSURA office if interested in an event for which registration is closed to see if space is available.

RESERVATIONS:

For those events marked "Registration Required":

- Call OSURA office (614-292-2916) and leave detailed message; you will receive a return call regarding your reservation request/status.
- PAYMENT is due in the office ONE WEEK after CONFIRMATION to keep reservation.
- Make check payable to OSURA (please write event date(s) and name(s) on check).
- Mail to 1590 North High Street, Suite 300, Columbus, OH 43201-2190.

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS AS SOON AS YOU KNOW YOU ARE INTERESTED IN AN EVENT!
Some fill quickly and you may be closed out if you delay.

SO YOU CAN PLAN AHEAD

The following events are in the planning stages – preparations are not far enough along to accept reservations, but they are listed here so you can pencil them in your calendar. When all details are in place (cost, times, content, etc.), they will be listed in the OSURA Calendar of the newsletter; until then, if you want information, contact the arranger.

- September 24, Coping with Change XII (Nancy Wardwell, Arranger)
- October 14, Marietta Sternwheeler (Hazel Benson, Arranger)
- December 4, LaComedia Dinner Theatre (Sylvia Jackson and Barb Preston, Arrangers)
- December 9, Holiday Buffet, Antrim Park Shelter House (Penny O'Neil, Arranger)

"ENGAGEMENTS AND ACTIONS"

CONFERENCE ON CONCERNS RELATIVE TO PUBLIC RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

The conference on STRS-like state retirement programs sponsored by the Ohio Council of Higher Education Retirees (OCHER) will be held on May 19 at the State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio, 275 East Broad Street, Columbus. All Benefits Committee members and any other interested retirees are encouraged to register.

The program and registration form were published in the April issue of the OSURA newsletter (available on the OSURA web site, hr.osu.edu/osura; click on "Newsletter"). Registrations must be received by May 12.

University News

BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACTIONS

At their April meeting, The Ohio State University Board of Trustees adopted a resolution approving the conversion from an academic quarter system to a semester-based calendar, which will result in a better integrated system of higher education in Ohio. The switch will take place in Autumn 2012. (*See back of this newsletter for more on this.*)

They also authorized purchase of the Holiday Inn, 328 West Lane Avenue, and renovations of the facility to convert it into a university residence hall. Cost of the 11-story, 243-room hotel is \$19 million. The residence hall would house 458 students. The purchase and renovations will be financed through University bond sales, and the debt service will be paid primarily through student housing fees. The University intends to begin renovations immediately.

The building will be operated in the same manner as other Ohio State residence halls, with a professional hall director, resident advisers, and educational and social programming. In addition to the guest rooms with private bathrooms, most of which will be converted into double-occupancy residence hall rooms, the property includes a restaurant and banquet areas, which will become a Campus Dining Services location, as well as public areas and meeting rooms, which will

be converted into study and programming areas. The existing swimming pool will be filled in.

The adjacent 244-car multi-level parking garage is included in the purchase and will be operated by Ohio State's Department of Transportation and Parking as faculty, staff, and visitor parking.

In addition, the Board:

- approved the proposal to establish a bachelor of science in construction system management degree in the College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. The new degree will incorporate most of the curriculum and resources of the current construction systems management within the bachelor of science in agriculture degree.
- approved the renaming of the Department of Industrial, Welding and Systems Engineering to the Department of Integrated Systems Engineering, effective immediately. The new name represents the interdisciplinary nature of the department's two programs.
- named Susan S. Williams vice provost for academic policy and faculty resources in the Office of Academic Affairs, effective April 1.
- reappointed William L. MacDonald dean and director of The Ohio State University-Newark, July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2014.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

William J. Shkurti, has announced his intention to retire from his post as senior vice president for business and finance effective March 30, 2010. During his remaining year at Ohio State, Shkurti will focus primarily on finance and budget matters. Because the scope of the job has grown too complex for one office, the planning and administrative functions will now report to Jeff Kaplan, senior vice president for administration and planning. The University will embark on a search for a new chief financial officer with the hope that this individual will be in place upon Shkurti's retirement.

President Gee announced "several other several key organizational changes that complete the reconfiguration of the University's senior leadership structure. These changes will help us to achieve our goal of becoming one of the nation's premier ten public universities."

- Effective April 1, Senior Vice President and Special Assistant to the President Jeff Kaplan assumed responsibility for all facilities planning, master planning, space planning, and real estate across campus. "This move leverages his talents as a strategist at a time when the University is embarking on a period of tremendous growth and development."
- "Associate Vice President and Director of Athletics Gene Smith retains his reporting relationship with me and Jeff, and together they continue overseeing the Schottenstein Center, the Blackwell Inn and Conference Center, the Fawcett Center, and the Drake Center."
- The Arts Initiative and the Office of Student Life will now report to Executive Vice President and Provost Joseph A. Alutto. "This change centralizes oversight for the entire student experience, facilitates information-sharing and programming, and enables us to provide the finest-possible collegiate experience."
- "Senior Vice President and General Counsel Chris Culley now reports directly to me. Previously, Chris had a dual reporting assignment to Jeff and me. Additionally, Senior Vice President Joyce Beatty now reports to me and will maintain a close working relationship with the provost. This move strengthens the connections between Ohio State's faculty, staff, and students and the communities we serve."

OSURA ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday, June 9, 2009

4:00 p.m.

Faculty Club

(valet parking available)

4:00 p.m. – Business Meeting

Proposed Amendments to Bylaws (see below) ♦ Outstanding Service Award

Speaker

Gene Smith

Associate Vice President and Director of Athletics at The Ohio State University.

"Building Leaders for Tomorrow"

6:30 p.m. – Dinner

Entertainment: "Buckeye Blend" - Barber Shop Quartet

Dinner Cost: \$30 per person

Registration materials were mailed to members

Deadline for reservations - June 3, 2009

Send check to: Kathi Hess, OSURA, 1590 North High Street, Suite 300, Columbus OH 43201-2190

NOTICE OF OSURA BYLAW CHANGE

In accordance with Article VII of the bylaws of The Ohio State University Retirees Association, the following proposed amendment to the bylaws will be presented for consideration at the Annual Meeting, June 9, 2009.

Article V – Dues

Existing Language: In March the annual dues for the next year shall be set by the Board.

Proposed Language: Dues shall be set by the Board.

Rationale for Change:

1. In recent years, the Board has determined the dues for the succeeding year before the March meeting. The existing bylaw required a pro forma vote during a meeting held during March. It is preferable to have the bylaws in line with actual practice.
2. The current bylaw speaks only to "annual dues" but the Board has been setting dues of life membership for many years. The proposed bylaw will clarify the Board's responsibility to set dues for life membership as well as for annual membership.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(Continued from Page 1)

informed. Also, some OSURA members are building coalitions by belonging to umbrella organizations of retirees that can formally lobby, namely OCHER (Ohio state universities), the Big Ten Retirees Association, PERI, and others. Your duty as retirees is to keep informed of such threats by reading the reports in the newsletter and elsewhere, and, if necessary, take action as individuals with letters, e-mails, and telephone calls. They matter. Politicians like to be re-elected.

Our funds are o.k. for the short term, and despite these potential threats we have to live with the hope and trust that none of them will ever come to pass. However, as the wise one said, "Trust everybody, but always cut the cards."

- Tom Willke

Estate Planning Seminar

OSURA sponsored an Estate Planning Seminar April 2. There was a great turnout, with nearly 100 in attendance. James Skeeles, Extension Educator, OSU, and Russell Cunningham, Attorney and OSBA Certified Specialist in Estate Planning, Trust and Probate Law, Barrett, Easterday, Cunningham & Eselgroth LLP, gave a presentation discussing many issues that need to be addressed by each of us as we create our estate plans. The following article is a brief summary of the topics discussed.

During the few days leading up to the seminar, news reporters placed estate taxes in the headlines as Congress debated the 2010 budget resolution. There are ongoing proposals and negotiations related to various federal estate tax provisions. However, estate planning is much more than just dealing with headline issues like taxes. It also involves planning your income for retirement, planning for nursing home expenses, providing distribution plans for beneficiaries other than the default provisions under state law, minimizing conflicts, and improving communication.

The executor or trustee of your estate will be responsible for paying estate tax on your taxable estate to the extent the value of your estate exceeds the value of the exclusions provided by the federal government and Ohio. The federal government provides an exclusion amount of \$3,500,000 for deaths in 2009 and \$1,000,000 for deaths in 2011 and beyond. Congress repealed the federal estate tax for 2010, so if you die in 2010 your estate will not owe any federal estate tax regardless of the size of your estate. However, the current proposals will reinstate the federal estate tax for 2010 and will either continue the \$3,500,000 exclusion amount for 2010 and beyond or make the exclusion \$5,000,000 for 2010 and beyond. Depending on the outcome of the negotiations, Congress may index these numbers for future inflation. Ohio, on the other hand, provides an exclusion amount of only \$338,334. Therefore, you may still need to plan for minimizing taxes even if your estate is under the federal threshold.

Many people want to avoid probate court, and there are a number of ways for you to accomplish this goal. One common method is for you to establish a trust. However, you must do more than just sign the trust. You need to take the additional steps of funding the trust, which usually involves titling assets into the name of the trustee or creating beneficiary designations. Other common methods of avoiding probate also involve proper titling of assets, such as joint tenants with rights of survivorship or Payable on Death (POD) or Transfer on Death (TOD) beneficiary designations. You also avoid probate by naming beneficiaries on your life insurance policies and retirement accounts.

Because of the income tax consequences of retirement accounts, you should carefully evaluate your beneficiary designation options. You may want to consider transfers to charity from the accounts either during your life or at death. The charity does not have to pay income tax on the amounts received. If your children or other beneficiaries receive distributions from a retirement account, they have to pay income tax. They may want to consider stretching the payments out over their lifetimes. Otherwise, your children usually will pay tax on all of the income within one to five years after your death.

Trusts are useful for other reasons as well. Particularly for married couples, you may use trusts to minimize estate taxes upon the death of the surviving spouse. You may also use trusts to protect assets from the creditors of your spouse, children, grandchildren, or other desired beneficiary.

This summary is just a sampling of topics discussed. For anyone interested in learning more about these topics and others, there are educational materials available online at <http://ohioline.osu.edu/ep-fact/index.html> in an Estate Planning Fact Sheet Series. These online materials will assist you as you prepare to meet with a qualified tax advisor who can help apply these concepts to your individual circumstances.

16 million people in the U.S. have Pre-Diabetes. Are You One of Them?

A research study evaluating the investigational use of pioglitazone to determine its effects on bone density is being conducted at The Ohio State University Medical Center. You may be eligible if you are a woman who has been post-menopausal for five years and have elevated fasting blood sugar.

To learn more about the study, call Jan Varga-Spangler at 1-800-678-6156.

Benefits

FROM THE BENEFITS COMMITTEE,

April 7

Judi McMahon was welcomed as OSURA's representative on the Staff Compensation and Benefits Committee and a retiree co-representative for OPERS.

STRS Ohio

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) selected STRS among other plan sponsors like SERS, for a review of the prescription drug program for calendar years 2006, 2007, and 2008 to ensure it meets or exceeds the minimum Medicare D standards. STRS has been participating in the federal government's Medicare D Employer Subsidy Program since its inception in 2006. This participation allows STRS to receive subsidy payments of 28 percent of drug costs applicable to eligible Medicare members. STRS has received \$32-\$36 million annually in subsidy.

On behalf of the Retirement Board, the executive director sent letters to the CEO's and boards of directors of troubled financial institutions to encourage their prudent review and application of all Troubled Assets Relief Program (TARP) proceeds. Specifically, STRS is concerned that the continued excessive spending by these firms has resulted in lower stock prices and is harming the value of STRS pension and health care fund assets. TARP is a program of the U.S. Government designed to purchase assets and equity from certain financial institutions in order to strengthen its financial sector and address the sub-prime mortgage crisis.

Estate Planning Seminar

The Estate Planning Seminar held on April 2 was highly successful, with nearly one hundred attendees. Seventy-eight percent of the audience responded on their evaluation sheets, giving the program a 96 percent rating of "good" or "excellent." (*Editor's note: See report of the seminar on Page 6 of this newsletter.*)

LEGISLATION TO WATCH

National

HR 1203 would enable federal retirees, active duty military personnel, and military retirees to pay their health care premiums with pre-tax dollars. STRS-Ohio will be following this issue to determine if it would be possible to extend the benefit to all retirees.

HR 1068 proposes a tax be imposed on certain securities transactions. It is estimated that this could cost STRS-Ohio as much as \$100,000,000 or more annually. STRS is working with CalPERS on this issue.

HR 1200 would create a single-payer health care system. Under the American Health Security Act, each state would create its own health care system with a federally mandated floor for basic health benefits. The plan would be publicly financed, with the federal government acting as the single payer, but care would be privately delivered and managed. The larger health care discussion in Congress is far from advocating a single-payer model.

ALERT: The federal stimulus plan reduces income tax withholding as part of the "Making Work Pay" credit, but this credit does not apply to retirement income, so the reduced withholding which began with the April pension check could result in a lower refund or in retirees owing taxes when they file their 2009 federal income tax returns next April. You may want to take this into account now.

IN MEMORIAM

We honor and thank our colleagues for their service and the many contributions that made our university a finer place.

Alls, Jr., Monroe, March 29, Physical Facilities, age 65 * **Blackledge**, Dale J., April 4, Agriculture County Extension, age 70 * **Blair**, Billie D., March 29, Extension/Entomology, age 81 * **Cook**, Dorothea Florence, March 16, University Hospitals and OSURA, age 82 * **Dowling**, William D., March 16, Education, age 83 * **Evans**, Carol, Music and OSURA, April 8, age 94 * **Fowler**, Sharon M., March 12, University Hospitals, age 59 * **Galloway**, Ernestine A., March 22, University Hospitals, age 84 * **Hunker**, Henry Louis, Geography and John Glenn School of Public Affairs, April 10, age 80 * **Janis**, Jan Zenon, March 12, age 83 * **Lundstedt**, Sven B., March 20, Public Policy and Management and OSURA, age 82 * **Munk**, Benedikt A., March 13, Electrical Engineering, age 79 * **Noyes**, David Holbrook, April 6, Physiology, age 74 * **Schoyer**, George P., April 3, University Libraries and OSURA, age 90 * **Smith**, Charles B., March 30, Civil Engineering, age 94 * **Whiting**, Larry R., March 29, Agriculture, age 70

When you know of the death of an OSU retiree or employee or spouse of an OSU retiree/employee, please contact the OSURA office – 614-292-2916.

Description of Events

See Pages 12 and 13 in the OSURA Directory or the OSURA web site for "Travel and Event Policies and Procedures."

- **Procedure for Reservations:** See Page 3 of this newsletter.
- **Challenge Levels:**
 - 1 – Minimal walking/standing, may include a few stairs
 - 2 – Moderate walking/standing, could include a few sets of stairs
 - 3 – Moderate walking/standing, includes climbing many stairs and/or uneven terrain
 - 4 – Lots of walking/standing, includes climbing stairs or hilly walkways and/or extended weather exposure

Note: Most trips will allow travelers to remain on the bus, if desired. Disabled persons should refer to Page 12 in the OSURA Directory for information on assistance.
- **Events Marked with *:** Participants must sign Disclaimer on Event Roster on the day of the event.
- **Registration Closes:** This is the deadline for reservations because it is the date vendors must be paid in full for the event.
- **Refund Deadline:** Reservations must be cancelled by this date to receive a refund of payment/deposit; cancellations after this date will be reviewed by the arranger and the OSURA office for refund decisions.

MAY 14 (THURSDAY) PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Reid Huntley will present "Upper Arlington Labor Day Art Festivals." Members' image theme: "photos on art."
Time and Place: 5:15 p.m., cocktails; 6:00 p.m., dinner; 7:30 p.m., program at the OSU Faculty Club.
Arranger: John Houston (*Photographic Society*)

MAY 20 (WEDNESDAY) BOOK CLUB

The Book Club is going to the dogs and cats! We are very much "in" with this month's non-fiction selections of *Dewey*, by Vicki Myron, and/or *Merle's Door*, by Ted Kerasote. Come share your own stories and other favorite animal books during a lively discussion with delicious treats.
Time and Place: 1:30 p.m., Carriage Hill Party House, Lafayette Drive (Contact Lee Hill, 614-459-4743, for directions.)
Arranger: Marajean Huling (*Book Club SIG*)

MAY 21 (THURSDAY) LUNCH BUNCH

May's speaker will be Professor Emeritus Lawrence Herson, of the OSU Political Science Department. In "Gifts of the New World: Food, Food, Glorious Food," he will describe how the food of the New World changed the diet of Europe, made armies and wars bigger, saved the peasants from starvation, and brought misery to Ireland. **RESERVATIONS REQUIRED**
Time and Place: 11:15 a.m. (lunch will be served at 11:30), Buckeye Hall of Fame Cafe, 1421 Olentangy River Road
Cost: \$10 cash for sit-down lunch
Arrangers: OSURA Social Committee

MAY 26 (TUESDAY) TERTULIA BREAKFAST

A group meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month for breakfast and conversation. Why not join them?
Time and Place: 8:00 a.m., Faculty Club
Cost: Breakfast on your own
Arranger: William Riley (*Tertulia Breakfast SIG*)

MAY 27 (WEDNESDAY) BRIDGE GROUP

Join this group for a good game of Bridge.
Time and Place: 1:00 p.m., Friendship Village Dublin, North CR
Arrangers: Sherry Detillian and Marianne Naber (*Bridge Group SIG*)

JUNE 3 (WEDNESDAY) * KINGWOOD GARDENS AND MALABAR FARMS

Challenge Level 3
Be guided through the gardens (wildflowers, peonies, iris, and roses in bloom), greenhouse, and mansion at Kingwood Center. Enjoy a buffet lunch at the Café on Main with time to visit the historical carousel before going to Malabar Farm. This is America's most famous farm, the country estate of Louis Bromfield, Pulitzer Prize winning author, progressive farmer, and conservationist. Take a wagon ride and tour the 32-room home where Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall were married.
Depart: 7:30 a.m. from Fawcett Center
Return: 6:00 p.m.
Cost: \$45 (bus transportation, tour fees, buffet lunch, snacks, and all tips)
Refund Deadline: **May 1**
Arrangers: Carol Baker and William Studer (*Travel Committee*)

JUNE 9 (TUESDAY) ANNUAL MEETING

Gene Smith, associate vice president and director of athletics at OSU, will speak on "Building Leaders for Tomorrow" following the business meeting. Dinner and entertainment by the Buckeye Blend, a barber shop quartet, will conclude the evening. See Page 5 of this newsletter for details and proposed amendments to the OSURA bylaws. Registration materials have been mailed to OSURA members.
Time and Place: 4:00 p.m. at the Faculty Club
Cost: \$30 (dinner)
Reservation Deadline: June 3 (dinner)
Arrangers: OSURA Board

**JUNE 24 (WEDNESDAY)
SUMMER PICNIC**

Challenge Level 1

Join your OSURA friends for the annual picnic at the Park of Roses. Bring a favorite dish (with serving utensil) to share and your own table service.

Beverages will be provided. Call the OSURA Office (614-292-2916) to let the committee know you are coming. Lunch will be served at noon.

Time and Place: 11:30 a.m., Park of Roses Shelter House

Cost: A dish to share

Arranger: Penny O'Neil (*Social Committee*)

**JUNE 30 (TUESDAY) *
NATIONWIDE AND OHIO FARM BUREAU 4-H
CENTER AND CHADWICK ARBORETUM AND
LEARNING GARDENS**

Challenge Level 2 (Quite a bit of walking)

The new 4-H Center features many of the most recent and efficient energy-saving devices, including a geothermal heating and cooling system, highly reflective roof, a water usage reduction system, and more. Tour will be conducted by Allen Auck, program coordinator. Then walk across Lane Avenue for a talk and tour of the Chadwick Arboretum led by Program Director Mary Maloney. For those who desire, there is an adjacent OSU ice cream parlor. Tour can not accommodate more than 15 people.

Depart: 12:40 p.m., Fawcett Center (meet in lobby to carpool to the 4-H Center)

Return: 3:00-3:30 p.m.

Cost: \$5

Reservation Deadline: June 23

Arranger: Don Cooper (*Cultural Arts Committee*)

**JULY 24 (FRIDAY) *
A TOUCH OF PORTSMOUTH**

Challenge Level 2

A guide will board the bus to tell us about the 50-plus scenes on the Floodwall Murals that chronicle more than 2,000 years of Portsmouth and Scioto County history. Then we will tour the 1810 House, a historic old farm homestead that represents the courage of pioneers who cleared, settled, and cultivated the wild forest near the mighty Ohio River. After lunch on your own at the historic Portsmouth Brewing Company, we will visit the Southern Ohio Museum. The exhibits include the Anna Louise Stanton Doll Collection; Carl Ackerman Collection of Historic Photographs; Ohio

Designer Craftsmen's Best of 2009; collection of American scene paintings by Portsmouth native Clarence Carter; and Art of the Ancients: The Ohio Valley, a collection of 10,000 archaeological objects.

Depart: 8:00 a.m. from Fawcett Center

Return: Approximately 6:00 p.m.

Cost: \$38 (bus transportation, admissions and tours, bus driver tip – lunch not included)

Registration Closes: June 17

Refund Deadline: June 17

Arrangers: Betty Maynard and Gladys Murray (*Travel Committee*)

**SEPTEMBER 15-19 (TUESDAY-SATURDAY) *
THE BEST OF MICHIGAN**

Challenge Level 2

We will arrive in Frankenmuth to spend the afternoon browsing at Bronner's Christmas Wonderland and the other shops and attractions in this fascinating village. That evening we'll enjoy a family-style dinner at Zehnder's Restaurant. The next day we will travel northward to the Straits of Mackinaw for a three-night stay. We will take a ferry ride to Mackinac Island for a sumptuous breakfast at the Grand Hotel. A self-guided tour of the hotel is included followed by a horse-drawn carriage ride with a narrated tour of the island. In the afternoon we will have time to explore the area on our own before returning via ferry to the mainland. We will travel to the Upper Peninsula with our first stop at Tahquamenon Falls, the second largest waterfall east of the Mississippi River. After lunch, we'll continue to Whitefish Point to visit the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum. Then we will board a boat for a cruise on St. Mary's River as we enjoy a buffet-style dinner and a narrated ride through the Soo Locks. Following breakfast the next morning, we will depart for home with many fond memories.

Depart: 7:00 a.m. September 15 from Fawcett Center

Return: Approximately 7:00 p.m. September 19

Cost: \$781, double, triple, or quad occupancy; \$959, single (bus transportation, lodging, 4 breakfasts, one lunch, 4 dinners, tours, admissions, tips, luggage handling, travel insurance). Refund (less \$64 insurance fee) after July 20 will be given only for illness or emergency situation.

Registration Closes: July 20

Refund Deadline: July 20 (less \$64 insurance fee)

Arrangers: JoAnn Rueger and Betty Maynard (*Travel Committee*)

OPERS PUBLISHES MEDICARE GUIDE: The Ohio Public Employees Retirement System has introduced a new publication, the "OPERS Medicare Guide," designed to help you understand how the OPERS health care plan works with Medicare and to help you navigate the Medicare enrollment process with Social Security. It provides an overview of the different parts of Medicare coverage, enrollment, and coordination of benefits as well as answers to a list of frequently asked questions and is available to view, print, or order via the OPERS web site, www.opers.org.



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MAY 2009
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New Academic Calendar to Begin in 2012

Ohio State University Media Relations, April 3, 2009

The Ohio State University will join the ranks of Ohio's 12 other four-year universities when it switches to a semester-based academic year in Autumn 2012. The University's Board of Trustees voted unanimously at their April meeting to adopt a resolution approving the conversion from an academic quarter system, in place since 1922, to a semester calendar.

"Ohio State is acting partially in response to the University System of Ohio's Strategic Plan for Higher Education, 2008-2017, which calls for a common academic calendar across all state universities," said Ohio State Provost Joseph A. Alutto. "But the move to semesters has been seriously considered for some time." In 1991, during E. Gordon Gee's first tenure as Opera president, the prospect of a calendar conversion was rejected in the committee stage. In 2001, the conversion was approved by committee, but tabled by the University Senate, citing an inadequate student information system at the time. The university has since implemented a new, modern system.

"The conversion to semesters will allow us to better integrate with other universities, facilitating the transfer of credits and students," said Alutto. Among the benefits to students will be an earlier entrance into the job market following graduation. The current quarter system keeps students in school a month longer than their competitors for jobs from semester schools. The conversion will also facilitate opportunities for student research, international study, internships, service learning, and other specialized learning experiences for undergraduate and graduate students.

According to the final report of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Semesters, formed last year to study the feasibility of a switch, the conversion process should be complete by 2012 at an estimated cost of \$8.7 million to \$11.2 million for such expenses as technology modifications, course redesign and curriculum alignment. The Committee for Enrollment and Student Progress is working on the structure of the overall academic calendar, which will be voted on by the University Senate. Trustees will then vote on the rule change to accommodate that calendar. The Office of Academic Affairs, the University Senate and the academic units – including the regional campuses – will begin identifying how to implement the changes. In addition, Ohio State will work with other universities that are changing to semesters, including Wright State, Ohio University, the University of Cincinnati, and Columbus State Community College.