

The Extension



President's Message: Joyce Howes

One of the roles I've taken on in retirement is a return to the classroom, as an adjunct instructor in the Biology Department. During fall semester I taught an introductory biology course called Biology of Food. We marched through all the familiar nutrients—carbs, fats, proteins—as well as vitamins, minerals, water, and more. We talked about nutrition throughout the human life cycle. But as I approached my last lecture, I began thinking about the changes that have occurred on earth in the years since I was a student, and I felt compelled to speak about one of the great challenges that today's students will face in their coming years: climate change. It was easy enough—too easy, really—to connect that topic to the subject matter of my class. But at the same time, I believe our students need to understand the existential threats they will face in the coming decades as our world becomes hotter, dryer, and less biodiverse.



In this final lecture of the semester, I was determined to give students factual talking points based on research and consensus among climate scientists around the world who have shown repeatedly that climate change is the result of human activity. Quite possibly, you're better informed about these issues than the average college freshman, but in case you're interested, here are a few trends that demonstrate the perilous path that lies ahead:

- Atmospheric CO₂ levels are the highest they've been in hundreds of millions of years, largely due to unchecked use of fossil fuels and production of calamitous concentrations of greenhouse gases.
- Warming temperatures, driven by greater concentrations of greenhouse gases, increase evaporation and decrease precipitation. Droughts, crop failure, and wildfires result.
- Global mean sea level has risen continuously for a century, putting coastal communities in peril of flooding and sources of fresh water in danger of saline contamination.
- 2016 was the hottest year ever recorded: 1.7 degrees Fahrenheit higher than the 20th century average!
- The sea surface temperature for 2016 was the highest ever recorded: higher than the average for the entire 20th century. Algal blooms, coral bleaching, decimation of fish populations all are consequences.

Perhaps I should have chosen a lighter, more uplifting topic for this New Year missive, but I'm frightened witless about these issues, and my experience in the classroom has recommitted me to our collective mission (even in retirement!) of educating the next generation. As we embark on the new year, let us consider our commitment to working together to create a sustainable future. On that sobering but hopeful note, I wish you a happy and productive 2019, shared with your favorite people.

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Events Calendar

Enjoy Raider Roundball
February 9 7pm

Gather at Box 219 to enjoy the game and some light refreshments. A limited number of free tickets are available. Contact Mary Gromosiak at mgromosiak@woh.rr.com

Mark your calendar! The Fifth Annual WSURA Reunion Luncheon will be held April 25, 2019, in the Berry Room at the Nutter Center. The speaker will be Head Men's Basketball Coach, Scott Nagy. Details in the next issue.



From the WSURA Oral History Project: Ken Davenport

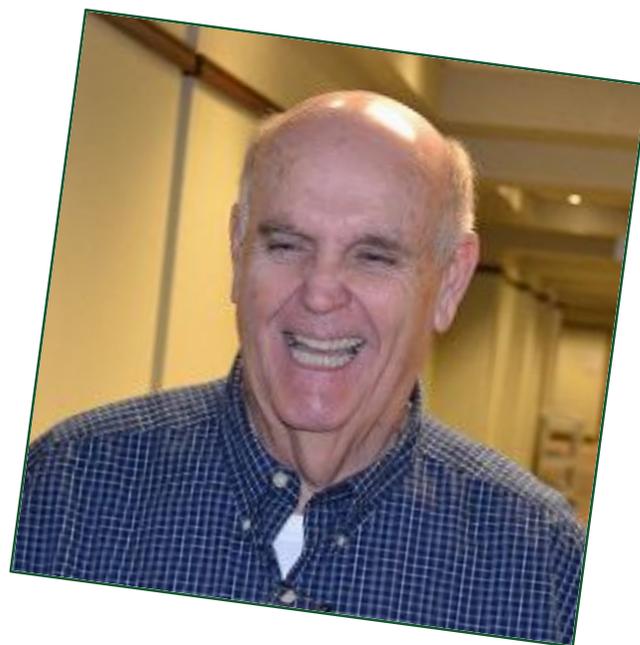
The WSURA Oral History project began in 2001 in conjunction with Chris Wydman, University Records Manager and Archivist at the Dunbar Libraries Special Collection and Archives Department. Over the years, 37 interviews with WSU retirees have been conducted, for many years under the direction of the late Lew Shupe and more recently Dan Abrahamowicz. All of the interviews are accessible from the WSURA website (wright.edu/wsura). Click on Oral History Projects in far right column and then Retirees Oral History Project. The plan is to include a selection or synopsis from one of these interviews in most issues of *The Extension* for the next several issues. Enjoy!

Ken Davenport served as Director of Admissions from 1974 until he retired in 1998. Many retirees remember him in that role. Like many of those who eventually made a career at Wright State, his story begins in the Appalachians. He was born in 1939 in a coal mining camp in Kentucky. His family migrated to Michigan during the war and returned to Kentucky at its conclusion. A few years later a friend of the family decided to come to Dayton to build houses and he urged Ken's dad, a skilled carpenter, to come along.

The Davenports settled on Fourth Street and Ken started at Kiser High School, graduating in 1956. During high school he had a part-time job at Rike's in the Campus Shop. At that time Rike's was one of the finest and largest department stores in the United States. Getting a job in the Campus Shop was a plum assignment. After graduation, he was asked to stay on full-time. But soon he concluded retailing was not for him. "I decided," he said, "that I hated retailing, because I hated the Christmas season, and I hated Easter, and I just hated the whole package." One night he confessed to his parents that he really wanted to go to college. Their opposition (Why leave such a good job?) lessened when Rike's agreed to schedule around his classes at the University of Dayton. He graduated in 1965 with a degree in Education, got married, and got a job teaching middle school history and geography in Xenia for the princely sum of \$5,000 per year.

In 1968, UD came calling. They needed someone to manage international student admissions and thought of Ken. To sweeten the deal, they offered a raise of \$3,000. So back to UD Ken went. He must have done a great job there, because Wright State invited him to come for an interview in 1970. Before he even made it home, Wright State had already called. Maybe they didn't want to give UD time to counter. Wright State offered \$11,000 a year, an impressive sum for the time. Ken thought he had hit it big.

During the next couple of years, Ken wore many hats. He supervised several areas of activity as Associate Dean of Students. Joanne Risacher joined the staff as Assistant Dean. Rich Johnson was put in charge of Wright State's first dorm, Hamilton Hall. In 1974, Ken became the Director of Admissions, when his predecessor was fired for playing too much golf. Soon he hired a young assistant, Gail (Roush) Fred, and the rest is history!



Fantastic Fall Activities

Mary Gromosiak always plans excellent excursions but she exceeded herself this fall. We started out at Woodland Cemetery on an exceptionally hot September afternoon for a steamy two-hour walk that often focused on seamier side of Dayton's past with visits to the graves of madams and murder victims. The following week Gary Barlow led an introductory workshop on the basic elements of art such as line and space. The second session was at the Dayton Art Institute where we examined works that exemplified the concepts we had discussed in class. Absolutely fascinating. We all learned something no matter how much we thought we knew about art before we started. Just before the election, Paul Leonard, who served as Dayton's Mayor and Ohio's Lieutenant Governor, led a sober but lively discussion about the state of politics in America. On November 11 we capped it off with a matinee performance of "Crazy for You" at the Festival Playhouse on campus. It was brilliantly staged and choreographed. The entire cast brought the score by George and Ira Gershwin gloriously alive, and the male lead, Joey Kennedy, was fabulous. Congratulations to director Joe Deer.



Two Poems About Fathers

Those Winter Sundays

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labor in the weekday weather made
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?

In: Collected Poems of Robert Hayden, 1966

Pentecost

The week after your father died,
I see you walking home after school
in your Wimpy Kid T-shirt,
and I don't even know you, but I want
to call you over like a kidnapper
and tell you it's only beginning.
Your head will always be a lit match
like the apostles in the stained-glass window
when Jesus came back. But he will never
come back. I say this because you know
but still you will dream of it.
You will love books and TV shows
about time travel. Like the blue
police box you can get inside and go
back to the week before last.
Or maybe he will find you
like he does in these first mornings
before you remember.
He'll always be wearing the same shirt
when he comes in to wake you,
like my dad in his olive stripes
as if he never wore anything else.

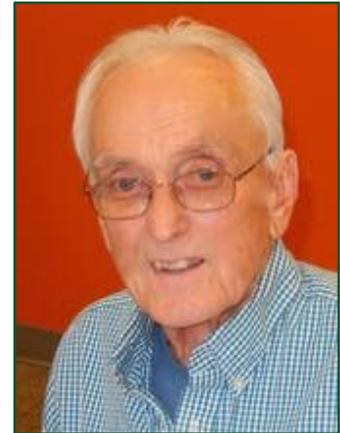
By Laura Read

In: Dresses From the Old Country, 2018

Nominations for Service Awards – Due March 15

This spring WSURA will announce the first recipients of the service awards created to honor Lew Shupe and Rich Johnson. Both men spent most of their careers at Wright State and both were known across the entire campus as exemplary human beings. Service to students, to colleagues, to the institution, their profession, and to the community was a basic part of who they were.

Lewis K. Shupe was a Professor of Communications who also taught art therapy courses. He was awarded the title Professor Emeritus when he retired in 1993. He served on the Friends of the Libraries Board and the Retirees Board for many years. In addition to serving a term as president, he also guided the retirees' oral history project for more than a decade. Because of his diligence, much of Wright State's early history was preserved in the many interviews that he conducted. His on-going service to the American Rose Society culminated with the Klima Medal, the Society's highest award for service. He also earned the highest recognition as a horticulturalist, arranger and teacher. Lew died in 2016 at the age of 84. The many tributes at his memorial service in the Berry Room were touching acknowledgements of a life well lived. We miss him still.



Richard A. Johnson began his career at Wright State in 1971 supervising Hamilton Hall. After that challenge, he left Wright State for about 5 years, returning as the benefits manager as well as the property and casualty overseer in Human Resources. In that capacity, perhaps his most unusual task was to monitor the cheerleaders to make sure they did not go more than three levels high to reduce the likelihood of falls. Anyone who had a complicated benefit question went to Rich. He had infinite patience and infinite knowledge. He knew almost every staff and faculty member and was widely known as being one of the most helpful people on campus. When he retired in 2009, the loss was palpable. He too served the WSURA Board until his declining health forced him to return to the care of family in Iowa. He died there from complications of Parkinson's Disease in 2017. He was 69.

WSURA seeks to recognize the service of current retirees who exemplify the qualities of Lew Shupe and Rich Johnson. The awards will be presented at the annual Retirees Luncheon on April 25. Please consider nominating your friends and colleagues for one of these awards. Two separate awards will be made: one to staff and one to faculty.

There is no form to fill out. Simply write a letter detailing the service history of your nominee. We will consider service to students and fellow faculty or staff, service to the institution, service to the community, service to the profession, and service to humanity. Be as specific as you can. The selection committee may contact you for further information, so be sure to let us know how best to get in touch with you. All retirees (except current Board members) are eligible for nomination, no matter where they live and serve. Return your nominations to:

WSU Retirees Association

Attn: Mary Kenton

210 Foundation Bldg.

Wright State University

Dayton, OH 45435-0001

Or email: mary.kenton@wright.edu

WSURA Awards Four Nick Davis Scholarships

This is the third year we have supported Rosa Tweed (daughter of Maureen Tweed) who is on a six-year program to earn a BS in Biological Sciences and a BFA in Printmaking. She will finish up biology in the spring and printmaking in the fall of 2019. During the summer she worked for Five Rivers MetroParks, serving as a conservation intern, doing everything from removing invasive Calley Pear to analyzing deer camera data for the annual bow hunts. She also worked with Dr. Tom Rooney on an undergraduate research project that focused on moth biodiversity at his research sites near Boulder, Wisconsin. She collected moths at night and assisted in the collection of spiders during the day. The trip also featured a porcupine sighting, finding wolf scat on a trail and interacting with owls. Currently she is working to identify her moth samples and analyzing their numbers, as moth biodiversity offers clues about how well the ecosystem is doing as a whole. Rosa is extremely grateful for our help. "It is impossible to describe the relief of receiving a financial aid award," Rosa observes. Without the financial aid she receives, she would not have been able to pursue both degrees without taking on crippling debt. After graduation she plans to pay it forward by contributing to scholarships herself.



For the first time, WSURA is supporting twins, Meghan Jenkins and Helena Jenkins. They are the granddaughters of the late Jeff Vernooy. Meghan is a junior with a double major in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and Public Health. She works in a lab on campus looking at the interactions between viruses and bacteria when they infect cells at the same time. She presented her work at a conference in Mexico and won an award for her poster. She has been interested in infectious diseases since Science Olympiad in 7th grade. She also credits her grandfather for supporting her interest in science. "My experience at Wright State has been amazing," she says, "and the classes and research have prepared me really well for my future."

Helena is a sophomore with—you guessed it—a double major in English and Women and Gender studies. She finds her current classes very enjoyable. She thinks her Introduction to Fiction Writing class is improving her prose style immensely. Helena loves "learning in the supportive atmosphere Wright State provides." She is grateful for the financial support that allowed her to follow in her grandfather's footsteps. She concludes, "I was able to volunteer this year for the Breaking Silences conference and it was an amazing opportunity to work with people who knew him."



The fourth Nick Davis recipient is Adam Al-masri, Jim Hughes' grandson, who is a junior in the University Honors Program majoring in Political Science and minoring in Finance. He plans to pursue an MBA with a concentration in Finance and Investment Banking. One day he hopes to help manage an investment portfolio for a mutual fund that will enable ordinary citizens to save for retirement and achieve financial security. "I will forever be grateful to the institution of Wright State University and the intellectually-stimulating professors who truly make it what it is," he writes. "Every day, it is an honor to walk the halls that my mother and grandfather have walked before me. I have no words to convey my gratitude for being granted this wonderful scholarship."

The Nick Davis Scholarship Fund is just a few thousand dollars short of being fully endowed. Please contribute as generously as you can when you get that letter or phone call. As you can see above, the students WSURA helps to fund are terrific. Their appreciation and their commitment to Wright State are heartening and refreshing. It is a privilege to help them along.



2018-2019 WSU Retirees Association Board of Directors with WSU President Cheryl B. Schrader:

(back, from left) Dan Abrahamowicz, Robin Suits, Carol Stevenson, Mary Gromosiak, Gary Barlow, Judith Engle, Abe Bassett, Cheryl Schrader, Marlene Bireley, Richard Williams, Peggy Bott, Gary Pacernick and Gail Whitaker;
(front, from left) Sheryl Provens, Mary Kenton, Larry Prochaska, Ruth Schumacher, Joyce Howes and Donna Schlagheck

Opportunities for Service— Del Mar Encore Fellows Initiative

After 38 years as an educator, including five at Wright State, Frieda Bennett retired in 2010. She stayed busy with her sorority, travelling, exercising, and lunching with former colleagues. For two years she served on the WSURA Board as editor of *The Extension*. This past August she began a new phase of her retirement—she got a job! It was with the Dayton Foundation as a Del Mar Encore Fellow. This program connects highly talented senior adults with nonprofit organizations with the goal of having a positive impact on the Dayton community.

Frieda works with the St Mary Development Corporation which builds affordable housing for seniors and helps them age in place with dignity and independence. This project focuses on determining the technology literacy of the residents, researching current and emerging technology as it relates to telehealth, and developing a plan for improving access to health services through the implementation of technology. Volunteers are needed to administer surveys.

There are four other worthy projects that need volunteers: Brunner Literacy Center, Dayton Metro Library, National Conference for Community and Justice, and Learn to Earn. For details about the projects and contact information, go to wright.edu/wsura

WSURA Board – 2018-2019

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Parting Words for 2018

At least two words have been chosen to represent 2018: “**justice**” by Merriam-Webster, the American dictionary company, and “**toxic**” by the Oxford English Dictionary.



At first glance “**justice**” seems like a warm, fuzzy word—something we should all strive for in our daily personal lives and in our civic life. Martin Luther King told us that “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” Alexander Hamilton wrote that the “first duty of society is justice.” Children learn very early that it’s important to be fair, and because they are fairly powerless they constantly feel the sting of injustice. In fact, reading a series of quotations about justice strongly suggests the conclusion that the more powerless groups are, the more they talk about justice. Some observers are perhaps a little cynical about the entire concept. Charles Dickens quipped “Charity begins at home, and justice begins next door.” Orson Wells takes an even darker view: “Nobody gets justice. People only get good luck or bad luck.” Malcolm X, as usual, pulls no punches: “Nobody can give you freedom. Nobody can give you equality or justice or anything. If you’re a man, you take it.” Merriam-Webster based its selection of the word, in part, on the fact that there was a 74 percent increase in the number of times it was searched on the website in 2018 than in 2017. Look-ups spiked in August when President Trump asked AG Jeff Sessions to fire the Special Council and again during the Senate confirmation hearings for Brett Kavanaugh.

“**Toxic**”, the adjective chosen by the Oxford University Press has no positive connotations—it always means poisonous. It was looked up 45 percent more in 2018 than 2017. And like a fine wine, it paired perfectly with many concepts both concrete and more metaphorical. There is toxic waste, toxic chemicals, toxic drugs, toxic air. One of the biggest news stories in Britain occurred when a former Russian intelligence officer and his daughter were attacked in Salisbury with a toxic nerve agent. Toxic masculinity came to the fore in massive, ongoing coverage of the #MeToo movement as well as in the (again) Brett Kavanaugh hearings and in coverage of mass shootings. Women often work in toxic environments and children sometimes suffer from toxic stress. Sadly, we just keep adding examples. There’s our toxic political culture, toxic jobs and the toxic algae blooms in Florida. Brexit is a toxic topic of discussion. Best-selling author M. A. Comley published the 18th novel in his Justice series, called, **Toxic Justice**, what else. Don’t bother to look for inspiring or aspirational quotes about toxicity. There aren’t any. Toxic is a useful but unpleasant word.



Let’s hope it begins to fade as 2018—let’s be frank, a pretty toxic year—recedes in our memory, especially as it applies to culture and not just chemicals.

Let’s set a goal to reduce the toxicity in at least one area of our personal and our public life. Maybe begin with less toxic waste or less toxic speech. And start advocating now for less somber words of the year for 2019. I’m rooting for “progress” and “reconciliation.” Even in small increments, they’re very good things.

By Mary Kenton



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The Extension

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Cut off dates for articles:

Nov. 15 – Winter

Feb. 15 – Spring

May 15 – Summer

Aug. 15 – Fall

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210 Foundation Bldg.

Wright State University

Dayton, OH 45435-0001

December 2018 Graduation

Nearly 1,700 graduating students celebrated at Wright State University's fall commencement ceremony Dec. 15 in the Wright State Nutter Center.

(Photo by Erin Pence and Chris Snyder)

