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Summer 6-1-2020

2020 June - East Tennessee State University Retirees Association Newsletter

Retirees Association, East Tennessee State University

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President's Report

Dear Fellow Retirees

Who would have thought just a few months ago that we would be confronted with the devastating effects of the COVID-19 virus which has been threatening our health as well as turning our way of life upside down---not to mention the impact it is having on our local and national economies. For many, personal investments are affected as well.

It is not clear how the virus will play out over the long haul, but its duration is most likely to last for several more months. As of now, it seems our collected efforts are having an impact on "flattening the curve," which will aid the health care system to deal with the virus. However, the impact of the pandemic will probably be with us until a vaccine becomes available.

One of the things my wife and I have done to get out and about during these unusual times is to take neighborhood walks. I've extended this by managing, most days, to get in some extra walking miles on the Greenbelt in Kingsport.

In keeping with the social distancing guidelines, the ETSURA Board has been holding its monthly Board meetings via zoom. It goes without saying that the time we find ourselves in now has aversively affected our planned activities. We have canceled all of our tours and Eat & Chats for this year. Also the Summer Luncheon, scheduled for June 19 was canceled.

Through the generosity of Dr. Dean Blevins, President Tennessee College of Applied Technology, Elizabethton, he will be hosting the September 24 Eat & Chat via a zoom presentation. As reported earlier, if we are unable to gather in-person for the November 6 Brunch/Luncheon, our speaker, Dr. Randy Wykoff, Dean, College of Public Health and Director of the ETSU Center of Rural Health, who was scheduled to be our Summer Luncheon speaker, will also meet with us via a zoom format. An invitation on how to register for each of these sessions will be sent via e-mail by September 15 as well as posted in the September newsletter.

The ETSURA Board has been impressed with how ETSU has responded to this crisis. President Noland and his staff, as well as faculty, have dealt with this emergency in a way that has kept our community safe. They have provided massive efforts to put classes online as well as provided for the education and graduation of our students. This storm is being weathered with creativity,

dedication, and compassion that are the hallmarks of ETSU.

Dr. Jack Rhoton, President
ETSURA 2020

It is arguably not an understatement to say that the COVID-19 virus has been a life disrupter in ways that we personally have not previously experienced. Each of us probably has a story to tell how the coronavirus outbreak has impacted or altered our lives in a variety of ways. In this issue, three of our ETSURA Board members: Cynthia S. Burnley, Isabel 'Bonny' Stanley, and Fred G. Tudiver share their perspective on the pandemic and how the virus has affected their day-to-day activities. Also, ETSURA member Colin F. Baxter, professor emeritus of history, reflects on retirement and what he has been up to since transitioning from ETSU.

Being Among the Vulnerable Elderly

This is a new label I had not previously used for myself until COVID-19 arrived. Am I getting used to it? Yes, especially as I am more and more cautious about going to the grocery, post office, gas stations, etc. and am using some of the small amounts of hand sanitizer, alcohol, and peroxide I have. I do like the Vulnerable Elderly grocery shopping hour, but do not like getting up in time to use it at 7-8:00 a.m. A couple of younger friends offer to pick up needed items for us, because we are old.

My husband and I have made numerous changes in our lifestyle and habits, such as entertainment, socializing, travel, and dealing with new fears. Bob has spent a great deal of time cancelling reservations for basketball and golf tournaments, reunions, plays, vacations, etc. Identifying as the vulnerable elderly helped to get full refunds in some cases. Instead of going to movie theaters, we are watching more Netflix and Amazon Prime. The popcorn isn't as good, but the chairs are more comfortable and we control the Pause button and the room temperature. Of course, we are doing more reading, but we are also taking more walks around Jonesborough and riding around the county, exploring areas we had not previously seen much. This is a beautiful Spring with spectacular Redbud and Dogwood trees that lift our spirits.

Another change is personal appearance. It doesn't matter what I have on or how I look if I have nowhere to go or anyone to see. I wonder how much money I'm saving by not wearing makeup or not using hair products. I am, however, wearing deodorant. So what if my hair isn't styled; I can put on a hat when I go to the grocery store. I'm glad I don't dye my hair and need to be concerned about white roots showing. I'm accustomed to looking old. Zoom meetings do require some attention to personal appearance, but my comfy drawstring pants aren't visible.

Since I am not going anywhere, there is no need to look at my calendar to see what is in store for the next day or week. However, I have missed, or almost missed, some birthdays I needed to acknowledge. Remembering what day it is can be a challenge, but the newspaper has it right on page one. But what about leftovers? Recalling what day I cooked that chicken and if it is still safe to eat, is more of a challenge. Every day is just about the same.

I have missed getting my second cataract removed. On March 4 the first one was removed. The second one was scheduled for April 1. Approximately one week before, the second surgery was cancelled because it was non-essential. I wanted to say "non-essential for whom?" I fully understand the need to preserve PPEs and other supplies for virus patient treatment, but my cataract seemed pretty essential to me, especially since I still don't have a new prescription for the first eye. I'm thankful to have a magnifying glass and do not need to be driving much right now.

I don't delude myself by thinking this will end in a few weeks. Until there is a vaccine and cure, I suspect this will be our new normal for the next 18 months, at least for those of us who are the vulnerable elderly. The social distancing is more routine now than it was one month ago, but I miss dinners with friends and other activities. At least the activities are not happening without us. Everyone is staying at home. My husband and I have stayed in good moods with no arguments or deep sadness. We really are trying to make the best of the situation. Having attentive friends and family members makes a big difference, and I highly value them all.

Dr. Cynthia Sue Burnley
Former Director, Performance Funding & Academic
Assessment at ETSU

March Retirees

Dr. Bert Bach, Provost VP Academic Affairs,
Special Asst. to President

Ms. Lorena Burton, Coordinator, Associate Dean
Academic Affairs

Mr. Pat Cronin, Professor/Director of Arts
Outreach, Theatre & Dance

Mr. Dwight Ernst, Licensed Clinical Social
Worker, Office of Practice

Ms. Angela Finny, Internal Auditor, Office of
Internal Audit

Mr. Larry Gourley, Custodian, Custodial Services

Mr. Jerry Keplinger, Coordinator, Biomedical
Services

Dr. Stuart Leicht, Professor, Internal Medicine

Mr. L. J. Shell, Plumber, Plant Maintenance &
Repairs

Mr. Guy Strickland, Radio Station Operator,
Campus Radio FM

Mrs. Rita Taylor, Information Research Tech 1,
Student Housing

Dr. Carla Warner, Director, Adult, Commuter, &
Transfer Services

Ms. Wanda Young, Coordinator, Psychiatry

April Retirees

Ms. Leslie Adebajo, Professor, Library
Administration

Mrs. Gerri Brockwell, Human Business Partner,
Human Resources

Ms. Elaine Evans, Library Assistant, Medical,
Medical Library Administration

Ms. Catherine Peoples, Director, Associate Dean
Academic Affairs

Mr. William Rasnick, Associate Vice President,
Capital Planning

Ms. Kimberly Waters, Grants/Contracts Manager,
Finance & Administration

Our Condolences

Dr. Sybil M. Lassiter passed away March 25, 2020. She was an Associate Professor for Nursing.

ETSURA Volunteers

Many of our ETSURA members are volunteers for charity organizations in the region. Without volunteers, many of these charities could not exist. Last year Fred Warren, ETSURA member and volunteer, asked if ETSURA could send an email asking for assistance for the Washington County/Johnson City Animal Shelter. The Board approved the request. One special retiree from ETSU contacted Fred Warren and offered her services. This retiree is now one of the most appreciated volunteers to the Washington County/Johnson City Animal Shelter. Dr. Roberta Herrin in conjunction with Tammy Davis, Director of the WC/JC Animal Shelter, volunteered hours working on completing a grant application this past year. Herrin's background definitely was a tremendous resource with the writing of this most needed grant.

This is just one of our ETSURA volunteer stories. If you know someone with a great volunteer story, please contact us and we will spotlight them in the next newsletter.

Our sincere appreciation goes to **Dr. Roberta Herrin** for volunteering at the Animal Shelter and for all of her community service.



2020 Board of Directors

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Dr. Don Gotterbarn
Ms. Susan Burkey
Ms. Gail Burleson
Dr. Jeff Wardeska

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Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Past President

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Ms. Susan Burkey
Dr. Louis Modica
Dr. Fred Tudiver

2021
Dr. Cynthia Burnley
Dr. Scott Champney
Dr. Don Gotterbarn
Dr. Chu-Ngi Ho

2022
Ms. Gail Burleson
Dr. Isabel 'Bonny' Stanley
Dr. Jack Rhoton
Dr. Jeff Wardeska

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Dr. Priscilla Ramsey
Dr. David Kalwinsky



**Do you have questions
about your Retiree Insurance?**

Contact the Benefits Administration
and select Option 2.

Hours 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday,
Central Time
800-253-9981

ETSURA Board of Directors meet at 3:30 p.m. the last Tuesday of each month in the Administrative Conference Room, Room 309, Dossett Hall.

No board meeting scheduled for June, July, and December.

June: No Board Meeting

Canceled Luncheon

Summer Luncheon/Picnic Food City, June 19-11:30 a.m.

June Newsletter, Volume 33, Issue 2

July: No Board Meeting

August: Board Meeting August 25, 2020 3:30 p.m.
Room 309 Burgin Dossett Hall

Move-in-Day, Governor's Hall—August 20 (ETSURA Volunteers) 7:00 a.m.—Noon. **(Tentative)**

September: Board Meeting September 29, 2020 3:30 p.m. Room 309 Burgin Dossett Hall
Board Nominations

Eat and Chat, 11:30 a.m., September 24th, One Acre Café, Speaker: *Dr. Dean Blevins*—President, Tennessee College of Applied Technology, Elizabethton. (Confirmed) **(Presented as a Zoom Session)**

September Newsletter, Volume 33, Issue 3

October: Board Meeting October 27, 2020 3:30 p.m.
Room 309 Burgin Dossett Hall

WETS-FM Fall Fundraiser, Date TBD

Tour: Friday, October 16, 2 p.m., Tour of Northeast State Community College Technical Education Complex. **(Canceled)**

November: Board Meeting November 24, 2020 3:30 p.m. Room 309 Burgin Dossett Hall

Annual Brunch/Luncheon, Millennium Centre, Nov. 6, 11:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m. Confirmed: Speaker: *Dr. Randy Wykoff*--Dean, College of Public Health and Director of the ETSU Center for Rural Health. (The title of Dr. Wykoff talk will be Rethinking Health: What Makes TN Less Healthy than 43 other States.) **(If we are unable to gather in-person, Dr. Wykoff will present a Zoom Session)**

December: No Board Meeting—December Newsletter, Volume 33, Issue 4

Second Harvest of Northeast Tennessee

Join other ETSURA members at Second Harvest in Kingsport - Every 2nd Wednesday.

Upcoming dates: **Canceled until further Notice!**

Time: 9 a.m. - noon (ETSURA lunch will follow)

Don't have time to volunteer?

You can donate directly to Second Harvest by mailing your donation to the address below:

Second Harvest Food Bank of Northeast Tennessee
1020 Jericho Drive
Kingsport, TN 37663

Bucky's Food Pantry

Donations can also be made to the Bucky's Food Pantry. The mission of the Bucky's Food Pantry is to diminish or end hungry on ETSU campus for students and others who face food insecurity. If you wish to donate, please make check to ETSU and write Bucky's Food Pantry in the check's memo line and mail to: University Advancement, PO Box 70721, Johnson City, TN 37614.



Thank you to Eastman Credit Union for your generous donation and for always supporting our activities.

Musings from Quarantine?

As we go into week nine of quarantine for old folks, I have been musing about what I have accomplished or learned during my weeks of forced constriction of activities. First I tackled the freezer, home of many unknown items. Is this chicken soup or applesauce and how old is it? Hmm--One helping of stew that was pretty good a year ago. Animal, vegetable, or mineral?

Next came the pantry. Cranberry--artichoke relish, pull date June 2015; Indian naan mix, date too old to read ; spices aged to tasteless, odorless dust. Out they all went.

Inventory of essential items: Toilet Paper (about more later), Paper Towels, Dish and Laundry Detergent, Toothpaste, Medicines, etc, etc,

In the midst of all this preparation and clearing out, I made some resolutions: I will keep a journal, I will write or call friends, I will read some old favorite books and finally get to some books I have been meaning to read, I will get some exercise. Many of these things have happened, some more conscientiously than others.

Somewhere along the line I mastered the pick-up service at Kroger's, learned how to zoom, and improvised a number of work-arounds. Previously I would have felt the need to run out and buy some specialty item a recipe called for. For instance, last night I substituted a bell pepper for eggplant. Are they much alike? Well, no, but the resulting dish wasn't bad. It is salutary to learn how much we can do with what we have and the many things we can do without.

About week four our daughter in Massachusetts got the impression we might be low on toilet paper, looked around on the internet, and ordered us twelve rolls of industrial-sized toilet paper. And I do mean industrial-sized. Each roll is equal to about six regular rolls—think seventy-two rolls! Since these jumbos don't fit in our bathrooms, I have been rerolling paper onto the cores of old rolls--somewhat like knitters who roll skeins of yarn into balls for ease of knitting. Message to other ETSURA members: if you run low on toilet paper, call me—but you'll have to roll your own.

Now that I am running on a slower speed, I am more aware of our beautiful spring, the birds, a resident rabbit. I am grateful for young neighbors who offer to do errands for us, and old friends I am now in greater contact with. I am grateful for our healthcare workers—many in my own family, our essential workers in grocery stores, the Post Office, and pharmacies. When this is all over, I am going to give them all a big hug and maybe some extra toilet paper.

Yes, Covid-19 is a scourge and is frightening, but we can learn a lot from our shared experience. I sure have.

Dr. Isabel 'Bonny' Stanley
Professor Emeritus of English

Some Thoughts on the Coronavirus Pandemic

This pandemic has greatly affected my life as it very likely has to anyone who is reading this. It has changed every day routines, connections and relationships with virtually everyone in my life. That has meant staying home 24/7 except for my wife's and my twice daily neighborhood walks -- which we cherish. It has been interesting getting to see our neighbors -- getting to know neighbors we hardly knew were there! All at social limiting distances of course.

I recently imagined living through this pandemic without any of the social media tools we now take for granted. No Zoom, Skype, text, tweets, ticktocks, YouTube, Snapchat, even email. We would all likely experience far more isolation and separation from those who matter to us than we have.

Connecting with our several sets of friends and couples has changed from meeting at one of our favorite restaurants or one of our homes to share a dinner, to prolonged zoom chats and "Quarantines." No, it is not quite the same, but I still feel connected to them which is important. I miss simple touches and hugs with those dear to my heart. Especially my two grandsons who live in Canada!

Although I've been retired from ETSU since 2016, I was busy running a non-profit CME (medical CE) company. I very recently retired from that position but was recently asked to write current CME briefs on COVID-19 for busy health professionals on the front lines. These brief evidence-based pieces have turned out to be very useful for health professionals too busy to read a lot of the literature on COVID-19 illness. There's been a tremendous volume of research literature on COVID-19 -- at least 9000 new publications between the start of this pandemic and early May 2020. So, distilling this volume into a usable and easily digestible format to answer the most common clinical questions about COVID-19 turned out to be the right tool at the right time. And it allows me to use the research tools I used in my previous work life.

Living in this pandemic has been tough and full of unknowns for all of us. As I write this in early May we are in the midst of a global debate, caught between the danger of this virus to human life on one side, and the danger of self- and imposed isolation to the economies of the world. There is definitely no perfect balance here, with no map or guide. We're all in this together.

Fred Tudiver, MD

Former Director of Primary Care Research for the Division of Health Sciences at ETSU

If you have recently moved or have an email address you would like us to use, please be sure and update your information with Tisha Harrison:

**ETSURA
Box 70564
Johnson City, TN 37614-1707**

423-439-6145

Email: harrisc@etsu.edu.

Gone Fishing? Not Exactly

I felt the steam running out at the end of post-Retirement in 2012. From the time I graduated from ETSU in 1961, through graduate school in Athens, Georgia, until teaching my last class at ETSU, I felt fortunate to have spent a lifetime of teaching history, a labor of love. A half-century flew by so quickly. After fifty years, I am giving books to Sherrod Library that I thought I could never part with. Scores of taped interviews with veterans, which were made by students in my military history class have been deposited in the Archives of Appalachia.

What one misses most are the students in the classroom and the seminar, who made teaching such a meaningful career. I miss longtime colleagues. Retirement is a time of sorting, and I did not choose an otiose retirement, but one where I often find myself busier than ever. Reading, writing, exercise, and gardening, are a few of the activities that have kept me limber. Wonderful trips to the beach with grand children who teach me and my wife new games to play. Retirement has the inestimable value of giving us more time to stay in touch with family and friends: the valued weekly lunches with friends, the time to reconnect with UGA graduate school friends David Woodward and Ed McNew, and my better-half, Tamara, a noted fiction writer and poet, has introduced me to the literary life, and a new circle of friends. I have also been able to complete my fifth book, *The Secret History of RDX: The Super-Explosive that Helped Win World War II*, published by the University Press of Kentucky. Many East Tennesseans worked at Holston Ordnance Works during World War II, and since the book's publication I have been invited to give many talks to area organizations.

Repairs to the body have been necessary. Thank you Appalachian Orthopedics for the two knee replacements. On occasion there is that fleeting thought that we do have an expiration date! Those persistent phone calls from cemeteries wanting to sell a plot, letters from funeral homes with invitations to tea and a funeral plan, and invitations to wealth management dinners. Alas, we are poor teachers.

During my retirement, a devoted brother, and a beloved sister, have passed away. I also mourn the loss of Professor Ronnie Day, and Executive Aide Sharon Chandler. The death of a friend of 47-years, Professor Gene Razor of Emory & Henry College, was a great loss. On a happy note, a 93-old brother and his

wife, Rita, who live in Hampshire, England, are well. Not far from their home is Highclere Castle, of "Downton Abbey" fame, which we enjoyed visiting. Travel is one of the joys of retirement. In England, we have stayed with friends in Wimbledon, rented National Trust cottages in such places as the Cotswolds and the Isle of Wight, where we walked the Tennyson Downs and visited Osborne House, the home of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. In Lincoln, we stayed in the aptly named "Crooked House," and attended Evensong at Lincoln Cathedral where enjoyed the choir and the famed Cathedral organ. On the Continent, we have visited Bruges in Belgium, and in France, Paris, Chartres, Mont Saint-Michel, and Claude Monet's house and gardens at Giverny. We have also visited Montreal and Ottawa in Canada.

In the American West, the Grand Canyon and Monument Valley, dazzled us. In California, we enjoyed the breathtaking beauty of Yosemite before driving to magical Carmel-by-the Sea, where stayed at the Cypress Inn. Sadly, Doris Day, who owned the Inn, passed away only days before our arrival, and memorial flowers engulfed the entrance. In Tennessee, we visited Graceland in Memphis, across the line in Mississippi, the home of William Faulkner. Unforgettable people and places, the making of great memories. Beckoning us home always, however, are the mountains of East Tennessee. With a son and daughter-in-law who are both teaching remotely via technology, and with two fantastic grandkids, and not withstanding the current pandemic, the best is yet to come.

Dr. Colin F. Baxter
Professor Emeritus of History

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FORM ETSU RETIREES ASSOCIATION

NAME: (Last) _____ (First) _____ (MI) _____ (Title) _____

SPOUSE'S NAME: (Last) _____ (First) _____ (MI) _____ (Title) _____

ADDRESS: (Street) _____ (City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip) _____

TELEPHONE: (____) ____ - ____ EMAIL: _____

FORMER STATUS WITH ETSU: FACULTY STAFF

AMOUNT PAID (\$10 PER PERSON): \$10 \$20

ACCOUNT NO: FUND 821350, ORG 79998, Banner Account: 29300

PROGRAM 999; CHART: E

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LIFE MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTION FORM

Enclosed is the applicable life membership fee. It is understood that this is a nonrefundable deferred gift to the ETSURA Endowed Scholarship Fund in the ETSU Foundation. The funds will be invested by the university with the income being used for current expenses of the association until my (our) death at which time it (one half if husband or wife) will be transferred to the Endowed Scholarship Fund. It is understood that any benefit received from ETSURA, the university or its foundation or this contribution will be of nominal value and it is fully deductible for tax purposes in the year paid.

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