

# EMERITI NEWS



OHIO  
UNIVERSITY

A newsletter from the Ohio University Emeriti Association



**June 18, 2015**  
**THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**  
**OF OUR FORESTS**  
**Brian McCarthy, Professor of Forest Ecology,**  
**Department of Environmental & Plant Biology**

*Introduction by Sue Boyd*

**Brian McCarthy** received his B.S. in Biology from Saint Peter's College in 1978, M.S. in Botany from Ohio University in 1982 (working under Warren Wistendahl), and Ph.D. in Ecology from Rutgers in 1989. He spent three years in the University of Maryland system prior to coming to Ohio University in 1992. He currently serves as the Associate Dean of Faculty, Research, and Graduate Studies for the College of Arts & Sciences and is also Professor of Forest Ecology in the Department of Environmental and Plant Biology.

His area of research specialty is broadly defined as forest ecology, with a focus on eastern hardwood forest ecosystems. Specifically, he has worked in the areas of tree reproductive ecology, forest stand dynamics, disturbance history reconstruction, fire ecology, understory community dynamics, invasive species ecology, mine land reclamation, and restoration ecology. To date, he has over 120 peer-reviewed publications, 300+ conference abstracts, and has secured approximately \$2 million in federal funding for his research program.

He has studied the ecology of the American chestnut explicitly for the last decade. He is currently the Vice Chair of Science for the American Chestnut Foundation, member of their Executive Board, and past President of the Ohio chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation.

## EMERITI BOARD 2014-2015

President	Dru Riley Everts
VP/Program Chair	Alan Boyd & Don Jordan
Secretary	Doug Baxter
Treasurer	Ed Baum
Membership	Margaret Thomas
Newsletter	Anita James
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Volunteer Services	Sue Foster & Phyllis Baxter
Emeriti Park	Richard Dean
Historian	Joanne Priskey
Nominations	Luther Haseley
Website	Joe Essman
Past President	George Weckman



## EMERITI LUNCHEON

Thursday  
June 18, 2015  
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM



**BALLROOM**

**RESERVATIONS** must be made to attend the luncheon. If you are not on the "ALWAYS" list of regular attendees, you **MUST** call or email Ruth Nostrant at 593-5194 or nostrant@ohio.edu by **Friday, June 12**. You may pay by cash or by check made payable to OU Emeriti.

You can add your name(s) to the Regular Attendees List and not have to call each month unless you cannot attend.

### MENU

**\$15.00**

Caesar Salad  
 Garden Salad  
 Tomato & Mozzarella Salad  
 Grilled Chicken w/Wild Mushroom Sauce  
 Meatloaf  
 Corn w/Red & Green Peppers  
 Mashed Potatoes  
 Rolls & Butter  
 Assorted Desserts & Fresh Cut Fruit

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT - Dru Riley Evarts



**Part 2:** In the May issue of *Emeriti News*, I attempted to review the accomplishments achieved by the Emeriti Board during the 2013-15 period. The piece was too long to run in its entirety in the space allotted, so here is a review of last month's points and the conclusion of the column. If you want to know more about the points reviewed here, go to our website ([www.ohio.edu/emeriti](http://www.ohio.edu/emeriti)) to look over that issue. The points discussed included *Constitution Revised and Approved*, *Policies Manual*, *Carlson Kiosk*, *On the Green Weekend Participation*, and *Timeline*.

Other points I had wanted to make include:

**Securing the Carlson Papers:** Archivist/Historian Jo Prisley and I had talked with Chuck Carlson many times to invite him to let us have the boxes of materials he had stored in his home, or to at least lend them for copying. After Chuck's death, Max Evans stepped in to help us by contacting Beth Stilwell, Chuck's daughter, about this archival material. She was glad to put it in our hands, with our guarantee that the materials would be well cared for. Jo has also put out the word for other people to bring in Emeriti materials for processing. Donors so far include George Weckman, Bob Hynes, Bob Smith, Edie Russ, and Sue Foster. Look around your own place and bring in any records you have.

**Meeting With the President:** During his three years as Emeriti president, George Weckman had re-established the old custom of the university president's meeting with Emeriti officers at least once a semester. A new wrinkle thought of last year by President McDavis himself was to have his chief of staff and special assistant, Jennifer Kirksey, in the meeting with us so she can go ahead and act on the decisions we make. She also tends to ask those people in charge of the areas we are questioning to attend appropriate meetings so we can get direct answers to our requests. Examples of suggestions discussed in these meetings are handrails to the campus green from all four sidewalks surrounding it (discussed for more than two years but only recently installed), and a print directory of offices, faculty, emeriti, and other key contact information (promised but not out yet). Last year, when we mentioned that we would like to have our one public meeting of the year be about what the campus would look like in the following five to 10 years, the president not only agreed to the program, but he and Kirksey arranged for other speakers and the entire presentation in the new Schoonover Center, of which tours were also given on the day of the program. It turned out to be the best-attended public program since the inception of these meetings.

Much else went on during the past two years, of course, but let me conclude this two-part final column with thanks to an active board. Their names and positions have run in each issue of this newsletter (including this one). I thank each of them for his or her service this year and wish continuing board members even greater success next year, and new board members (Richard and Karen Vedder) great success as co-Benefits chairs. Their first column appears in this newsletter; it summarizes the important points learned in their first trip to OCHER (Ohio Council of Higher Education Retirees) on May 19 (the council's last meeting of this academic year).

You can show your appreciation for the work of board members, both by thanking individuals for their work as you see them and by offering to help. Do you know of speakers you would like to hear? Mention that to George Weckman. Ideas to involve more emeriti in our monthly meetings? See Margaret Thomas about that. An ambition to help more with volunteer services? Let Sue Foster or Phyllis Field Baxter know. And so on. Everyone's ideas and offers of help are needed. If your idea or offer is one that might fit into various slots, take it to Alan Boyd, who will be going into his first year as president and will find the right board member with whom to share your suggestions.

*Dru*

Many thanks to Dru for her service as president for the last two years!

## BITS AND PIECES OF NOTE

### WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS IN SEPTEMBER

The University Board of Trustees will be voting on new emeriti candidates in June, and we will officially welcome them at our first Fall meeting--September 17. You probably already know the nominees from your department, school, or college. As you see them over the summer, encourage them to come to the September induction, where each of them and a companion are our guests. Of course, they would become members of the Emeriti Association, whether they come to the induction or not. But the rest of us would like to meet them, too, and encourage them to take part, especially by attending the monthly luncheon meetings.

### SUMMER PARK BEAUTIFICATION

We do not meet during the summer for our monthly lunches, but the Emeriti Park beautification marches on as usual from early April until fall weather chases us out. We meet from 9 to 10 a.m. every Wednesday morning unless it is raining at that time. Plenty of tools are provided, but you are welcome to bring your own if you like. The main work is weeding, deflowering spent blooms, and picking up orphaned twigs and sticks. You may work alone or go around in a little group. Some university grounds staff are on hand to help and answer your questions. Try it this summer; you'll like it and will feel useful at the same time. Dick Dean is going into his fifth year as Emeriti Park chair. You can reach him at 740-593-8487 or [deanr@ohio.edu](mailto:deanr@ohio.edu) if you would like to know more.

### OTHER BUSINESS AT OCHER MEETING

We heard a long presentation on 403b plans, but most of this material was largely irrelevant to retirees. If you have friends or relatives presently making decisions on choosing one of these plans, you could share with them the following: The low-investment-fee plans offered by mutual-fund companies such as Vanguard are typically better deals than insurance-company plans with high investment fees, according to this speaker. We also heard reports from representatives of retired faculty and staff of other state-supported colleges. The most interesting of these comments was the fuss reported over changing the name of the University of Akron. The issue is not settled, but many of the suggestions involve including the word "Polytechnic" in the name.

*Richard Vedder*

## BENEFITS NOTES

The meeting with OCHER on May 19 was informative. The two topics of most interest to Ohio University emeriti are: 1) Is my pension secure for my lifetime (and, in some cases, that of my spouse)? 2) What is going to happen to my health care costs?

**Pension Security:** A report from OCHER member Dick Hill (of Ohio State) indicated that our pensions appear to be "reasonably" secure--much more so than they were three years ago. At present, the retirement system has funds equal to about 70 percent of its liabilities. That is a higher proportion than it had been three years ago, and the reason some cutbacks have been made.

STRS assumes an annual rate of return on its investment of 7.75 percent--lower than several years ago. This assumption, I might add, is very consistent with the assumptions universities make in deciding how much to spend out of their endowments. Under this assumption, the funding ratio will probably rise from around 70 percent today to about 80 percent a decade from now--a move in the direction of strengthening the underlying finances of the system. If STRS is lucky (brilliant?) in its investment strategy and earns 10 percent a year (as it has in some past periods), the system will be almost 100 percent funded within a decade. However, if the rate of return were to fall to, say, 4 percent, under current policies, the system would be only slightly over 50 percent funded a decade from now--a precariously low level.

One thing that hurts those of (almost all of us) with defined benefits is the move since 1997 allowing faculty to select defined contribution plans--reducing funds paid into STRS to fund the defined benefit plans on which we depend. To help deal with that, currently 4.5 percent of the 14 percent employer contribution goes into funding the traditional defined benefit plans. According to Professor Hill, STRS actuaries want to make that at least 8 percent. There is a real possibility that the 4.5 percent will be raised to 5.5 percent shortly, a step in the right direction for retirees and fuller funding of our pensions.

**Health Care:** Changes in health care costs to retirees vary significantly, depending on whether the retiree is on Medicare, and also on the plan selected. For the very large number of our group who are on Aetna and also Medicare, the increases in the coming year will be relatively modest--a few dollars per month. For others, however, the increase is likely to be pretty substantial, sometimes \$60 a month or more. There are a plethora of other small changes likely, but final decisions have not yet been made.

*Richard Vedder*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	01 <b>JUN</b>	02 Emeriti Volunteer <i>Dairy Barn</i>	03 Emeriti Volunteer <i>Emeriti Park-9AM</i>	04	05 Emeriti Volunteer <i>Kennedy Museum</i>	06
07	08	09 Emeriti Volunteer <i>Dairy Barn</i>	10 Emeriti Volunteer <i>Emeriti Park-9AM</i>	11	12 Emeriti Volunteer <i>Kennedy Museum</i>	13
14	15	16 Emeriti Volunteer <i>Dairy Barn</i>	17 Emeriti Volunteer <i>Emeriti Park-9AM</i>	18 Emeriti Board Meeting <b>EMERITI LUNCH</b> <i>OU Inn</i>  [Board photo]	19 Emeriti Volunteer <i>Kennedy Museum</i>	20
21	22	23 Emeriti Volunteer <i>Dairy Barn</i>	14 Emeriti Volunteer <i>Emeriti Park-9AM</i>	25	26 Emeriti Volunteer <i>Kennedy Museum</i>	27
28	29	30 Emeriti Volunteer <i>Dairy Barn</i>	<b>Put Thursday, September 17, on your calendar to mark our first luncheon meeting of the new academic year. New emeriti will be induced and President Roderick McDavis will tell us what is ahead for the new academic year.</b>			

Photos by Ed Baum taken during the On-the-Green Weekend brunch at Tailgreat Park, May 30.



Antia James, Editor  
P.O. Box 157  
Athens, OH 45701

