

Association of Retired Faculty and Staff (ARFS)
University of West Georgia
Coordinating Council Meeting, March 10, 2017, 10:00 am - 11:43 pm
Conference Room, Alumni House
MINUTES

Present:

Mitch Clifton, Daniel Flinn, Denice King, Wanda McGukin, Debbie Novak, Glenn Novak, Anne Richards, Jan Ruskell, Martha Ann Saunders, Karen Smith. Guests: Rodney Byrd, Director of Human Resources Operations; Ketty Cusick, Director of Development, College of Arts and Humanities, Ingram Library; Denise Robinson, Human Resources Specialist. **Not present** (and excused): Jimmy Drew, Frances Jackson, Bruce Lyon. **Not present:** Linda Wagner.

1. Mitch **called the meeting to order** at 10:00 am and asked guests at the meeting to introduce themselves to the group.
2. The **minutes** of the meeting held January 20, 2017 had been distributed on line in advance of today's meeting and Denice provided an updated copy of them to the group in paper form as well, along with a copy of the agenda for the meeting and a financial statement regarding the UWG Retiree Legacy Scholarship. Anne noted that she had learned after the January meeting that what she referred to in the meeting as the Barriers Committee was actually titled the Barrier Team and that Amber Smallwood and not April Duffie is the current chair of this team. This new information was provided in the minutes Denice had circulated. MOTION (Ruskell/McGukin): to approve the minutes as updated and distributed. Passed on a voice vote.

3. Plans for the 2017 Annual Reunion, set for August 26, 2017

Denice reported that President Marrero and Vice President Crafton have put this event on their calendars. The date of the event has been cleared with the Sunset Hills Country Club. The food served last year will be served again, unless we decide to make changes in it. Without the salad bar cost would be \$12.95/person. It was agreed, however, that we would prefer to continue to offer the salad bar, especially in light of the fact that several vegetarians appreciate its presence. Cost per person with the salad bar is approximately \$15/person. Denice will get more detailed information from Kevin about expenses for last year and provide an additional update at our next meeting. Denice also reported that Ali Rosborough has informed her that our group will have the same budget as last year to cover the cost of its operations and activities.

Mitch explained that we will use the same format as last year for the structure of the gathering, including the business meeting, but will do our best to shorten the length of the event. In light of Ali's decision about our budget, he also suggested we postpone to another year consideration of requesting some payment from attendees and putting a limit on the number of guests retirees might bring to the event. Mitch also reviewed the process used in the past for moving from one portion of the program to the other, and sequencing attendee access to the food tables.

Glenn suggested we avoid having honorees among those eating later, so they can be ready for the portion of the program where medallions are handed out. The possibility of reserving tables or areas for retirees closer to the food tables was mentioned as something we might think about.

4. **Up-date on this year's retirees.**

Anne distributed an updated list of the 24 people she has thus far learned are retiring. Debbie Novak mentioned that Shirley Lankford (Library) is planning to retire by the end of June and offered to interview her and Tim McWhorter to get information needed for the Commemorative Booklet. Wanda volunteered to interview Denise Robinson in relation to information needed for this booklet. She also mentioned that Cynthia Epps might not wish to be acknowledged at the reunion/reception. Anne asked if Wanda would check with Cynthia to be sure she understands that she can be acknowledged in the commemorative booklet and receive a medallion (if she wishes to) regardless of whether or not she plans to attend the reunion.

5. **Pre-Retirement Brochure**

Anne explained that she had drafted content for a possible pre-retirement brochure by compiling considerable material from brochures created previously at Emory University and Valdosta State University. She also incorporated some material from a Clayton State University retiree association booklet. A black and white copy of this draft, which had been sent to Rodney Byrd for review, was distributed at today's meeting. Anne mentioned that Emory's original brochure had been in black and white and that Valdosta's brochure is a far classier one. At a recent meeting of the USGRC, however, President Dennis Marks (of Valdosta) mentioned that the classier brochure (which had a number of graphic images in it) presented some persons with a problem when it came to downloading it. As a result, he recommended groups adopt an image-less version.

Rodney distributed a revised version of Anne's draft, which he had crafted. Content in his version was re-organized more logically. It also highlighted the title of the brochure and various websites in blue ink - and included the university logo (with a red flame). Among other things, eligibility requirements for retirement were also moved from an inside page to the front page of the brochure.

Both Rodney and Denise agreed that having a brochure of this type available will be a great help to personnel in Human Resources and to future retirees. Jan asked if it could be given out at the annual Benefits Fair, and Rodney and Denise supported this idea.

It was agreed that the use of some colored ink on the brochure is more eye-catching. Anne agreed to get a quote from Publications and Printing on producing 500 or less of this brochure. [Editorial note: Black and white pages can be printed for 5 cents/page; pages with color on them for 50 cents/page. Cost of first page in color and inside content in black and white = \$189.]

The brochure was then reviewed for specific changes that are still needed. It was agreed that, in the section on Eligibility for Retirement, there is an extra comma that should be removed on the first line of the first bullet, and a space that should be removed between the word age and a comma on the second line of the third bullet.

Several phone numbers have yet to be determined, e.g.,

- * Under the headings Five Years Prior to Retirement, Four Years Prior to Retirement, Two Years Prior to Retirement, and One Year Prior to Retirement, the number to call for information about pre-retirement seminars (something the Coordinating Council has discussed, but hasn't yet organized);
- * Under the Five Years Prior heading, and the Six Months prior heading, the number to call for scheduling an appointment with a Benefits Specialist. [678-839-6403?]
- * Access to continue UWG email account
- * Admission to Theatre Company Performances

- * Campus Center Fitness Access
- * Continuing Education [678-839-6615]
- * Retiree Legacy Scholarship [678-839-6582]
- * Eligibility to check out books from Ingram Library
- * Courtesy Parking Hang Tag [678-839-6447]
- * University Bookstore
- * Travel Program Presentations [770-832-2029]
- * East Commons discount
- * To be included in the Current Faculty/Staff Directory [678-839-6582]
- * To secure a copy of the current Faculty/Staff Directory [678-839-6582]

It was agreed to change the contact information for the Association of Retired Faculty and Staff from Kevin Hemphill to Denice King-Perdue [678-839-6384] and dking@westga.edu

Under the heading "Important Contact Information" it was agreed to remove "Vanguard" since the university no longer has a relationship with this group, but to include Minnesota Life as it provides free consultation to faculty/staff regarding the construction of a will. It was also agreed to insert contact information for the TRS.

Under the heading "Important Contact Information" it was agreed to list "Alumni Travel Program Opportunities" and to use Denice King's phone number [678-839-6384].

It was agreed to change the heading "Free or Discounted Programs" to "Services for Retirees" - in part because it wasn't clear that all the areas listed there provided free or discounted benefits. It was agreed to keep under that heading the following topics:

- Access to continue UWG email account
- Admission to Theatre Company Performances
- Campus Center Fitness Access
- Continuing Education
- Retiree Legacy Scholarship
- UWG, Main Number
- Eligibility to check out books from Ingram Library
- Courtesy Parking Hang Tag
- University Bookstore
- Travel Program Presentations
- East Commons Dining Hall
- To be included in Current Faculty/Staff Directory
- To secure a copy of the Current Faculty/Staff Directory

It was agreed to move "Alumni Travel Program Opportunities" and "UWG Athletics" contact information to the section titled "Important Contact Information" and to remove mention of "University Communications & Marketing."

Rodney offered to check with Mark Reeves at the Bookstore about the possibility of offering retirees discounts there. Debbie said she would like us to further explore the possibility of retirees being given the same discount benefits current employees enjoy in different sectors of the campus.

[Editorial Note: I called Continuing Education on Friday to find out if discounts were offered to retirees for attending Continuing Education programs. I was informed that, currently, employed faculty/staff get a 10% discount, but none is offered to retirees. Tiffany, the departmental assistant there offered to take up with Director, Marty Davis, on Monday the prospect of offering the same discount to retirees. She also suggested that some retirees might, themselves, wish to offer Continuing Education programs.]

A discussion took place regarding the fact that some campus discount programs or community discount programs for those associated with the university require current IDs, yet many retirees have IDs that are no longer current. Denice agreed to seek information about how IDs identifying retirees as retirees can be created. Debbie also asked if those in the ARFS group could be identified with a "silver wolf" icon on their ID. Anne mentioned that UCM created a "rainbow wolf" icon for use on name badges for those who have taken the Safe Zone Training, so didn't think that our group would be refused permission to be identified with a silver wolf. She also mentioned that, at Georgia Tech, the retiree association is referred to as the "Silver Jackets."

6. Ketty Cusick, Director of Development, College of Arts & Humanities, Ingram Library On-campus Excursions for Retirees

Ketty explained that, prior to her working in the Development sector of the campus, she had given tours for prospective undergraduates through the Admissions Office. She asked if retirees might be interested in learning more about new and exciting changes on campus by going as a group on a tour of such facilities as the Visual Arts Building, the Costume Shop in the Theatre Department, Special Collections, the renovated Murphy Building, the Coliseum (to learn about its operations, including sustainability initiatives), etc. Such tours might not only give retirees ways to connect with one another socially and sustain ties with the university, but also enable them to become better informed about developments that have occurred on campus since they last retired. She offered to facilitate such tours free of charge if retirees are interested in them and said these could be scheduled as part of upcoming Alumni reunion days as well.

This suggestion was well-received by Coordinating Council members. They expressed interest in participating in such tours and mentioned that it seemed like a "great offer."

Jan Ruskell also noted that, when the Neva Lomason Library is undergoing upcoming remodeling, and the Travel Program presentations might come to a temporary halt as a result, this might be a good alternative for retirees.

Martha Ann asked how parking might be handled for retirees interested in participating in such tours. Denice suggested that retirees could meet in one location (e.g., the Stadium parking area) and be picked up by a shuttle bus for tours like these.

Glenn mentioned that arranging such tours on a Saturday might be another option, since parking will be less of a problem.

7. **The Rejuvenator** - next edition.

Mitch asked who bears responsibility for coordinating this newsletter. He was informed that, in the past, its publication and distribution have been coordinated by the President of ARFS in collaboration with either Meredith, Frank, or Kevin. Denice explained that she has learned that, in its present up-graded format, it last cost about \$475 for printing, and about \$70 for setting up and about \$75 for mailing. Total cost = about \$620 per issue.

Debbie asked if a student employee in Alumni Relations or on the UCM team might be able to put this together. Denice offered to explore these possibilities after she returns from a one-week honeymoon trip. She will also get in touch with Meredith to see what is required to get this out.

A discussion took place about what should be in the next issue and when it will come out. Wanda mentioned the importance of announcing the garden party get-together to be held during Alumni Weekend (in April). We typically feature a photo taken at the 2016 Retiree Reception/ Reunion and a list of upcoming travel programs. Also included should be an announcement of our 2017 retiree reunion/reception date, as well as another call for donations for the Legacy Scholarship.

Given the fact that Alumni Weekend is coming up in April, and there might not be time to get the next newsletter into print and distributed by then, the possibility of sending it out on line was considered. Anne mentioned that a lot of retirees do not use email (sometimes because they don't have it, sometimes because their computer is in need of repair). Mitch said that, under the constraints of time now upon us, he believed the majority of retirees could be reached via our email listserv.

Denice offered to coordinate efforts to get out the *Rejuvenator*, using the same format as in the past. She also mentioned that she, Ali, and Kevin are in a rebuilding phase so far as their roles and responsibilities are concerned and have planned to go on a retreat after Alumni Weekend to discuss how best to utilize their division's personnel and financial resources in the coming year. Many issues currently up in the air will be discussed and worked out at that retreat. In the meantime, Denice said she will send out an email asking for text for this publication, and do her best to get it back on a regular schedule. It was agreed that the next edition should come out as soon as possible in anticipation of the April Alumni Weekend events, and the subsequent issue should go to print in July (since it provides more detailed information about honorees who will be recognized at the August reception/reunion). Karen volunteered to send in information promoting contributions for the Scholarship.

Denice agreed to send out an email about the schedule for Alumni Weekend, which will take place April 28-30, 2017. The timeline for various events is still uncertain, but the Alumni Awards Gala will be held on Friday night, the 28th, and the garden party will be on Saturday. Campus tours are likely to take place after this. Debbie explained how the garden party event was arranged last year. Particular professors agreed to attend and then alumni who had taken classes from those professors were contacted to inform them of this.

8. **Date for next Coordinating Council Meeting**

It was agreed that we will hold our next meeting on Friday, June 2, 2017 at 10:00 am in the Conference Room at the Alumni House.

9. **Old Business**

a. **Problems concerning retirees taking classes at UWG.** Anne explained that she and Denice had been in contact with April Duffie of the Barrier Team and had received a progress

report prior to today's meeting. In this report, April explained that the request to the Barrier Team had opened up several issues the team is still in the process of addressing, including how other institutions have expedited matters for retirees. She further said the group hopes to simplify the process and will keep us updated on their progress.

b. **April 7th USGRC meeting.** Mitch reported that he and Anne will be attending this meeting, to be held at the Board of Regents office in Atlanta. The group will be meeting with Chancellor Wrigley, among others. Jan asked if the bill had passed in the legislature to provide the additional monies necessary to sustain pensions through the Teachers Retirement System. Response: It is expected that the issue will be addressed at that meeting.

c. **Campus Center Survey.** Mitch distributed copies of the survey Kevin had put together to determine retiree interest in using the workout facilities at the Campus Center. Unfortunately, Mitch discovered that one of the questions we had agreed on may have been overlooked, i.e., the one asking for information about the time of day retirees might want to use the facilities, and the frequency of their intended use. Mitch explained that he plans to follow-up with Kevin about this.

10. Committee Reports

a. Scholarship Committee.

Referring to the Financial Statement Denice distributed at the outset of the meeting, it was announced that the scholarship has received contributions totaling \$20,885 at this point. It is thus close to the amount needed to endow it. Debbie also reported that \$57 was collected at the last Travel Program meeting, and that Jan has made an additional contribution of \$500.

Debbie explained that she contacted American Pie to explore the possibility of setting up a "Spirit Night" event there to raise money for the scholarship. To pursue this further, the group has to write a letter of intent specifying what the money will go for and print our own tickets specifying the name of the group and the purpose for which the money is being raised. Patrons in the restaurant then give this paper to the cashier as they pay for their meals. 15% of their bill goes to the Spirit Night pot when this payment is made. The restaurant is closed on Sundays and does not allow groups to raise money on either Friday or Saturday nights. On other days, groups can come in from 5-9 pm and distribute their tickets. The effort is a "slow way" to raise money according to Debbie. About 8 members of ARFS would have to volunteer to share the time allotted (5-9 pm) because 2 doors have to be covered. To inform the public this is happening, advertisements could be placed in the Daybook section of the *Times-Georgian*, on the DISCUSS listserv, and in the Work West online publication. In addition, for a fee of \$50, American Pie will announce our fund-raiser on its sign. Given that the estimated income from such an effort is likely to be \$150, it didn't seem like a very productive way for us to pursue additional contributions. Denice offered to determine, meanwhile, whether or not the Development Office will even approve such efforts. She also explained that this office has a policy of disallowing the promotion of one scholarship over others.

In light of what Debbie discovered, Mitch questioned the feasibility of raising monies this way. He said he thought we had done a good job of securing funds without utilizing this approach and informed the group that he is more inclined to make a donation himself than spend the time at the restaurant to bring in such a small sum of money. Dan said that he recalled getting the letter when he retired that said that, if every retiree gave a set amount of money (i.e., \$25), the scholarship could readily be endowed. He said he wrote his own check for that amount that day and would further encourage us to ask people to give to the scholarship annually.

It was agreed that ARFS representatives handing out pre-retirement brochures at an upcoming Benefits Fair can solicit donations for the scholarship at that time.

b. Mitch mentioned that it appeared that the current committee structure is still operational. So far as the **Nominations Committee** is concerned, it will be distributing a slate to be voted on at the August reception/reunion. [Editorial note: According to our Bylaws, this Committee's composition is as follows: Past President (Chair of the Committee), one current Coordinating Council member who is not currently an officer, one current or former Coordinating Council member who is not currently an officer, the President, and the President-Elect. Thus, it now includes: Glenn Novak (past-president and chair), Bruce Lyon, Debbie Novak, Mitch Clifton and Jan Ruskell.]

c. Jan announced the following **presentations scheduled for the Travel Program:**

March - Bob Reeves (trip taken to Australia and New Zealand - including bungee jumping)

April - Myron and Jan House (trip taken to Hawaii)

Programs have yet to be scheduled after that until space for them has been determined.

11. Other Business

a. **ARFS logo.** Denice asked if the group had a logo and was informed it did not. She said she thought about creating a tablecloth that could be used for fundraisers, check-in at the reception/reunion, and the Benefits Fair. UCM could begin thinking about a logo design if this is of interest to the group. It was clear from their responses that the group thought this was a "wonderful idea." The possibility of having a "silver wolf" in our logo was also recommended.

b. The possibility of scheduling **Day Trips** for a group of retirees was revisited. This might include the kind of trips Ketty Cusick proposed (see item #6 above, pg. 4), or visits to an art exhibit in the community, tied in with a plan to have lunch together. It might involve a trip to Callaway Gardens. It could be arranged by bus, or through private travel means. The cost of organizing these trips could also factor in a donation of an amount (say \$10) in support of the Scholarship. Denice explained that, after checking with Risk Management personnel, she has learned that "state vehicles" cannot be used for purposes of these trips because this is not considered an "appropriate use of state resources." She has since found the name of a "tour bus" company that can provide transportation for a group if retirees would like to arrange this. It could include "ARFS and Friends," plus others if we prefer.

Mitch reported that, in the last few months, he has received requests from faculty about organizing such trips. Glenn mentioned that, as a back-up plan, if the bus proves too costly, private cars could be utilized, and the group can always eat on campus. On a weekday, Wanda mentioned, it was likely the group could use the bus-service provided on campus. Denice agreed to explore these options further.

Jan suggested that a list of potential day-trip sites be circulated at the reunion or provided in the *Rejuvenator* to secure information about retiree preferences.

Adjournment: the meeting adjourned at 11:43 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne C. Richards, Secretary