

Association of Retired Faculty and Staff (ARFS)
University of West Georgia
Coordinating Council Meeting, August 24, 2018, 10:00 am - 11:12 am
Conference Room, Alumni House
MINUTES

Present: Mitch Clifton, Jimmy Drew, Daniel Flinn, Kathryn Grams, Tom Mackel, Denice Perdue, Anne Richards, **Not Present** (and excused): Debbie Novak, Bruce Lyon, Melanie McClellan, Bob Reeves, Gail Reid, Martha Ann Saunders, Karen Smith. **Not present** (and not excused): Swain Harris.

1, Kathryn Grams (president) **called the meeting to order** at 10:00 am and welcomed all those in attendance, including new members of the Coordinating Council. Those present introduced themselves to one another.

2. The **minutes** for the Coordinating Council meeting held May 18, 2018 were considered. These had been sent out on line in advance of today's meeting. One correction was made in the section on page 2 labeled "Other Business." Katy Krai should be Kathy Kral. MOTION (Drew/Clifton): to approve the minutes with this correction. Passed on a voice vote.

3. The **minutes** for the Annual Reunion and the General Membership Meeting held August 11, 2018 were considered. They, too, had been sent out on line in advance of today's meeting. Kathryn reported that Debbie Novak had asked for the following addition to these minutes, to be inserted mid-way down page 1 in the section headed "General Membership Meeting" : "President Mitch recognized Jan Ruskell and Glenn Novak for their contributions to the group. He then . . ." MOTION (Flinn/Mackel): to approve the minutes as revised. Passed on a voice vote.

4. **Coordinating Council Roster.** Kathryn expressed appreciation to all those who had agreed to serve on the Coordinating Council and circulated a roster with the names of council members and their contact information. She asked if those present would let her know if any of the information on the roster needed correction. She said she also planned to check with members of the Council who were not in attendance today to ensure that their information is correct and to determine if they are comfortable with this information being circulated over email in a document internal to the Coordinating Council.

5. Review of the Annual Reunion and Planning for Next Year.

Overall Considerations: Denice reported that a total of 87 persons attended the annual reunion, although 104 had pre-registered for it. This is down from 130 attendees in 2017. No one heard any negative feedback about the \$5 fee charged for the event. Denice also mentioned that Kevin has recently sent out a survey for attendees, and we will be able to review the result of that survey at our next meeting. Jimmy said people found that getting their food went more quickly than last year because salads were pre-made on the table. Debbie also left word with Kathryn that the food line had moved along very well. Tom commented that he thought the fee charged

(\$5) was very reasonable for non-honorees. Kathryn said she thought the crowd was a good size for the space.

Cost Considerations. Denice explained that, after pricing for the meals had been arranged with Anita Wilson, who has been the main contact at the Sunset Hills Country Club for our group in recent years, Anita left the Country Club (for a position where she made more money) and the Club raised their prices substantially. Last year we paid \$2,900 for more people than attended this year. This year our bill came to nearly \$4,000 (a cost of about \$16/person). In discussing this with the new General Manager at the Country Club, Denice also learned that Anita had given our group and other groups a special discount in the past that was only supposed to be given to civic groups. Under the direction of the new manager, it has been determined that the Club is not making enough money and a lot of groups will no longer be able to get the discount they formerly enjoyed.

Looking toward the Future. Denice commented that it has become a nice tradition to hold the event at the Country Club and the space is a good one. The staff at the Club does a great job and the food is excellent. The wait staff was attentive and quick and did a fine job. In general, however, we have to re-evaluate our location and pricing for next year. Denice said that she planned to talk with the head chef to ask what kind of meal they can provide if we set our price range to be no more than \$14.95/person. She plans to convey that we are very satisfied with the service and the food, but have budgetary limitations we have to consider. Mitch said we might want to think about returning to the campus, and holding our reunion in the Campus Center Ballroom. Anne mentioned that parking would no longer be a problem there since the new parking drop-off area will likely be completed this year

Issues that should be addressed. (1) Initially, there weren't a sufficient number of **signs indicating that particular tables were "reserved" for honorees and their guests**. Denice actually had plenty of extra signs, but hadn't put all of them out at first. (2) There were **three separate means of pre-registering for this event**, and not all of them were consolidated as they should have been. Persons pre-registering could either call Dale, email the Development and Alumni Relations office, or pre-register on line. One of the student workers handling the email check-in system neglected to keep up with this in her last two weeks of work. As a result, Denice was not aware of the existence of about 14 pre-registrants. Debbie Novak met one of them in the grocery store who said she had not received confirmation of her pre-registration. When Bart Gillespie checked into this, he learned of the 14 that had been unacknowledged (and not reported to Denice). Fortunately, he found this out a day or so before the event and the Country Club was willing to add these folks in and prepare for their arrival in the group. Denice mentioned that Bart has concluded that the training for new student workers should be adjusted to avoid such situations occurring in the future. It was also emphasized that persons who pre-register for this event should get confirmation of this, regardless of the method they choose for pre-registration. Tom asked if persons seeking to pre-register could do so on line. Denice said this was possible, but . . . two honorees misunderstood the directions given and ended up paying for their registrations by accident. Their money was eventually refunded, but required a rather cumbersome process to handle the \$5 overpayment. (3) Tom noted that at least one of the retirees brought three persons along, which cost the university extra money. Mitch explained that he had talked with Dave Fraboni at some length about the **matter of cost** and had suggested

a fee of \$10 per person be charged to non-honorees and their guests. Fraboni urged us to charge no more than \$5 per person. however, since the event is provided as a "benefit" to retirees, honorees, and guests who want to attend to honor new retirees. Denice said she experienced this as a "feel good" event and didn't believe there was a need to re-think the whole process as we have received no feedback suggesting major changes are warranted. Kathryn mentioned that those who attend enjoy coming back to campus to honor those who are retiring. Anne reported that, in the past, some retirees informed us that this event was the only acknowledgment of their retirement they were a party to; while various departmental and campus-wide retirement events are held for other individuals. Kathryn thanked Denice and her staff for all they did in handling the "great responsibilities" associated with organizing this event.

(4) Dan Flinn said he thought the event was **too formal** and could have been less so if more stories had been told by honorees. He didn't think enough honorees had spoken, although he knew they all had stories they could have told. He, himself felt "cut off" from sharing what he wanted to share at the time he retired. He believed that President Marrero was worried that he (Dan) was about to launch into an off-color remark as the ending to a joke he was telling, but this was not the case. Still, he recalled that persons in the audience had seemed interested and engaged with his remarks - and they got a good response. Denice said she thought we should let honorees know they have the opportunity to speak. Anne commented that some have shared with her that they wouldn't feel comfortable participating in the awarding of the medallions piece of the program if they are required to say something. As Denice explained, however, they could be told they would have the opportunity to say thank you or share a few words further if they wished, but they are not expected or obligated to do so. It was agreed that this was a good idea.

(5) Dan Flinn said he was uncertain about **where members of the Coordinating Council should sit**. Some were assigned a seat at tables near the front of the room because they had an active role in the program. Others seated themselves wherever they found a space. Kathryn recommended that, aside from those who have speaking roles in the program, we could plan for other Coordinating Council members to disperse themselves throughout the group, where they can talk with others about retirement, their plans, and related matters.

6. Concerns Related to Changes to the UWG Email Lists Policy

Anne explained that on July 19, 2018 she received a memo from Jami Bower sent to the ALL FACULTY and ALL STAFF lists @ West Georgia indicating a change in policy and procedures regarding University-wide electronic mailing lists. This indicated that there would no longer be an "ALL Faculty/ALL Staff" email list for general use and comments, and it would be replaced by an "ALL Employees" email list that would be required for all UWG employees. The "All Faculty" list would be limited to discussion and information relevant to faculty pedagogy and subscribed to through the Provost's office - but faculty could choose to opt out. The "ALL Staff" email list would be limited to discussion and information relevant to staff and operational/administrative functional topics, with subscribers identified by VPs (who could choose to opt out). The "UWG Community and Events" email list would be renamed "UWG Items of Interest." For access, employees have to opt-in to receive communications. The "Work West Bulletin" was to be sent to the "ALL Employees" email list in the future instead of "All Faculty" and "ALL Staff."

Because this memo seemed to exclude her from receiving general university information, and because it indicated that the Provost's office controlled subscribers on it, Anne wrote Micheal

Crafton to explain her reasons for wanting to remain on the "ALL Employees" email list. He wrote back to say he was still in the process of determining just how to operationalize his new responsibilities in this regard.

Meanwhile, on July 30, 2018, Lynne Gaskin (another retiree) wrote to inform Anne that she (Lynne) had spoken with both Jane Simpson and Jami Bower about the new procedures. She asked both of them if members of ARFS had been consulted about the policy changes [which they had not] and called their attention to passages in the UWG Procedures (# 10.2.4 Use of University E-Mail Lists), which specifically includes emeritus UWG faculty. She asked if emeritus faculty could automatically be included in the new "All Employees" email list and moved to that list. And she had the same question about the "ALL Faculty" list. She also noted that UWG Procedure #10.2.4 Use of University E-Mail Lists, D. Procedures 4. Attrition indicates that "Employees will be removed from all E-mail lists at the time of separation from employment, with the exception of 'UWG Marketplace,' in which decisions will be made by the administrator of that E-Mail list."

Lynne went on to explain that she has appreciated being included on several UWG e-mail lists since her retirement as a way of staying informed about the university and the community-at-large and expressed the hope that the new procedures didn't negate her continuing to have this opportunity.

On August 3, 2018, Jami Bower wrote to announce clarifying updates to the July 19th memo. She also referred all faculty and staff to the "policy page" on the University website, where additional details can be found.

On August 14, 2018, Anne Richards had an opportunity to discuss these matters in person with Micheal Crafton and she asked him what decisions had been made about the issues Lynne had raised with Jami Bower and Jane Simpson. He said he would be open to coming to today's ARFS meeting to discuss the matter until he realized he had a conflict at the time we would be meeting. A few days later, at the event honoring Carole Scott, he informed Anne that all retirees would have the opportunity to remain a part of all email lists they had been a part of in the past, unless they chose to opt out.

So, thanks to Lynne Gaskin's inquiry, it seems the issue is now resolved. [Editorial Note: Subsequent to today's meeting I received another email from Lynne who said she heard from other colleagues and from Jane Simpson that retirees will definitely stay on their current lists unless they opt out.] As far as we know, this seems to be the case for all persons who wished to remain a part of those lists.

Kathryn called attention to portions of the memo from Jami Bower dated 8-3-18 that indicated the "UWG Community and Events" E-mail list has been renamed "UWG Items of Interest" list and requires that those wishing to receiving communications must opt-in. Those interested in joining a Google Group were directed to the following website:

<https://gsuite.google.com/learning-center/products/groups/get-started/#/>

Tutorials for joining a Google group can be found by logging into <https://groups.google.com> using your UWG ID and password. For a short tutorial for leaving a group, login to the same website in the same manner.

Kathryn offered to contact Micheal to seek clarification about which email lists retirees are automatically opted out of and how they can "opt in" for various communications they would like to receive, including the Work West Bulletin.

7. Plans for Fourth Quarter Edition of the *Rejuvenator*.

It was agreed that a Fall edition of the *Rejuvenator* would ideally come out towards the end of September. After some discussion, it also seemed likely that it could easily include 4 pages. Plans for Fourth Quarter Edition of the *Rejuvenator*, continued.

The following items were mentioned for inclusion in this upcoming issue:

- *A write-up highlighting the retirees honored on August 11th - including the photo taken of them.
- * A write-up about Carole Scott, Professor Emerita in Economics, who was honored on Monday of this week by the Richards College of Business for her 50 years of contributions to that College. Anne circulated a photo of Carole, holding the engraved plate she was given at that event. She will forward this on to Denice for the newsletter.
- * Information about the opportunities for retirees to attend tailgating organized by Development and Alumni Relations personnel.
- * Information about the Night-School events taking place this coming semester, with an invitation to retirees to attend them, e.g.,
 - October 16, 2018 - "Sink Your Teeth Into This: Vampires Past and Present" at the Red Rock Room in Carrollton.
 - October 30, 2018 - "Edgar Allan Poe/The Raven" at the Carnegie Library, Newnan.
 - November 6, 2018 - "Life and Death in the Roman Army" at the Red Rock Room in Carrollton.
 - November 13, 2018 - "Great Famine and the Irish World" at the UWG Center at Newnan.
- * An update on the healthcare subsidy for 2019 for Medicare-eligible retirees - to be provided by Anne Richards based on her attendance at the August 14, 2018 Board of Regents meeting where a presentation was made on this topic. This subsidy will remain the same in 2019. Anne also reported that, at that meeting, Karin Elliott, Interim Vice Chancellor for Human Resources at the USG, reported that there were 44.2 million retirees covered in 2016, but in 2018 that number rose to 49.4 million retirees. As a result, Anne was not optimistic about Medicare-eligible retirees seeing an increase in the subsidy of \$2,736 per person and per covered dependent despite the fact that healthcare costs are going up. Kathryn Grams pointed out that The University System remains committed, however, to providing catastrophic prescription drug coverage for persons whose prescription drugs costs far exceed their ability to pay for them (e.g., \$18,000 per month).
- * Information about new construction projects underway and completed on campus, e.g., Biology Building, New Health Center. This was something Swain Harris offered to write up at some point in the recent past, but Denice said she believed she could gather the information from Development officers who keep up with such changes on campus.
- *Information about the Annual Fund drive.
- *Information about Homecoming and other events in October (e.g., A-Day, community events)
- * A request for retirees to send in information about their activities and continuing contributions to the campus, the community, their profession, etc. AROHE, the national association of retiree organizations in higher education, would like us to keep better records on such matters and share them with institutions just beginning to form their own retiree organizations.

Denice mentioned that she would like to do more to engage retirees in participating in events that are of interest to them and give them an opportunity to share time and experiences with their fellow retirees and current faculty/staff. She also suggested we consider including some story highlighting the contributions of an individual retiree in each forthcoming edition of the *Rejuvenator*, as we will be doing in the next issue with Carole Scott. Anne distributed a brochure announcing the 16th annual "Perspectives - Georgia Pottery Invitational" which takes place August 31-September 16th in Watkinsville, GA. A retiree from UWG, Cameron Covert, is one of the invited potters participating in this event.

8. Annual UWG Fall Benefits Fair

It was agreed that involvement in this event was beneficial and meaningful for ARFS representatives last year, and that we should definitely plan to be involved again this year. Kathryn agreed to contact Holly Mostrom to find out when the event will be held. It was further agreed that, during the event, we'd like to have two representatives from ARFS at a time staffing our table there on a rotating basis. Anne reported that she has extra copies of the pre-retirement brochure that many found of interest last year. She will count them and report the number she has left to Kathryn. [Editorial note: the number is 225.] If necessary, arrangements will be made to print additional copies. Anyone who sees anything in the current brochure that needs updating should let Kathryn know about this.

9. Fall Programs for Retirees?

See list of Night-School sessions in item #7 above.

Retirees might also find of interest some of the exhibits on display at the Carrollton Center for the Arts (including one currently set up featuring the work of persons who serve as Art Educators in the surrounding community).

10. Date and Location for Next Meeting (January?)

It was agreed that our next meeting will take place on either January 11th or 25th.

Kathryn will send out an announcement to Coordinating Council members to determine the most suitable date.

11. Announcements and Other Business

a. Kathryn distributed a copy of the announcement for the **upcoming GA-HERO meeting** taking place on November 9th in Milledgeville at Georgia College & State University. She noted that Anne Richards will be moderating a panel of persons who have attended the AROHE meeting in Atlanta (October 7-9, 2018), entitled AROHE 2018 MEETING: Lessons Learned. Panelists will share particularly significant experiences from that meeting. Mitch is our representative to GA-HERO, but is unable to attend the November 9th meeting. Kathryn expressed interest in attending in his place.

Mitch, Anne, and Melanie McClellan will be attending the AROHE meeting. Mitch and Anne will be participating on a panel as part of a Resource Exchange Fair, discussing our annual retiree reunion and distributing copies of our 2018 Tribute Booklet. Denice suggested that Anne and Mitch consider taking our ARFS tablecloth for this event, which was much appreciated.

b. A discussion took place regarding a request from AROHE for member institutions to share information to be placed in a "Start-Up Kit" for persons who wish to start, expand or revitalize their retirement organizations. AROHE is seeking such items as:

- Mission statement, purpose statement and/or vision statement
- Governing documents, such as bylaws or operating procedures
- Start-up documents, such as proposal for establishment of the organization or other similar documents
- Surveys of retiree interests and/or accomplishments (survey instruments or resulting reports)
- Strategic plan, business plan and/or annual report
- Successful retiree events
- Successful projects in service to your college/university

Any information shared is to be submitted by September 4, 2018. Kathryn, Anne, and Mitch agreed to remain after today's meeting adjourned to discuss the documents we have available to send in.

- [These include
- Copy of a brief history of the creation of ARFS (Anne Richards presentation to GA-HERO on 11-13-15)
 - Copy of our bylaws (Anne Richards to provide)
 - Copy of our best-practices report to GA-HERO on our Annual Retiree Reunion (dated 4-27-17, Mitch Clifton to provide) along with PDF of our most recent commemorative booklet (Anne Richards to secure from Publications and Printing)
 - Copy of our best-practices report to GA-HERO on our participation in the UWG Annual Benefits Fair (dated 11-17-17, Anne Richards to provide)
 - Copy of our pre-retirement brochure (Kathryn Grams to scan as PDF)
 - Copy of survey of our membership developed by Kevin Hemphill re: use of Campus Center Workout Facility) (Kevin Hemphill to be approached for this)
 - Copies of 1-2 scanned (?) issues of our *Rejuvenator* newsletter or listing of our ARFS website if/when persons can access copies of the newsletter by going to that site].

c. Information available regarding next year's retirees.

Anne circulated a list of the 5 persons we know at this point will be among our honoree retirees in 2019 (Bonnie Bar, John Brown, Barbara Kawulich, Dawn Putney, and Bryan Thompson). Also listed were two persons to be included in our In Memoriam section (Karen Rankin and James Earl Perry).

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 11:12 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne C. Richards, Secretary of the Day

