

Fall 2016 Newsletter
September 25, 2016

Dear SOU Retiree,

You are receiving this letter from me, Ralph Fidler, President of the Retirees Association, in lieu of a Fall Newsletter, for at this time the Newsletter lacks an editor. Publication has ended until someone volunteers to assume the duties of soliciting articles and preparing copy.

Greetings and Invitation to the Luncheon: I first wish to greet you, then remind you that the Association's fall luncheon will be held on Friday, October 14, 2016 in the Rogue River Room in Stevenson Union, beginning at 11:30. The format will be the same as in the past, with time for socializing and getting lunches at the food court. The program itself will begin at noon, and as I will be on a cruise to the South Pacific at this point, Bev De La Zerda, a past Association president, has kindly offered to preside in my absence.

The program itself promises to be a fine one. The featured speaker will be Susan Hearn, of the Southern Oregon Friends of Hospice. She will discuss the immensely valuable work being by all hospice programs in Southern Oregon, and will explain what facilities, programs, and services are available to residents of the area. She will also discuss documents used during hospice care and gladly answer questions any of us may have about how hospice works and what its benefits are. Prior to Susan's presentation we will hear a few words from our newest scholarship recipient, Heidi Dawn. We are also hoping for the opportunity to introduce to you SOU's new President, Dr. Linda Schott.

Report on Retirees Council Business: The Council is comprised of the following members, serving staggered three year terms: Ralph Fidler, Glenda Woods, Belinda Melendez, David Hoffman, Barbie Breneiser, Frank Lang, James Dean, Connie Alexander, and Ernie Ettlich. Officers for the coming year were elected, these being Ralph Fidler, president; Glenda Woods, treasurer; and Belinda Melendez, secretary. John Engelhardt (jje@jeffnet.org) continues as the Association's web master. You can find the web-site by searching at: retirees.sou.edu.

During our hour long meeting on Sept. 6, 2016, Council members agreed to dates for winter and spring luncheons (Feb. 17, 2017 and May 19, 2017), settled on future programs and speakers, and discussed such matters as contacting retiring faculty (to invite them to become members of the Association) and building membership; meeting with the University's new president; and determining how to most effectively contact retirees in the future, as well as provide opportunities for them to inform us all about their unique experiences and perspectives.

Given the fact that we can no longer publish a *Retirees Association Newsletter*, Council members discussed alternatives. In past months, I have asked for a volunteer to

assume the editorship, but no one has stepped forward. (I believe that the newsletter has been an important publication for us, and that Carol McNair and Jim Dean have done a wonderful job of editing it for the last several years.) Two problems we discussed are these: 1) how to keep in touch with the membership now; and 2) how to provide a platform for writing done by Association members. Jim Dean suggested that we should probably turn to digital publication—use email and the web-site as places to inform retirees of Association programs, luncheons, scholarship activity, and so on. We also need to encourage people with self-edited stories or articles about retired life to submit them in a pdf. compatible format to John Engelhardt, for posting on the web-site. There are no space constraints when we post to the web-site, and we incur no publication or mailing costs. However, not all members of the Association are aware of the site or are not inclined to go to it. So we may have to continue mailing printed material to some members. To ensure that all our members are regularly contacted, we need to have as many of you as possible submit your current email addresses to us so we can update our membership information and stay in touch.

Enclosed with this letter is a billing for 2016-17 dues, which remain the same. On the form is a space for donating to the scholarship fund. We hope you are able to contribute to this worthwhile activity.

A Personal Note: A few years back, when the Association president suggested that there was a real possibility that the Association would cease to exist if no one stepped forward to serve on the Council, Dave Hoffman and I both thought, “Wow, this can’t happen,” and volunteered to serve as co-presidents. The luncheons mean so much in the exchanges we have with other retirees. Having been a staff person, I thought it an honor to get to meet and know the University’s faculty and other staff members and to update each other on what is going on in our lives. Dave and I were a good mix in assisting each other in conducting meetings and handling the luncheons with the help of other council members. Although it takes time and thought to run the meetings and organize the luncheons, it is a pleasure to be able to converse with other council members and to greet retirees as they come to luncheons. I feel honored to have worked with such a fine group of people while at the University and feel blessed to be able to get together with them at the luncheons.

I continue to believe that we all benefit by remaining in touch with SOU’s other retirees and encourage you to think of serving on the Council in the future. To demonstrate to you that such service is not demanding, I asked members of the current Council to write me brief accounts of what they do so that I might give you a sense of the amount of work involved. Glenda Woods, current treasurer, has this to say: “Serving on the Council is not a stressful thing, and there is not a great deal of work involved. We attend council meetings—which are always pleasant occasions—once per term to discuss Association business. Recurring topics include such items as the newsletter, Association memberships, council memberships, treasurer’s reports, our scholarship fund and awards, election of officers, and entertainment for luncheons. As Treasurer I am responsible for preparing the proposed and final budgets based on financial information from the SOU Foundation and Extended Campus Programs and presenting

budget information to the Council members during meetings. During luncheons the Treasurer sits at a table where I and others distribute name tags and take dues payments. This is not burdensome, and it provides an opportunity to meet and say “Hello” to fellow retirees as they arrive. . . I am beginning my second year as Treasurer. It has been a positive and enjoyable experience for me; so I’m happy to recommend that others volunteer to serve on the Council should there be vacancies.”

Jim Dean, who has served several terms as president as well as editor of the Newsletter concludes thus: “It’s been a few years since I was on the Council, but I do have experience amounting to about eight years of the past nineteen. It strikes me that you and others have stream-lined the operation of the Council, to make serving less a burden—though I’m not aware that it was ever a great burden (the presidents and the newsletter editors sharing the largest burden).”

Finally, Barbie Breneiser’s account: “I’m into my second year on the Council. I feel the time commitments are minimal for a Council member. Council meetings usually run about an hour, so it is not a huge time commitment. Attending the luncheons is always a fun activity—reconnecting with other retirees and hearing an interesting program is time well spent. I also appreciate that our contributions help to provide a scholarship for a worthy student. I think the Retirees Association is a worthwhile organization that we should encourage others to join.”

As indicated above, serving on the Council is a rewarding experience and does not take that much time. I hope that as members’ terms expire you will willingly step forward to serve if you have not done so in the past.

Finally, ending on a light note, I admit to being someone who loves bad puns and jokes that make readers or listeners groan, so before Marilyn and I sail into the deep south Pacific, I leave you these three samples: 1) “They told me I had type-A blood, but it was a Typo.” 2) “When chemists die, they barium.” And 3) “Don’t worry about old age; it doesn’t last.”

Respectfully yours,

Ralph Fidler, President