

Association of Retired Faculty and Staff (ARFS)
MINUTES
11th Annual Reunion and 1st General Membership Meeting
Saturday, September 12, 2015 11:30 a.m. - 1:45 p.m.
Sunset Hills Country Club

1. After retirees and guests had time to mingle and socialize, **Glenn Novak, President of ARFS, welcomed those in attendance at this event.** He thanked **Bernie Wong** for providing musical selections on the piano, adding a delightful ambiance as retirees conversed with one another. He also introduced Dave Fraboni, the new Vice President for University Advancement.

2. **Remarks: Dave Fraboni, Vice President for University Advancement,** said he enjoys meeting with retirees because he realizes that the success the university is currently enjoying has been built on the shoulders of all the work they did at the institution in the past. He also acknowledged the importance of providing the kind of support that enables the institution to retain students and assist them in making progress toward graduation, including financial support. He explained that he had recently learned that the gap in financial support that made a difference for one student's enrollment could be as little as 86 cents. And he had apparently had the opportunity to meet Paul Cadenhead, an 88-year-old graduate of West Georgia College (1944) who worked his way through school, as he told the story of one Christmas break in the early 1940's when Paul was the only person expected to work on campus through the break. A faculty member who knew Paul would be doing this, told him that he (the faculty member) needed to practice his cooking and asked if Paul would be willing to test his developing skills in this area. Needless to say, Paul gratefully accepted the invitation. [He also went on to have an exemplary and successful career as an attorney and has been giving back generously to UWG ever since.] Fraboni encouraged retirees to continue to connect with alums, noting that retirees are typically the people with whom alums most want to remain in contact.

Fraboni shared that what drew him to UWG was a connection he made with Dr. Marrero, a person he described as akin to the "Energizer bunny with a car battery strapped onto him." He also complimented Dr. Marrero for having worked tirelessly with teams of faculty and staff to create a Strategic Plan for the institution that didn't simply sit on a shelf, but was actually a means for setting campus priorities and goals, and holding people accountable for achieving them. He said he was impressed with several national awards the institution has won and concluded by stating that he was "honored to be a part of this university."

3. **Remarks: President Marrero** thanked Dave Fraboni for the energy and spirit he has brought to West Georgia. Reflecting on the fact that he himself has only been on the UWG campus for two years and three months at this point, he said he has come to understand and appreciate the 30-40 years of service retirees such as those at today's event have given to helping the institution develop so successfully over time. He mentioned enjoying an evening in the Carrollton square last night - stopping in at the Cultural Arts Center where Steve Goodson, Chair of the History Department was putting on a sold-out program on "The Life and Music of Hank Williams," interspersed with live music by Daniel Williams and the Driftin' Poboys Band; then having a meal at a local restaurant, where the waiters were UWG students; and then waking up this morning to go on a bike ride with his daughter, Lily, on the Greenbelt; followed by a run on his

own. Considering such experiences, he said he feels "incredibly blessed" to be living in Carrollton. Dr. Marrero went on to say that he sees the university community as a "family," which might be dysfunctional at times but is the kind of community/place that makes his being president such a "great gig."

He went on to say that the university is "not standing still," but is, instead, moving forward in numerous ways. Enrollment is up to 12,806 this Fall, with a Freshman class of 2,300 and a graduate enrollment of just over 2,400. He acknowledged the legacy left by retirees: that the quality of the teaching and service to students had made West Georgia a "special place." He said he was also mindful of the fact that West Georgia had been the kind of institution of higher education in the past where students felt they were known by name - and he said he wanted to ensure that the institution didn't lose its "soul" as it grew and developed. He envisions West Georgia as a place "where every student matters" and supporting the success of every student is a commitment that continues.

He also called attention to a Scholarship Gala launched last year during Homecoming - which raised \$55,000 for student scholarships and which will be held again this year on September 26, 2015. Last year the Gala enabled 236 students to remain enrolled in school. Pledges for this year have already made it possible for about 400 students to have support (from as little as 86 cents to as much as \$1,000).

In the near future, Dr. Marrero reported, the university will be undertaking the first ever "capital campaign" in its 109-year history. A feasibility study just completed has set the cap on this campaign at \$50 million, and, in the two years he's been president, about \$23 million has already been secured in gifts and pledges. He said the institution needed the "time and talent" of retirees to tell the story of where we're headed and what the institution is trying to achieve, not only with regard to the capital campaign, but also with regard to the transformational vision that focuses on supporting the success and development of each and every student. He also mentioned that the institution recently won a prestigious national award from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) for its Leadership Development and Innovation Initiative known as "Engage West." In addition,, *US News and World Report* listed UWG in its top 100 schools, another listing has us among the top 70 in the US, and "we continue to be elevated in these rankings" as we win awards for our on-line classes, handling of e-core for the state of Georgia, etc.

Dr. Marrero also reported that there is a 99% occupancy rate in our campus residence halls, and athletic teams have enjoyed great success. Our football team is currently ranked 3rd in the country, for example, and has already been picked to win the Gulf South Conference. As a result, "there is no better time to be a Wolf."

Dr. Marrero concluded his remarks by saying how thankful he was for the honor of being the 7th President of the University of West Georgia and for being included in the celebration of retirees that was the focus of today's gathering.

4. Following the president's remarks, **lunch was served** - a bountiful meal of fried chicken, pulled pork and barbecue sauce, macaroni and cheese, salad, turnip greens, and a peach cobbler.

5. ARFS: Who We Are/Background.

After lunch, **Anne Richards** thanked those in attendance, acknowledging the many other functions competing for retiree time and attention on this one day in Carrollton, including activities planned by the League of Women Voters and the Master Gardeners, in which many retirees are an integral part. She also noted two funerals scheduled for the afternoon (for Shelly Murphy, wife of former UWG head basketball coach, Ed Murphy; and for Jim Hopkins, Magistrate Court Judge in the community.) She then provided a brief history of the development of the ARFS organization, including how it was established in 2004 as a voluntary association of the university's retired faculty and staff for several purposes:

- * To maintain social connections with university colleagues,
- * To foster continuous involvement between the university of West Georgia and its retired employees;
- * To support the intellectual, social, and physical well-being of retired faculty and staff; and
- * To continue to make meaningful contributions to the future of the university and to the academic community.

Anne invited retirees to involve themselves to the extent each might choose in monthly programs featuring the national and/or international adventures of traveling colleagues, service projects, parades, plays, and concerts. She also mentioned the newsletter (*The Rejuvenator*, which is distributed quarterly to the membership, and the connections our retiree organization has made with the national organization of retired organizations in higher education (known as AROHE nationally and GA-HERO in the state-wide form). And she also reported on the creation of the University System of Georgia Retiree Council (USGRC) - which is composed of one official representative from each institution in the USG (or one "proxy member" as a substitute). The purpose of the USGRC is to advise the Chancellor's Office and the Board of Regents on matters of consequence to retirees. Although this group has focused almost exclusively since its inception on the transition to a new healthcare system for Medicare-Eligible Retirees, Anne explained that those associated with it hope, in the near future, to turn their attention to many other issues of concern to retirees.

Anne displayed a copy of the packet of materials mailed recently to Medicare-Eligible retirees, which contains vital information about the retiree's AON Retiree Health Exchange ID # and a scheduled appointment with a Benefits Advisor, the person who will help Medicare-Eligible retirees enroll in healthcare for 2016. She also (1) explained how retirees could become members of ARFS, (2) reminded Medicare-Eligible retirees that information presented at various meetings has been summarized in notes that are available in paper or online form to all who might want copies, and (3) invited those retirees who have any questions, concerns, or problems in the enrollment process to get word to her or others in the ARFS leadership so they could seek answers, clarifications, or remedies for same.

She thanked Frank Pritchett, Director of Alumni Relations; Meredith Ledbetter, Assistant Director of Alumni Relations; and Kevin Hemphill, Coordinator of Alumni Relations, for the invaluable assistance and support they provide ARFS, which makes it possible for us to do everything we are able to do for retirees. She also thanked Charles Robinson for, once again,

taking photos of retirees at these events. Anne also invited retirees to take advantage of the information and services provided by ARFS, including a Committee on Widows/Widowers/Surviving Partners, the mission of which is to insure that such individuals continue to remain connected to the university community if they so desire. She conveyed an invitation from Linda Wagner, chair of this committee, that others join her in determining what would be most meaningful for the committee to do for those who lose a spouse or life partner. Anne also encouraged retirees to take advantage of some or all of the benefits available to retirees, such as a courtesy parking hang tag, eligibility to purchase membership to utilize all facilities in the Campus Center, a copy of the current academic year's faculty and staff directory (along with a listing in it if they choose), eligibility to check out books from the Ingram Library, and reduced rates on West Georgia Theatre Company performances. She also mentioned that efforts are ongoing to look into the possibility of securing other benefits as well.

6. Glenn Novak then convened the first official meeting of the General Membership of the UWG Association of Retired Faculty and Staff. He reminded the group that, at last year's annual reunion, official Bylaws of the group had been approved that called for the creation of a Coordinating Council to replace the "Steering Committee" of volunteers who, for ten years, had been acting informally on behalf of retirees while handling "many tasks and many working parts."

In accordance with the adopted Bylaws, a Nominating Committee had been established, and had come up with a slate of candidates to serve as officers (2016-2017) and At-Large Members of the Coordinating Council. Also in accordance with ARFS Bylaws, the slate was circulated online in advance of today's meeting and several copies were also distributed on each table at today's meeting. This slate read as follows:

Officers:

President: Glenn Novak (term ends 2016)

Vice President: Mitch Clifton (term ends 2017)

Past President: Glenn Novak

Secretary: Anne Richards (term ends 2017)

Treasurer: Karen Smith (term ends 2017)

At-Large Members of Coordinating Council:

Tom Carrere

Annelle Colevins (Scholarship Committee)

Mary Erickson

Frances Jackson

Patti Jiles (Co-Chair, Program/Events Committee)

Bruce Lyon (Nominating Committee)

Wanda McGukin (UWG's Director of GA-HERO)

Debbie Novak (Scholarship Committee)

Jan Ruskell (Scholarship Committee)

Martha Ann Saunders (Program/Events Committee)

Linda Wagner (Chair, Widow/Widower/Surviving Partner Committee)

Burdett Wantland

Shirley Wantland

Glenn expressed appreciation for all who had accepted various roles and asked for a motion to be made on the slate.

MOTION (Annelle Colevins/Carol Ferling): **TO ACCEPT THE SLATE AS PRESENTED.**

There being no questions, concerns or discussion on the motion, a voice vote was taken and the motion passed with all votes in the affirmative.

Glenn then thanked all who assisted in organizing today's event.

7. Recognition of Retirees

The following current retirees were recognized individually.

Cherree Almon

Fran E. Chalfant

Denise A. Parham

Rebecca P. Stanard

Dale S. Ward

As they came up to the front of the room, Dr. Novak and President Marrero presented them with their medallions. Anne explained that several of the other honorees (who retired this year and were included in this year's commemorative booklet), were unable to join us for today's presentation for a wide variety of reasons, e.g., due to a move out of town or out of state; trip out of the country; recovery from an accident, illness, or unexpected medical challenge; family visiting; or family member needing unexpected care-taking. She noted, however, that each retiree unable to attend today's reception would receive his or her medallion and commemorative booklet following today's gathering.

8. Association of Retired Faculty and Staff Legacy Endowment (Scholarship)

Frank Pritchett announced that donations made to date for this scholarship totaled \$6,025* and it takes \$25,000 to make it possible to award the scholarship based on the endowment. He explained that this is the scholarship created to be awarded to relatives of retirees and also called attention to the availability of donation envelopes on each table. Attendees were encouraged to contribute by check, through the mail, or online - with any amount they wanted to give.

9. Opportunities for Retirees

Melanie McClellan spoke about opportunities for retirees to return to work to fill temporary vacancies in various departments. She explained that she has undertaken the role of "Matchmaker" or "Liaison" both on campus and in the community. She is coordinating efforts to find current faculty or staff or retired faculty or staff with the skills to serve in some capacity when particular assistance is needed either on campus or in the surrounding community.

Dr. McClellan also announced that her office, in the Bonner House on front campus, has become the "Welcome Center" for the campus. Visitors needing parking permits to park on campus, maps or directions, or a conference room seating 8-10 persons to hold a meeting, can make arrangements for same through this office. There are also 3 parking spaces outside the Bonner House reserved for visitors seeking information regarding any or all of the above, and two student assistants cover this office (along with office manager, Amanda Wright).

* This amount was subsequently found to be in error. New total is \$11,475. :) :)

Recalling the way community and university engagement came together following Hurricane Katrina to assist persons impacted by the storm, Dr. McClellan announced that an exhibit highlighting aspects of these efforts is currently being put together by the Department of Public History and will soon be on display at the Bonner House.

Dr. McClellan also made Retirees' Employment Service (RES) information available to any retiree who wished to fill temporary vacancies occurring in various departments (see attached handout). Her office will manage the data base of volunteers for such positions once individuals complete application for RES work and her office will also serve as a liaison to HR in efforts to expedite and resolve any problems regarding necessary process, procedures, and paperwork to make it possible for retirees to serve in available positions. She also forewarned that TRS retirees have to get permission from the TRS before becoming re-employed, and that this process can take anywhere from a couple of days to 30 days to complete.

10. Closing Remarks

Anne thanked all whose names appeared on the slate of Coordinating Council members for their contributions to today's event. She also expressed appreciation to Anita Wilson and the staff at the Sunset Hills Country Club for graciously welcoming us to this facility, making us feel so much at home, and inviting us to collaborate with them in organizing other UWG special events in the future.

11. Adjournment: The gathering was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

A photo was then taken of Coordinating Council members for the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne C. Richards, Secretary (ARFS)

