



Retirees Association

Spring Newsletter 2011

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

by Sue Corp

At the Fall and Winter luncheons and in the Winter Newsletter, we outlined the changes which are coming to the funding structure of the SOU Retirees' Association. As you will recall, the Elderhostel Program will no longer be underwriting the Retiree's Association expenses beginning this coming Fall. Your Council has requested feedback from our membership in the form of questionnaires at both luncheons, as well as soliciting responses via the newsletter.

The Council appreciates the thoughtful and well-considered responses to the

questionnaires. Following a lively discussion at our March 23 meeting, the Council voted unanimously to establish a \$20 membership fee. Your decision to join or not join the SOU Retiree's Association will have no impact on your current University retiree benefits. A form for your use is included in this issue. You'll also notice opportunities on this form to make an additional donation to our scholarship fund as well as to provide additional dollars to support publication of the newsletter. Lodi Belford graciously agreed, upon a unanimous vote of the Council, to serve the Association as our new Treasurer and handle the ensuing finances.

Additionally, the Council voted to form a committee which will begin work immediately

to clarify the benefits available to all SOU Retirees. As the committee's work progresses, we will inform you of the results of their efforts. Please remember you may follow the Council's work on line as minutes of the meetings are now posted on our website: <http://retirees.sou.edu>.

Please remember to RSVP to Sally Klein about the Spring luncheon, May 20, at the Higher Education Center in Medford. SOU President Mary Cullinan will be our speaker, and we'll have an opportunity to tour this amazing facility following her remarks. Please join us for this special chance to experience SOU's unique outreach and collaboration with RCC and the Medford community. ▲

An Invitation to Lunch

Jeanne Stallman

The Retirees Association's next luncheon is on May 20 in Medford; I extend a personal invitation, urging you to attend. As the Retirees Association contact for years, and now the University's head at the Higher Education Center, I am particularly excited about sharing the HEC facilities with you! It feels like inviting some good friends over for lunch at my new house. And our Medford campus is indeed a home to be proud of, from its green features to its smart classrooms. I think you'll find that the light, airy classrooms here in the region's commercial hub feel rather different from classrooms you think of on the Ashland campus. I would love to show you around the building, explain its hidden features, and talk about how our Medford campus relates to both the main campus and to our sister institution and cohabitant of the Higher Education Center, RCC. No doubt there is some history here, and ideas about the role of a branch campus, about which we could converse at length!

Nevertheless, the focus is of course on your lunch with each other. At your lunch in Medford you will get to enjoy each other's company in a new setting – the Multipurpose Room on our ground floor level just off the lobby. It's a cozier setting than the Stevenson Union, as the room seats only 70 people maximum. Before or after lunch you can check out what kind of students frequent our Medford campus – and maybe squeeze in a little shopping or antiquing in downtown Medford! Plus, there's a spe-

cial surprise lined up for you: this year's McNair Scholars will be presenting their research in the Presentation Hall immediately after your luncheon. This is a great chance to witness the presentation of a next generation of young scholars! Because the McNair event is a first at the Higher Education Center (it is part of an effort to expand Southern Oregon Arts & Research to our Medford campus), the scholars are very much hoping you will stay for their presentations. YOU are a primary reason their presentations were scheduled here!

continued, page 4...

The Retirees Association's SPRING LUNCHEON

President Mary Cullinan, Speaker
Friday, May 20, 2011
11:30 am – 1:30 pm
Higher Education Center, Medford

RSVP to Sally Klein by
Friday, May 13, 2011
Email (preferred): kleins@sou.edu
Or Telephone: 541-552-6049

Those interested in sharing the van or rides should contact Jeanne Stallman: 541-552-6378

What is a Dramaturg?

By Alan Armstrong

Ten years or so ago, working in my Center for Shakespeare Studies office, I got a call from Dr. Lue Douthit, who wanted to know if anyone at SOU was an expert in the poetry of John Donne. “That would be me,” I said, casting both grammar and modesty aside. Though I now directed a Shakespeare Studies program, I had written my doctoral dissertation, at Cornell University, on Donne’s love elegies. It turned out that Lue—Director of Literary Development and Dramaturgy at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival—was looking for help with the next season’s production of Margaret Edson’s hit play *Wit*, in which Donne’s poetry played a crucial part.

And so I found myself leading a series of Donne tutorials with Lue and actors Catherine Coulson and Linda Alper, who would play the roles of a noted Donne scholar and her former graduate student, now diagnosed with cancer. Although I had collaborated with OSF actors in theatre education programs and reviewed OSF productions for many years, this was my first direct involvement in the work that actors do to bring a play to life. It was fun—both like and unlike the work I had always done to teach Shakespeare’s plays in the classroom.

A few years later, in 2005, I got a second unexpected call from Lue, wondering if I’d be interested in helping with another play, but this time more actively, from start to finish, as dramaturg for the 2006 OSF production of Shakespeare’s *King John*. Lue’s invitation prompted in me the same three questions that you probably have: 1) What exactly does a dramaturg do? 2) How do you spell that? and 3) King Who? I’ve since learned that, at least in the U.S., “dramaturg” is usually spelled and pronounced in its German rather than its French form, with a hard “g” and no terminal “e.” I remembered also that the Reduced Shakespeare Company used innocently to ask if anyone in the audience had read *King John*, and then would demand a plot summary from the

one or two people foolish enough to claim they had. And I began to learn, by doing, what a dramaturg does.

The dramaturg’s work starts very near the beginning of OSF’s year-long production process, helping the play’s director shape an original Shakespeare text into a 21st-century script. Typically this means scrutinizing the director’s preliminary cuts—of words, lines, or sometimes whole scenes—to make sure that nothing crucial to the show’s storytelling, characterization, or poetry gets lost. I was lucky to have John Sipes (director) and Scott Kaiser (voice and text director) for mentors in my first outing. They graciously overlooked my occasionally pedantic, purist impulses—e.g., to reshape the passages around small cuts until they formed perfect iambic pentameter lines again. Last year we all worked together again on Shakespeare’s *Henry VIII*, a play which now demands occasional bits of exposition that Shakespeare’s audience hadn’t required in 1613. One day, after Scott and I had finished writing a letter from King Henry to Archbishop Cranmer, he turned to me and said jokingly, “My God! We’ve corrupted you completely.” Well, yes, in the Socratic sense of teaching me to negotiate the gap between a potentially sterile fidelity to the text and the challenge of bringing 400-year-old plays to life for 21st-century audiences.

Last season’s modern-dress *Hamlet*, directed by Bill Rauch, is a great instance. Since Bill and his Hamlet, Dan Donohue, had the chance to shape much of the script in an intense couple of weeks’ work in Los Angeles, I came on board later than usual. But my first script work involved one of the features of our show that I love most—the “embedded” Hamlet soliloquies. Sitting in Bill’s office last November, with Dan on the phone from L.A., we worked out the logistics of moving Dan’s soliloquies forward from the end of the scene. Instead of delivering set speeches on an otherwise empty stage, Dan’s Hamlet would break into thought and speech in the midst of the play’s preceding action, on a stage still peopled by the characters who provoked his words.

Another part of the dramaturg’s early work is research into the literary criticism and performance history of the play. I sent Lisa Peterson, the director for this season’s *Henry IV, Part Two*, a packet of “the ten best essays” on the play which she had asked me to choose. The challenge is to find scholarly interpretations of the play—with sublethal doses of theoretical jargon—that might actually contribute to the director’s vision or to actors’ preparatory work.

We paved the way for Lisa’s shaping of the script by making her a spiral-bound “workbook” with five parallel columns: 1) a modern edited text of *Henry IV, Part Two*, 2) the 1600 Quarto text of the play, 3) the 1623 Folio text of the play, 4) the modern edition’s glosses of unfamiliar words, and 5) a blank column for Lisa’s notes. Thus we arrived at a preliminary rehearsal draft script. Then, armed with a dozen or so academic editions of the play and photocopies of the original texts, I worked through the play line by line, writing the explanatory notes that become part of the actors’ scripts—so they know what “petard” means or how Edmund Mortimer might lay claim to Henry IV’s crown.

The last phase of a dramaturg’s work comes in rehearsal—eight or ten exhausting, exhilarating weeks of sitting, five hours at a stretch, watching and listening, ready to help. Lue Douthit said to me immediately before my first rehearsal: “Speak only when you’re spoken to.” In a room full of talented artists who really, really know what they’re doing, that’s excellent advice. The reward is the unpredictable moment when the call comes from the dugout, and you can help Laertes find out what poison he could have bought from a mountebank, or fight to save Hamlet’s lines about the armies of men who die for a patch of ground “which is not tomb enough and continent to hide the slain.” ▲

UNDERWRITING AND UNDERTAKING

by Jim Dean

Carol McNair's editorial direction to me was straightforward and challenging. "Write something about funding the Retirees' Newsletter and don't be boring. You could tell a joke. Jokes are good."

My problem: I have a repertoire of two jokes, neither remotely connected to any aspect of newsletters. Moreover, articles about funding anything tend to be gravely serious, and frequently dull. What to do?

I could describe how the Retiree's Council has been casting about, trying to find ways to continue as a viable organization given the loss of our funding source. The activities of the Association were subsidized in the past by money taken from Elderhostel fees. It costs about 900 dollars a year in production and mailing costs for the Newsletter.

Unfortunately, Elderhostel has fallen on hard times and its connection to the University has been severed. This unhappy reality, though important, is hardly dramatic enough to cause an upsurge in altruism and cause people to begin contributing to the Newsletter's continuation. The truth is that anyone willing to support it will have none of the satisfaction that comes from helping a starving child, or protecting basic human rights, or saving the planet.

Council members are looking at two possible ways of sustaining publication: 1) by selling advertising; 2) by securing underwriting. At the last meeting of the Council one member with a mordant turn of mind suggested that we should encourage medical equipment distributors and funeral home directors to advertise with us. After all, we do a lot of business with the former, and the latter can be counted on to do business with us, whether we will or no.

As Council discussion became more serious, I found myself daydreaming a little, thinking how much more respectable the burial business has become over time. We once were taken care of by "grave diggers." Then by "sextons" and "undertakers." These were supplanted by "morticians," a term which has a more scientific and pleasing ring to it. Funereal practice these days has become even more respectable. Now "funeral directors" insure that we leave this mortal coil with proper pomp and circumstance. We should all take comfort in that.

Such thoughts, in turn, led me to remember my favorite bit of advice from Mark Twain: "Endeavor so to live that when it comes your turn to die, even the undertaker will be sorry."

But I have lapsed from discussing underwriting to irrelevant talk of undertaking. My apologies. So it's back to serious business.

Rather than extol the virtues of underwriting I've elected to be honest and simply

tell you why I would like to keep the Newsletter going.

I find it to be an infinitely better publication than most of its kind. The current editor has a quite exceptional talent for securing interesting, lively pieces written by a cross section of the campus community. These writers reflect the University and its retirees in very positive way, making me glad to have been part of something special. I realize that not all retirees will share this view and might even accuse me of hopeless soft-headedness. But there you have it. There are worse things to be accused of.

The newsletter helps me stay connected to the University and to former colleagues; it informs me, and sometimes delights me. It introduces me to new faces and voices at the University, teaches me facts I had not known before. It presents, in telling, sometimes touching ways the lives of those who have left us, suggests what losses and gains there are in our declining years, and even articulates what ingenious ways there are to exist, endure, prevail. It beautifully illustrates that there is life beyond retirement.

These seem, to me, important things, and worth supporting. Your list will likely differ from mine. But, if like me, you see yourself enriched by finding the quarterly Newsletter in your mail box, you might consider becoming an underwriter. Contact Sue Corp, Association President, if you're interested.

And if you know any good jokes, I'd be interested in adding some to my repertoire. ▲

Lunch...continued from page 1

Finally, if a lunch with friends and the scholarship of young minds isn't quite enough to persuade you – well, did you know that Medford hosts an ArtWalk the 3rd Friday of each month? And Friday, May 20, is of course the 3rd Friday! You can come for lunch, stay for scholars and shopping, then top it all off with the ArtWalk and dinner on the town! This is our downtown Medford campus – parked right in middle of city life.

Parked? That word does surface regularly in regard to Medford. While parking in any urban environment can be – well,

slightly more difficult than in a small-town setting – I have always found it easy to park within a couple short blocks of campus on a Friday. There is three-hour-free parking both on Central Avenue between 9th and 10th, and in the Middleford parking garage. Both are two short, level, blocks to the Higher Education Center. There is also free-all-day parking at the Bear Creek lot, just east of Riverside between 8th and 10th; a footbridge takes you from this parking lot to 9th & Riverside, one block away. For those who cannot face driving to Medford, but are eager to attend, we are exploring the possibility of

providing transportation from Ashland. We have a 14-passenger minibus that could be used; all we need is a Retiree who will volunteer to drive, and is cleared by the Motorpool to drive a campus van. Those of you who led field trips before retirement would be great! If you can volunteer, or would like to request a ride, please call me at 541-552-6378.

One way or another, for lunch only or an afternoon-long adventure, I hope you will come join me and your fellow retirees on May 20 in Medford. I look forward to welcoming you there! ▲

SO Conferences/Senior Programs
U Southern Oregon University
1250 Siskiyou Blvd.
Ashland, Oregon 97520

Non Profit Org
US Postage
PAID
Southern Oregon
University

Planned Giving *by Gary Gillespie*

For many individuals, supporting Southern Oregon University has become second nature. When we've asked for help, they think nothing of writing a check and sending it off. These are typically our greatest sources of funding. And much of this support is from outright gifts, raised generally through annual fundraising and other campaigns for specific projects.

While you may be particularly impressed with SOU's recent accomplishments, you may also feel that you are currently limited in the amount of financial support you can provide. You may worry about outliving your resources and have concerns that a large charitable donation might impact your future financial security. Or you may be unwilling to do anything that could reduce the size of the estate you hope to pass on to your spouse or heirs.

These are legitimate concerns. However, charitable giving is not just about outright gifts. There are other giving options available that can allow you to assist SOU without compromising your financial security. These options are known as Planned Gifts, and they can include a wide variety of gift assets from cash and marketable securities to a family home or other real estate to closely held business assets, mineral rights, and intellectual property.

Whether you are concerned about lifetime income, the continued beneficial use of a property, or providing for family members, a planned gift may be the solution you need. Here is a brief list of planned gift options that may be of interest to you:

- Charitable Remainder Trusts
- Charitable Lead Trusts
- Donor-advised Funds
- Charitable Gift Annuities
- Gifts of Life Insurance

All of the above take the form of bequests and would only be implemented after your passing. When considering a bequest it is advised that you consult your attorney or financial advisor on the best approach to establishing your donation. Those of us at the SOU Foundation can also provide you with further information and assistance. ▲



Gifts

Anyone Can Afford Without Affecting Your Cash Flow

Supporting
Southern Oregon University
has never been easier.
We can help you design a plan
to provide future scholarships
or outright gifts to
SOU with easy to
understand language and
very simple paperwork.

Contact us to give
your philanthropy a future!

Southern Oregon University Foundation
1250 Siskiyou Blvd.,
Ashland, Oregon 97520
541-552-6127 or 541-944-8393
www.soufoundation.org