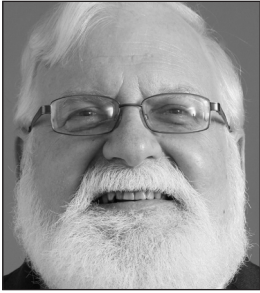


Tower Talk

Barbara Floyd, editor
Vicki Kroll, assistant editor
Cynthia Nowak, assistant editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



UTRA President
Andy Jorgensen

Thank you for the honor of selecting me as your president of UTRA. Let me first thank Chris Spengler for her outstanding work as president for the last two years, as well as being an active board member for several years.

In case I have not had the pleasure of meeting you in person, let me briefly summarize my connection with UToledo. I

joined the Department of Chemistry 35 years ago and presently have emeritus status. I have been on the UTRA Board for the last several years and been active on the UTRA Scholarships, Book Buddies, Breakfast Club, and Program Committees.

Details about UTRA activities past and future can be found on the other pages of this newsletter. The Program Committee, co-chaired by Kathy Wilson and Chris Spengler, has a full line-up for this fall and early winter. In the past year, there has been a valuable addition to our presentations given in the CADE building. Our Alumni liaison Sarah Metzger has arranged for these events to be streamed online so that you can

view them from any location! The next such opportunity will be the Nov. 30 talk, "My 30 Years in the Egyptian Deserts," by Dr. James Harrell, UToledo professor emeritus. It will be held at 2 p.m. in person at CADE and online. You will be able to sign up for the streaming session via the upcoming announcement. Early 2024 sessions also will be available online, so stay tuned.

During our Spring Annual Meeting, we heard a very exciting report from Women's Basketball Coach Tricia Cullop. She and her coaching team keep very busy throughout the year as they recruit, train, and support this very successful team. Check them out on the court this fall. Our other general meeting is the very popular Holiday Brunch. It will again be held at Heather Downs Country Club on Dec. 10. Registration is forthcoming.

Recently the UTRA Board established the Philanthropy Committee to focus our fundraising activities to address the needs of our students. You may recall that in the Spring Annual Meeting and the Holiday Brunch, we offer the possibility of donations to the UToledo Student Emergency Fund. Look for additional opportunities arranged under the direction of committee chair Lynn Hutt.

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UTRA MEMBERS GATHER FOR ANNUAL MEETING

The University of Toledo Retirees Association heard from Women's Head Basketball Coach Tricia Cullop at the group's annual meeting held June 14 at the Belmont Country Club. Cullop, who served as the keynote speaker, recently signed a contract with the University through 2030. She spoke about her philosophy for success.

Cullop stated that when recruiting players, it is not enough to be good at basketball. She also looks for attitude, especially how quickly the players recover emotionally from a tough loss. Cullop also looks for how interested the players are in their college careers off the court.

Her emphasis on academics is reflected in the team's graduation rates and grade point averages. Last year, the women's team had a GPA of 3.55, and for the last 11 years, the team has had the top GPA in the Mid-American Conference.

Cullop also talked about summer travel opportunities for the team, including a trip to Greece this year. "I love to expose the players to the culture



Incoming and outgoing board members at the annual meeting celebrate UTRA's selection as the Alumni Association's Affiliate of the Year. Read more on page 5.

Continued on Page 5

VOLUNTEERING AT METROPARKS TOLEDO

By Vicki Kroll

Judy Babula and Kathy (Bielski) Wilson met when they worked in the former Community and Technical College and cultivated a friendship, which first took root there.

Fast-forward a few decades and a couple retirements later, and the perennial pals are still hanging out and helping Metroparks Toledo as volunteer garden keepers.

“Garden keeper is a fancy term for weeder,” Wilson joked. “This year Judy and I take care of the Heirloom Garden adjacent to the pioneer house at Toledo Botanical Garden Metropark. There are a variety of rare flowers and vegetables planted there annually by the staff, and our job is to keep invasive weeds at bay so that the garden can thrive.”

“During the pandemic, Kathy and I decided to visit one Metropark each week during the spring and summer. We both enjoyed getting out of the house while getting some exercise,” Babula said. “Young and old can enjoy the beauty and events at our Metroparks. Walking, biking, kayaking, camping, picnicking, playing, archery, tree climbing, roller blading, skating, and sledding are a few of the numerous activities enjoyed in our parks.”

“Once pandemic-related restrictions lifted, we knew we wanted to get more involved with volunteering, and the Metroparks seemed like a good fit,” Wilson said.

During the growing season, the two weed for a couple hours each week at Toledo Botanical Garden Metropark.

“I like weeding because I can give some of my time while being outdoors. It is nice to talk to Kathy as we do our work, which makes for a pleasant experience,” Babula said. “I have a good feeling each day when I am finished, that we have done something to help nature and something that helps to make others happy.”

“The fact that we’re doing something where results can be seen immediately is rewarding,” Wilson added. “We also get positive feedback from folks who are walking around enjoying the park. Almost every shift will find a visitor stopping to chat or thanking us for helping keep up the garden.”

They are two of more than 2,000 volunteers who

make the Metroparks Toledo so special.

“Once I moved to the area, almost immediately I would hear ‘Go to the Toledo Metroparks!’ And like so many others, I fell in love,” said Meredith Busic, volunteer engagement specialist with Metroparks Toledo. “What guests may not see are our absolutely amazing volunteers that make it all happen.

“We use volunteers at just about every possible place we can. They help in our offices, they help us promote ourselves in the community, they lead walks, build trails, pick up litter, maintain our garden beds, monitor our native species, clean seeds, plant trees, remove invasive species, serve as our eyes and ears, answer questions, assist with programs, and help with special events like expos, holidays, teas, and grand openings, plus so much more,” Busic said.

“Our volunteers educate, advocate, connect, and support their parks in every way possible. We have 19 parks across Lucas County that are each uniquely special, and the only way we were able to make these parks happen — to make them accessible, clean, safe, and fantastically wild — is thanks to the tens of thousands of hours that our volunteers dedicate yearly.”

Volunteers can donate as much or as little time as their schedules allow. No experience is needed; Metroparks provides training if necessary.

“Big impacts are mostly made by the volunteers who come once or twice. Maybe they come yearly for special programs or just once looking for something to do on a Saturday and that is one of the greatest things about them. Their one to three hours is a ripple you can only really see when you stand back,” Busic said. “It’s the people they helped into a kayak for the very first time, or the bags of trash they picked up along the road, it’s the trails they build for guests to enjoy, and native species they plant that will last generations. To them, it may just be a moment, but to us with the Metroparks and to the community, it is those little things that make the Metroparks one of Northwest Ohio’s precious gems.”

JoAnne Mihaly, who worked at MCO/MUO/UTMC as a dietetic technician for 25 years, and her husband, John, stepped up to join the Volunteer Trail Patrol this year.



Judy Babula and Kathy Wilson weed flower beds at Toledo Botanical Garden as part of their volunteer activities at Metroparks Toledo.

UTRA EXECUTIVE BOARD 2023-2024

Learn more about the incoming board on page 5.

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UTRA NAMED ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AFFILIATE OF THE YEAR AGAIN

The University of Toledo Retirees Association was selected for the fourth time as the 2023 Affiliate of the Year by the UToledo Alumni Association. The Association noted that UTRA stood out by accomplishing the following:

- Writing a governance document that detailed each UTRA committee's purpose, structure, functions, etc.
- Creating a Philanthropy Committee, whose main purpose is to facilitate retirees' philanthropic efforts such as supporting the UTMC Satellites group; donation collections; and tracking and analyzing giving via the combined charitable campaign.
- Hosting a wide range of programs, usually one activity per month. 2022-23 programming included visits to the Museum of the Great Lakes and the Toledo Museum of Art; Hoen's Gardening Center; a Sandpiper cruise; a six-day bus trip to Vermont; a daylong bus trip to the Purple Rose Theatre in Mich.; a wine tasting; Rocket football tailgate party; and a lecture on the Toledo State Hospital with tour of the former grounds.

Out of those programs, the Sandpiper Cruise had 68 people attend, and the Holiday Brunch had 65. The Vermont bus trip was very popular, with 45 people who attended all six days. The bus trip to the Purple Rose Theatre had 46. Overall, UTRA has had a considerably high member attendance-per-event ratio. The UTRA Program Committee is providing more innovative events this year, including a bus trip to Gettysburg.



Curt Black, past president, and Chris Spengler, immediate past president, receive the Affiliate of the Year Award on behalf of UTRA at the Alumni Association's annual meeting.

NEWS FROM COLUMBUS

By James Lapp

STRS OHIO

Earlier this year, the STRS board approved two benefit enhancements (one each for active and retired members) for fiscal 2024. Retirees who started receiving benefits on June 1, 2019, or earlier, will receive a 1 percent cost of living adjustment (COLA) in fiscal year 2024. The increase will be added to the base benefit on the retirement anniversary date and each month thereafter. Current retirement eligibility for active teachers that requires 34 years of service for an unreduced benefit has been extended five years through July 2028. This requirement had been scheduled to increase to 35 years on August 1, 2023. Educators may still retire at any age with at least 30 years of service at a reduced benefit.

The board's external actuary, Cheiron (which by state statute must approve any benefit enhancements) said it would approve \$830 million — or 1 percent of STRS assets — for benefit enhancements. The \$825 million cost for the 1 percent COLA and the delay in raising years of service for retirement was just below the \$830 million allowance. Benefits will be reviewed again, no later than spring 2024.

Cheiron was pressed by board member Rudy Fichtenbaum on what members should tell a retiree who is hurting financially because of the reduced COLA. Cheiron's response was how much worse it would be if the fund were to run out of money and pensions were cut or eliminated, and that in its experience the longer the pension plan takes to address a problem, the more painful the solution becomes.

On another note, Cheiron recommended that the STRS board assume that the current 7 percent rate of return will hold for the next decade.

At the May board meeting, Aon/McLagan (an industry leader in compensation analysis) provided the board with its review of the performance-based incentive (PBI) plan for eligible associates in the investment department. It found the STRS plan to be generally aligned with competitive market practice and stated that STRS competes with a broad range of firms for investment talent. The PBI plan is designed to attract, motivate, and retain top-caliber professionals in order to drive strong investment returns.

In June, STRS investment consultant Callan LLC shared results of the first quarter performance of STRS investments. Returns ranked in the top 5 percent of public funds Callan monitors over the past five-, seven-, and 10-year periods and at or near the top 25 percent for the one- and three-year periods. Returns were higher than the board's investment policy benchmark over each of these periods. Over the past five years, STRS achieved top 5 percent returns among public funds monitored by

Callan, while maintaining lower risk than its peers.

The board voted to adopt the system's operating and capital budgets for fiscal year 2024. It approved an operating budget of \$115.6 million, a 2.8 percent increase over the current fiscal year. The approved capital budget totals \$8.3 million. STRS continues to downsize its staff with 17 positions scheduled to be eliminated next year. At the May meeting, STRS selected a consultant for both its general investments and alternative investments. In previous years, nearly a dozen firms vied for these contracts; this year there were just two. The board voted to negotiate with Callan, the current general consultant, to become the sole investment consultant covering both traditional and alternative investments.

OPERS

OPERS ended 2022 with a defined benefit (DB) funded ratio of 84 percent, and an unfunded liability period of 16 years. The funded status is expected to decrease in the short-term because of unrecognized investment losses and could exceed the 30-year amortization period requirement if the 2023 return is less than its assumed rate of return of 6.9 percent. A loss of 4.5 percent or greater in 2023 would cause OPERS to exceed the 30-year amortization requirement, while a gain of 19.1 percent would offset the unrealized losses. Hitting the assumed rate of return would cause the funding period to increase, but would not exceed 30 years.

During the first quarter of 2023, the OPERS defined benefit fund returned 3.9 percent, in line with its benchmark. The OPERS healthcare fund, which has more liquid assets than the DB fund, posted a 4.9 percent gain during the first quarter, outperforming its benchmark by 0.18 percent.

Cost-of-living adjustments for OPERS members in 2024 will be 3 percent for retirees with a benefit effective date prior to January 7, 2013, and 2.3 percent for retirees with a later effective date whose COLAs are based on the Consumer Price Index-W. According to state law, the annual COLA for those retirees is based on the change in the CPI-W from the end of June 2022 to the end of June of this year, with a maximum adjustment of 3 percent. Health Reimbursement Arrangement deposits for retirees who have an HRA for their healthcare will remain unchanged for 2024.

OPERS released its latest annual financial reports — the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and the abbreviated Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) — that provide a detailed look at the financial, investment, actuarial, and demographic details of the pension system.

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UTRA ELECTIONS RESULTS 2023-24

The Nominating Committee would like to thank all UTRA members who agreed to stand for election for board offices for the 2023-24 year. The following is a list of those members who were elected.

President: Andy Jorgensen

Andy Jorgensen retired from UToledo in 2017 after 29 years as a faculty member in the Department of Chemistry. Previously, he was assistant vice president in Academic Affairs and was the director of the University's conversion to semesters. In UTRA, he has served as vice president, chair of the UTRA Scholarship Committee, and member of the Program Committee. He has also been active in Book Buddies and the Breakfast Bunch.

Vice President: Lance Talmage

Lance Talmage has served on the UTRA Board for the last three years. He has been active on the Bylaws Committee, the Governance Committee, and has attended many UTRA activities. Lance became a part-time faculty member of the medical school in 1973 and a full-time faculty member in 2014. Lance served as interim chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology from 2014 to 2017 and worked three more years for the College of Medicine.

Secretary: Jan Whitaker

Janice (Jan) M. Whitaker worked as a social worker with the transplant program at UTMTC for 22 years before retiring in 2011. Since then, she has been a member of UTRA and directs the Book Buddies club.

Members-at-Large

Cecelia Clarke: Since retiring from the College of Pharmacy at the end of 2001, Cecelia has continued to maintain an ongoing relationship with UTRA. She became a life member of UTRA in Aug. 2001, and served on the UTRA Steering Committee from 2000-04, during which time she helped to establish the UTRA Scholarship. In early 2012, she began volunteering in the Alumni Office, and in 2013 she received the UToledo Alumni Association Volunteer of the Year Award for her outstanding efforts. For the past two years, she served as Secretary for the UTRA Board.

Laurie Flowers: After retiring from the Marketing and Communications Office in 2020, Laurie was elected a UTRA Board member-at-large. She revived the bimonthly Pathfinders walking excursions. Laurie is also active in the UTMTC Satellites Auxiliary as a volunteer and working with clinical offices to assist hospital patients and their families.

Penny Poplin Gosetti: Penny retired in 2021, having taught higher education master's and doctoral students as well as serving in administrative positions (including assessment, accreditation, and program review). Penny also co-coordinated international leadership academies for higher education students. This is Penny's first time as a UTRA Board member.

Thomas Mehelas: Tom retired in 2017 from the College of Medicine, where he was the deputy service chief of ophthalmology. He's served as a UTRA Board member-at-large and on the Health Science Scholarship Committee.

UTRA MEMBERS GATHER FOR ANNUAL MEETING

Continued from Page 1



Tricia Cullop, women's head basketball coach, presents keynote address at the UTRA annual meeting.

and food of other places," she said. While Cullop called the 2022-23 season "one of the most memorable and fun," she said she is looking forward to this year, when the team will have five new players and a new assistant coach.

In addition to Cullop, UTRA members heard from outgoing president Chris Spengler, who recapped some of the programs presented to members over the past year. These included talks on climate change, the architectural history of downtown Toledo, and the history of the Toledo State Hospital. Other events included a trip to the Purple Rose Theatre, a Sandpiper boat cruise, and a bus trip to Vermont.

Spengler pointed out that these many successful programs helped the UTRA group receive The University of Toledo Alumni Association Affiliate of the Year Award again this year, the fourth time UTRA has been so honored.

Incoming president Andy Jorgensen urged UTRA members to get more involved, to join one of the group's committees, continue to attend programs, and encourage other UToledo retirees who are not currently active to join the organization.

Treasurer Celia Regimbal reported that UTRA has a bit more than \$34,500 in its treasury, which the UTRA board uses to support membership activities, including helping to pay for meals for those attending the annual meeting and holiday brunch.

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO UTRA DESCENDANTS

By Peter Papadimos

The UTRA Scholarship Committee reviewed the applications submitted for its scholarships earmarked for descendants of UTRA members. This year the Scholarship Committee received applications from five qualified students. Based on their academic record and their essays, three students were awarded scholarships.

The students selected for the 2023-24 UTRA scholarships are:

Nina Ligman will be a junior English major with a perfect GPA. Ligman is an avid reader and writer who seeks to become a book editor at one of the big five publishing houses. She is a descendant of Steven LeBlanc. She will receive \$1,500.

Mark Dembowski will be a senior chemical engineering major and has a nearly perfect GPA. One of his goals is to make a difference in people's lives via his chemical engineering degree. He is a descendant of Cennis Zablocki. This is his third year to receive a

scholarship. He will receive \$1,000.

Joshua Fulton is a junior pre-business major. His goal is to own his own business and serve the community via the provision of goods and services. A descendant of Barb Monger, his award will be \$500.

The Scholarship Committee reminds UTRA members that donations to the UTRA Scholarship Fund are accepted at any time. Recent donations have permitted us to increase the total amount of dollars awarded to this year's total of \$3,000. If your children or grandchildren are attending UToledo, please encourage them to complete the Alumni Association online scholarship application via the UTRA webpage. The application will be online beginning in October and is due by February 1, 2024.

A special thanks goes to Augusta Askari, Celia Regimbal, and Andy Jorgensen for serving on the Scholarship Committee.

PHILANTHROPY COMMITTEE RAISES FUNDS

By Lynn Hutt

The newest UTRA committee, the Philanthropy Committee, held three events at the annual meeting for the benefit of UT students and also children receiving services at the UToledo Medical Center. The committee collected stuffed animals from UTRA members for the children. The committee also held a 50/50 raffle, which raised \$279 for the UTRA Scholarship Fund. UTRA members also donated \$665 for the Rocket-to-Rocket Fund.

On Aug. 27, the Philanthropy Committee had a fundraiser at the Junk King Warehouse. Brad Menard, a former UT employee, and his wife, Jessica, owners of Junk King Warehouse, held a community garage sale, and all proceeds were donated to the UTRA Philanthropy Committee to benefit students.

The Philanthropy Committee and the treasurer are working on a review of the process of how funds are collected, deposited, and dispensed for the benefit of the students, with the help of Sarah Metzger.

WELCOME THE NEWEST RETIREES AND UTRA LIFETIME MEMBERS

NEW RETIREES

Valerie Abbott
Jacques Amar
Kelly Andrews
Patti Ardis
Mark Boswell
Lynn Brinkman
Holly Burtch
Robert Collins
Mary Cornell
Walter Denk
David Edwards
Edward Findsen
Marilyn Gee

James Graff
Shirley Grzecki
John Jaegly
Christine Jeffers
Michael Koltz
Paula Kramer
Colleen Lancz
Michele Lewandowski
Jeen Lim
Michael Link
John Macko
S. Maggie Maloney
Allen Markowicz
Todd Marti

Kenneth McFeggan
Helen Mendez
Marie Mikolajczyk
Kathleen Miller
Susan Modarai
John Morris
Janet Nelson
Lisa Nino
Marilyn Palazzolo
Linda Powers
Patricia Reid
Pamela Samples
Deborah Saunders
Deann Adele Schiavone

Joy Seifert
Kathleen Sutherland
Gerard Thompson
Robert Waddle
Christine Wile
April Workman
Dawn Zavala

NEW LIFETIME MEMBERS

Elizabeth Akeman
Shirley Grzecki
Katherine Wilson

UTRA MEMBER TO RECEIVE BLUE T AWARD AT HOMECOMING

By Cynthia Nowak



Barbara Floyd, professor emerita of library administration and former university archivist, will be honored this fall with the Daniel J. Saevig Blue T Award. The award, recently renamed for the former associate vice president of alumni relations, is given in recognition of an individual's outstanding service to the UT Alumni Association and the University through committee and community involvement.

Certainly her most recent book (and she has authored several), *An Institution for the Promoting of Knowledge: The University of Toledo at 150*, published in 2022, once again brought her to the attention of the community. Calling the book her proudest achievement, she says, "[The request to write it] was like a gift. It gave me a chance to use the knowledge I had gained in my 31 years as university archivist and my writing skills to document the institution at an important milestone in its history."

As part of UT's Founder's Day, Floyd gave a lecture about the 10 events she identified as shaping the University's history — and received a standing ovation at the end.

Over her years at UT, she served on numerous committees, chairing several. Her reputation for getting things done led to her appointment as interim director of University Libraries in her last two years of employment as a faculty member.

When she receives the Blue T during Homecoming ceremonies Sept. 30, it's likely she will echo what she said earlier about professional legacy: "I certainly hope the history of the University I wrote will be one of my legacies. I think the book can serve to educate future University leaders about what we did right, and also, what we did wrong, and to learn from those lessons as we move forward at a very precarious time in our history. I hope when the University celebrates its 300th anniversary that whoever writes that book will find what I did to be helpful."

VOLUNTEERING AT METROPARKS TOLEDO

Continued from Page 2

"We've always enjoyed the Metroparks year round and had been able to walk, hike, or bike every park last year," Mihaly said. "We would sometimes see volunteers on the trails, and then I learned more about the Volunteer Trail Patrol during a walk with the UTRA Pathfinders and thought volunteering made sense for us."

The couple are hitting the trails as volunteers for the first time this year. As members of the patrol, they field questions from park visitors and alert rangers of any potential issues; they act as ambassadors for the park system.

"We enjoy the interaction with park visitors, and the more questions we hear, the more we discover about the great park system we have here in Toledo," Mihaly said.

The two plan to visit every park again this year as members of the Volunteer Trail Patrol.

"Helping people enjoy the parks as much as we do is probably the biggest reason we do it," Mihaly said. "Plus, the bonuses of being outdoors, getting exercise, and meeting new people are pretty great, too."

Want to learn more? The Metroparks hold several volunteer orientations during the year. These informational meetings cover opportunities that are available and explain how easy it is to get involved. Upcoming orientations are scheduled from 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 19, at the Wildwood Preserve Metropark Ward Pavilion; Thursday, Feb. 22, at the Pearson Metropark Macomber Lodge; and Monday, April 15, at the Glass City Metropark Glass Pavilion.

For more information, go to metroparkstoledo.com/get-involved/volunteer or contact Busic at meredith.busic@metroparkstoledo.com or 419.407.9841.



John and JoAnne Mihaly, members of the Volunteer Trail Patrol.

NEWS FROM COLUMBUS

Continued from Page 4

They are available for review at opers.org. Highlights of the reports include:

- OPERS maintained a total net position of \$106.8 billion at the end of 2022, down from \$127 billion from a year earlier, reflecting last year's declining stock prices and historic losses in the bond market.
- Membership reached nearly 1.25 million, which included 220,667 retirees, 297,827 active members, and 730,139 inactive members.
- OPERS made pension benefit payments of more than \$7 billion, up from \$6.8 billion in 2021.
- Healthcare costs declined to \$591 million, from \$853 million.
- The OPERS defined benefit fund returned a loss of 12.03 percent, below the assumed rate of return of 6.9 percent. The healthcare portfolio returned a loss of 15.51 percent, below its assumed rate of return of 6.0 percent.
- Last year, OPERS had 85 members who were more than 100 years old, with the oldest being 107.
- For every dollar received from public employers in 2022, \$3.27 was returned to the Ohio economy through pension and healthcare payments made to retirees. More than \$2 billion of the OPERS portfolio was invested with Ohio-based companies.

ACTIVITIES PHOTOS



The UTRA Programming Committee developed several educational programs for members in 2023, including a trip to Hoen's Greenhouse (top left), where participants learned how to plant container gardens. Regular UTRA programs include the Pathfinders (right), a group that meets twice each month for leisurely walks.



Book Buddies (bottom left) is a regular monthly program of UTRA, where members read and discuss a book selected by one of the group. To find out more about UTRA programs (which are open to all members), go to: toledoalumni.org/connect/ut-retirees

IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Ruth Rowland Alteneder, Perrysburg, professor emerita of nursing, died June 28 at age 89. She joined MCO in the 1970s and began teaching clinical nursing. Alteneder was appointed chair of the Family Nurse Practitioner Program when it was formed and later became associate dean in the Graduate Nursing Program. In 1978, she joined the UT faculty as an adjunct assistant professor of nursing. Her research focused on AIDS and herpes. In 1991, she received a doctor of philosophy degree in health education and educational psychology from the University. Alteneder served as president of the Toledo branch of the American Association of University Women. She received numerous honors, including the Golden Lamp Award and the Excellence in Education Award from the Ohio Association of Advanced Practice Nurses. Alteneder retired from the University in 2000.

Sherry L. (Steinman) Ashenfelter, Tucson, Ariz., a former employee who worked in the College of Law, died July 6 at age 75.

Dr. Pamela Ann Bechtel, Oak Harbor, Ohio, who taught at the University from 1997 to 2005, died March 24 at age 66. She joined the health education faculty as an assistant professor and returned as a visiting professor.

Dr. Mary Ann (Iannone) Bell, Perrysburg, a UT graduate who returned to her alma mater to teach, died April 12 at age 66. She received a master of science degree in nursing from MCO in 1994 and a doctor of philosophy degree in health education from UT in 2011. Bell was a grad student at the University from 2008 to 2011, and then was an instructor from 2012 to 2015. In 2017, she was named an assistant professor of nursing and taught through 2018. Bell was the co-author of "A National Survey of Emergency Nurses and Avian Influenza Threat,"

which was published in 2014 in the *Journal of Emergency Nursing*. Her father, Dr. Anthony Iannone, was the founding chair of the MCO Neurology Department.

Paul J. Berwanger, Seabrook, Texas, a former UT police officer, died May 22 at age 67. A UT alumnus, he received a bachelor of science degree in chemical engineering in 1988.

Abigail J. Braid, Sylvania, a former nurse at UTM, died March 20 at age 25. While attending the University, she worked in the Student Recreation Center in 2016 and 2017. Braid received a bachelor of science degree in nursing from UT in 2019, when she was hired as a nursing assistant at UTM. One year later, she was a staff nurse in the Cardiovascular Unit, where she worked until 2021.

Howard Burkert Jr., Monclova, who worked in Carlson Library and Mulford Library for more than 20 years, died Nov. 1, 2022; he was 50. He joined the staff in 1998 and held various titles over the years; these included assistant director of student technical support and coordinator of library computer services. A UT alumnus, Burkert received a bachelor of arts degree in 2001.

Charles R. Burroughs, Dayton, a UT police officer who retired in 1995, died Jan. 24 at age 90.

Dr. Sheri A. Caldwell, Oregon, who worked in Student Services and was an instructor at the University from 2006 to 2011, died July 10 at age 57. A UT alumna, she received a master of business administration degree in industrial relations in 1992 and a doctorate in educational media in 1998.

Ann M Casey, Oregon, former UT employee, died March 3 at age 38.

George L. Chapman III, Naples, Fla., a former University trustee, benefactor and longtime Rocket

fan, died March 22 at age 75. He retired in 2014 as chair, president, and CEO of Health Care REIT, now known as Welltower Inc. Chapman was appointed to the MCO Board of Trustees in 1999 and served as chair when the institution merged with The University of Toledo in 2006. Ten years later, Chapman and his wife, Leslie, donated \$1 million for the construction of basketball offices at Savage Arena; the area was named the Chapman Basketball Complex. He served on the UT Presidential Search Committee in 2014 and 2015 when Dr. Sharon Gaber was selected to lead the University. UT named Chapman to a two-year term as a nonvoting national trustee in 2022.

James A. Chidester, Delaware, Ohio, an organist who was an instructor of music from 1997 to 2012, died April 19 at age 87.

Barbara P. (Malston) Clark, Oregon, a former MCO employee, died March 14 at age 91.

Dr. James M. Croak, Maumee, a clinical assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology in 1989 and 1990, died Feb. 26 at age 81. A UT alumnus, he received a bachelor's degree in 1964 and completed his residency at MCO in 1973.

Patricia A. (Kirwan) Crowley, Erie, Mich., a University employee who retired in 1995, died May 23 at age 92.

Jeannette "June" (Baynes-Hicks) Davis, Toledo, a former MCO employee, died Jan. 7 at age 69.

Dr. Lawrence J. Dessner, Toledo, professor emeritus of English, died July 19 at age 89. He joined the faculty as an assistant professor in 1969 and was promoted to associate professor in 1974. Dessner specialized in Victorian literature and creative writing. He wrote a book, *How to Write a Poem*, published in 1979 by New York University Press. After retirement, he continued to

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IN MEMORIAM

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teach and helped with the Toledo Excel Program.

Peter Elloian, Cincinnati, professor emeritus of art, died July 10 at age 87. In 1966, he became an instructor at the Toledo Museum of Art School of Design, which at the time taught UT art students. In 1987, Elloian was named professor of art at the University. Elloian received the UT Outstanding Teacher Award in 1993. He and his wife, Carolyn Autry Elloian, adjunct associate professor of art, retired from UT in 2001. She passed in 2011. While teaching, he created his own art with a focus on graphic arts, printmaking, and drypoint and metal engraving.

Benjamin R. Emch, Marysville, Ohio, a financial reporting analyst in the Controller's Office from 2010 to 2012, died April 12 at age 43. He received two BBA degrees — one in information systems operation management and one in finance — from the University in 2001.

Hal Fetterman, Sylvania, longtime UT benefactor, died June 25 at age 85. In 2007, he and his wife, Susan, donated \$1 million to the Athletic Department to build a multi-sport practice facility that became the Fetterman Training Center. In 2018, they pledged \$1 million to the University to support new research into treatments for pancreatic cancer; the gift established the UT Medical Center Pancreatic Cancer Research Innovation Fund. The couple also started the Scott Raymond Fetterman Memorial Scholarship Fund in 1996 for UT engineering students.

Janet M. Gearhart, Toledo, an instructor in the College of Nursing from 2005 to 2016, died Feb. 10 at age 72. She was named a clinical associate in the college in 2016. Gearhart received a bachelor of science degree in nursing from UT in 1988.

Dr. Albert C. Gordon, Lexington, Va., who taught for a time in the Theatre and Film Department, died May 30 at age 89.

James "Kirk" Grant, Folly Beach, S.C., who was an assistant professor of law for a time, died May 5 at age 80.

Dr. Mustafa Guvendi, Istanbul, a clinical associate professor of surgery from 2003 to 2016, died Feb. 18 at age 86. He completed his residency program at MCO in 1983.

Mary "Jo" Harmon, Toledo, who taught in the English Department for more than three decades, died June 10 at age 70. She retired as a professor in 2016. A UT alumna, Harmon received a bachelor of arts degree in 1975, a master of arts degree in 1977, and a master of business administration degree in 1992.

Roger G. Kennedy, Toledo, professor emeritus of media technology, died July 4 at age 92. He joined the University as a media production specialist in 1964 and helped faculty and students with accessing the latest in media technology. Kennedy was director of audio-visual services and was responsible for delivery, use, and retrieval of equipment, films, and video at the University. He also managed photographic services and an instructional television studio. He was among the early users of digital imaging. A past president of the Educational Media Council of Ohio, Kennedy received professor emeritus status in 1985 and continued to teach for several years, retiring in 2012.

Suzanne M. Kielczewski, Perrysburg, who worked at the University more than two decades, died July 26 at age 72. She was hired as an account clerk in the Registrar's Office in 1990. During her time on campus, she also worked in Accounting and Student Services before retiring in 2016.

Virginia (D'Arcangelo) Knapp, Toledo, an executive secretary for years who retired from the University in 2000, died July 9 at age 85.

Rosalie "Rosie" (James) Koedam, Perrysburg, a former MCO/MUO/UT employee, died March 11 at age 76.

Dr. Robert L. MacDonald, Las Vegas, adjunct instructor of history, died May 24 at age 44. A UT alumnus, he received bachelor and master of arts degrees in history in 2001 and 2006, respectively. He is survived by his mother, Deborah MacDonald, University retiree.

Cheryl Bondy Marquette, Punta Gorda, Fla., a health and safety officer who retired from the University in 2006, died July 1 at age 76. She joined the University in 1987. The UT alumna received a bachelor of arts degree in adult liberal studies in 2000 and a master of liberal studies in 2006.

Dr. Michael R. Molnar, Warren, N.J., died Feb. 7 at age 77. He joined the University as an assistant professor of astronomy in 1974. Molnar moved to Houston in 1979 for a job in industry.

Shirley A. (Posadny) Monto, Toledo, a longtime volunteer with the Satellites, died April 23 at age 81. For decades, Monto and her husband, Joe, who passed in 2014, supported projects benefitting MCO/MUO/UTMC. She helped with fundraising events; collected and distributed stuffed animals for children at the hospital; and made tray favors for patients.

Lizabeth A. Moody, Key West, Fla., who was a visiting professor of law, died May 19 at age 88.

Nicholas E. Obee, Toledo, a custodial worker on Main Campus from 2007 to 2017, died March 16 at age 42. He is survived by his mother, Lynda Obee, administrative assistant in

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IN MEMORIAM

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the Department of Physics and Astronomy.

Debra K. (Nichols) Ostrander, Perrysburg, who worked as a registered nurse at MCO for 10 years, died March 18 at age 68.

Barbara A. (Moon) Reed, Maumee, who worked at the University from 1996 until her retirement in 2007, died Feb. 25 at age 93.

Ronald P. Roan, Sylvania, a computer specialist at MCO/MUO from 2005 to 2006, died May 5 at age 66.

Gladys R. (Barnett) Rudolph, Toledo, instructor of English from 1997 to 2016 who also served as an instructor of music, died May 10 at age 86. She is survived by her husband, Bob, who also taught at the University.

Dr. Elizabeth "Libby" Ruppert, Westlake, Ohio, professor emerita of pediatrics, died June 15 at age 86. She joined the faculty when her husband, Dr. Richard Ruppert, became the third president of MCO in 1977. Together, the couple helped shape healthcare education in the area and devoted their time to improving the community. She began her career as a neonatologist and was known as a champion of the children, offering aid and developing programs to help those with disabilities and special needs. Ruppert was a former president of the Ohio chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, which named its outstanding pediatrician of the year award in her honor. She helped develop the EduCare Center and the Anne Grady Prescribed Pediatric Center for children with and without special needs to come together to learn with and from each other in an inclusive environment. Ruppert was the first woman board chair of the United Way of Greater Toledo. In 2006, she helped secure a \$50,000 grant for the Ohio Chapter of the

American Academy of Pediatrics to bring the Reach Out and Read program to the state; the early childhood literacy program provides free books to families during visits to pediatricians. That same year, she was a founding member of the Lucas County Initiative to Improve Birth Outcomes. For her public service, Ruppert received a Jefferson Award in 2010; she also was inducted into the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame. She taught at MCO until 2003. In addition to her contributing to the education of hundreds of medical students, she served in the Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics and Ambulatory Pediatrics departments. In 2012, the Rupperts received the University's Ashel Bryan Distinguished Volunteer Award. Richard Ruppert died later that year.

Fred Scott Jr., Temperance, Mich., a former UT employee, died April 24 at age 95.

Joyce (Potter) Shawaker, Toledo, a longtime UT employee, died May 6 at age 85. She received a bachelor of education degree in 1963 and a master's degree in education in 1963. Shawaker was an English instructor in 1965, 1966 and 1969. She returned to the University in 1977 as assistant director of placement services. In 1986, she moved to the College of Law, where she was law placement director until her retirement in 1997.

Lawrence C. Shears, Toledo, an associate lecturer of mathematics from 1997 to 2012, died May 29 at age 82. He returned to teach in 2002. A UT alumnus, Shears received a bachelor's degree in education in 1963.

Arlene A. Susdorf, Toledo, died June 1 at age 73. She joined the staff as a secretary in the Distance and eLearning Lab in 2007 and transferred to the College of Law in 2012. She retired as a secretary in

law instruction in 2017.

Dr. Neil R. Thomford, Perrysburg, professor of surgery at MCO/MUO from 1980 to 2005, died April 25 at age 91. He was the first chair of the Department of Surgery; while he was leading the department, MCO Hospital developed its heart transplant program, which resulted in the area's first heart transplant operation. During his tenure, Thomford also served as acting dean of the medical school.

Janis M. Van Buren Myers, Toledo, who was an X-ray and CT technologist at MCO, died Jan. 20 at age 81.

Steven J. Wagner, Monclova, Ohio, CEO of The University of Toledo Federal Credit Union, died April 14 at age 51. He joined the credit union in 2010.

Edward Ford Weber, Toledo, died Feb. 27 at age 91. As an instructor, he taught trusts and estates in the College of Law from 1967 to 1979.

Susan R. (Morrison) Wille, Gahanna, Ohio, who taught nursing at the University, died June 6 at age 78. A UT alumna, she earned bachelor of science and master of science degrees in nursing in 1979 and 1984.

Billy Joe Winfree, Toledo, a custodian on Health Science Campus from 2021 to 2022, died March 26 at age 51.

Dr. Barney M. Wisinger, Toledo, who taught at MCO/MUO for four decades, died June 19 at age 93. He moved to Toledo in 1962 and became a faculty member at the new medical college. Wisinger retired in 2007.

Cheryl L. (Wagner) Yeager, Sylvania, a cardiovascular technician at MCO/MUO/UTMC from 1995 to 2012, died June 18 at age 67.



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UTRA Tower Talk

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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We continue to monitor the actions of our government and the boards of our retirement systems with respect to our retirement plans. Jim Lapp has been our faithful servant in this area. Be sure to read his very informative report in this newsletter. This is an especially interesting time in our state with respect to these plans.

UTRA continues to offer many avenues of activity to our members. If you like to:

- Walk, join our Pathfinders on alternate Wednesdays.
- Eat breakfast with colleagues, join our Breakfast Group on the first Tuesday of the month.
- Read, join our Book Buddies on the first Wednesday of the month.
- Learn about interesting topics, look for announcements of our regular presentations.
- Support our students in their financial challenges, check out the Philanthropy Committee.
- Recognize students as scholars, support the UTRA Scholarship or the HSC Scholarship.

If you are going to attend one of these events, please consider inviting a retired colleague to join you. If you wish to be active in any of these committees, communicate with a board member. See the roster within these pages.

Finally, if you have received this newsletter by mail, but do not receive the regular UTRA emails, please send your email address to Sarah Metzger (sarah.metzger2@utoledo.edu) so you can be added to that distribution. If you are on Facebook, look for UTRA postings there. If you have any comments, questions or suggestions for future activities, please write to me at andy.jorgensen@utoledo.edu.