

# The Extension



## President's Message: Judi Engle

Overshadowed by the misery of COVID-19, 2021 did see some remarkable changes in our community. The Dayton Arcade, after decades of abandonment, opened beautifully restored and filled with permanent occupants. The Dayton Convention Center and newly renamed Radisson Hotel are undergoing multi-million dollar upgrades and the Levitt Pavilion brought free performing art back to downtown on a regular basis. All good news for what many perceived as a dying urban center.



One recent announcement in this same vein of community investment and economic stimulators was a stunner: two native Daytonians have purchased a 210,000-square-foot abandoned warehouse on Springfield Street to convert it into a Hollywood style film studio. The studio will be the largest production studio in the Midwest at an estimated cost of \$25 million. In Dayton?

Lisa Grigsby, Dayton Film Commissioner, offers some logical reasons for bringing a film "campus" here. The industry is becoming much more decentralized and Dayton provides lower living and transportation costs; access to urban, suburban, and rural shoot locations; and generous tax incentives.

Joey DiFranco, president and cofounder of Film Studio 1913, says his "personal goal...is for Dayton to be the creative capital of Ohio." DiFranco claims that the location's proximity to WPAFB and Wright State is "right where we want to be." It will, no doubt, enhance Wright State's nationally renowned theatre programs once completed. Wright State's Department of Theatre, and the more recent Tom Hanks Center for Motion Pictures, have been recognized for their talented faculty and students and appear to have been part of the decision making for Studio 1913's founders. And, rightly so.

Most recently, the National Board of Review named alumna Nicole Riegel's film "*Holler*" one of the Top 10 Independent Films of 2021. The Julia Reichert and Steven Bognar film, "*American Factory*," capped decades of locally produced and award-winning films by this duo. This film garnered a 2020 academy award for its riveting documentary on the changeover of a shuttered General Motors plant to a Chinese glassmaking company.

Joe Deer, professor and artistic director of the Department of Theatre, Dance and Motion Pictures, believes the new studio will be "a great attraction for faculty and students. I'm excited that Dayton will have this new professional studio facility and am certain our extended network of filmmakers will be closely engaged with it. I can't wait!"

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## Upcoming Events

Gary Barlow, retired Professor of Art Education, has developed a workshop titled "My Friend Vincent: His Life and Work." It will cover Van Gogh's life from his childhood in Holland until his death in southern France as well as his works. Originally scheduled for March, we will postpone it until COVID-19 has waned.... Keep your fingers crossed! Space is limited, so if you are interested, be sure to sign up as soon as you see the notice in your email or on the WSURA event calendar.



## Good Riddance to 2021! Welcome 2022?

Last year got off to a shocking start on January 6 when ruffians stormed the Capitol Building and Vice President Mike Pence and Speaker Nancy Pelosi were whisked away by security details because threats had been made on their lives. Remember the chants of “Hang Mike Pence”? That day also produced the most notable quote of the year according to Fred Shapiro, the Yale Law School Librarian. Just before the insurrection started, Mitch McConnell said from the Senate floor: “The voters, the courts, and the states have all spoken.” MSNBC reports that McConnell hasn’t spoken to Donald Trump in over a year. Republican Rep. Liz Cheney will likely be the star if, as seems likely, televised hearings are held in 2022. Must-see TV? Watergate Redux? The end of “our democracy”? Time will tell.

Merriam Webster declared “vaccine” the word of the year for 2021. The first COVID-19 vaccines appeared in the U.S. in January 2021. The BBC reminded Americans on December 29 that the basic technology for the current vaccines went back to the 1980s. For the last 10 to 15 years scientists have been working on developing mRNA vaccines for other COVID viruses such as SARS and MERS. Clinical trials were made more efficient during the Ebola crisis. Pfizer and Moderna took advantage of these advances to produce safe and effective vaccines for COVID-19 in relatively short order. The roll out was not without problems, but eventually everyone who wanted a vaccine was able to get one. Frontline workers and the elderly went first, then people became eligible in descending age order. More than 520 million doses have been administered in the U.S. and only nine people have been confirmed to have died from vaccine related causes. All nine had blood clots and received the Johnson and Johnson vaccine.

As of December 14, the CDC reports about 85 percent of Americans over the age of 18 were vaccinated. Half of the remaining 15 percent reported being worried about side effects. Another 42 percent say they just don’t trust the COVID-19 vaccine. The remaining 12 percent either said their doctor hadn’t specifically recommended it or they had trouble obtaining it. As a group the unvaccinated are younger, less educated, and less likely to be married.



We’ll still be talking about vaccines throughout 2022 as we get second boosters and remain in semi-seclusion for who knows how long. Many experts expect the epidemic to continue perhaps for another year or two in the United States. And who knows about Africa and Asia where the vaccination rates are much lower. No matter which group of scientists is correct about the longevity of the epidemic, we have a big clean-up job ahead. And, it is especially sobering to acknowledge that 1 in 100 Americans over the age of 65 has died from COVID-19.



The past year has been made tolerable for many of us by books—fat ones, skinny ones, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, cookbooks, maybe even some graphic comic books. Jonathan Franzen, called the “literary genius for our time” by Jonathan Jones in *The Guardian*, published his most warmhearted, “intensely absorbing” novel, *Crossroads*, in 2021. Pulitzer Prize winner Elizabeth Strout published *Oh William! A Novel*, which continued the story begun in *My Name is Lucy Barton*, which came out in 2016. Both short novels are absolute gems, as is pretty much everything else Strout has published throughout her career. Gary Shteyngart somehow managed to produce a COVID novel, *Our Country Friends*, which was called a masterpiece by a fellow Pulitzer Prize winning novelist. Surely, Shteyngart started the book before the pandemic but saw immediately how it could enrich his plot.

But the book that Barnes and Noble named the Book of the Year for 2021 is *The Lyrics: 1956 to the Present*, in two volumes, by Paul McCartney. Note that it’s “lyrics” not “songs.” And remember Bob Dylan won a Nobel Prize for Literature in 2016. He and McCartney are arguably two of the great poets of the last 50 or 60 years. It’s comforting to have Paul McCartney, a member of our generation, who has been with us through it all, receive such an accolade. It affirms that creativity and productivity can continue at the highest level as we grow older each year. It makes 2022 seem not only possible to navigate but maybe even pleasurable.



By Mary Kenton



### Yesterday, Paul McCartney

Yesterday

All my troubles seemed so far away  
Now it looks as though they're here to stay

Oh, I believe in yesterday

Suddenly

I'm not half the man I used to be  
There's a shadow hanging over me  
Oh, yesterday came suddenly

Why she had to go

I don't know, she wouldn't say  
I said something wrong  
Now I long for yesterday

Yesterday

Love was such an easy game to play  
Now I need a place to hide away  
Oh, I believe in yesterday

*Considered by many to be one of the best pop songs of all time, Rolling Stone consistently rates it in the top 100.*

## Artist's Corner

### Like a Rolling Stone, by Bob Dylan

Once upon a time you dressed so fine  
Threw the bums a dime in your prime, didn't you?  
People call say 'beware doll, you're bound to fall'  
You thought they were all kidding you  
You used to laugh about  
Everybody that was hanging out  
Now you don't talk so loud  
Now you don't seem so proud  
About having to be scrounging your next meal  
How does it feel, how does it feel?  
To be without a home  
Like a complete unknown, like a rolling stone  
Ahh you've gone to the finest schools, alright Miss Lonely  
But you know you only used to get juiced in it  
Nobody's ever taught you how to live out on the street  
And now you're gonna have to get used to it  
You say you never compromise  
With the mystery tramp, but now you realize  
He's not selling any alibis  
As you stare into the vacuum of his eyes  
And say do you want to make a deal?  
How does it feel, how does it feel?  
To be on your own, with no direction home  
A complete unknown, like a rolling stone  
Ah you never turned around to see the frowns  
On the jugglers and the clowns when they all did tricks for you  
You never understood that it ain't no good  
You shouldn't let other people get your kicks for you  
You used to ride on a chrome horse with your diplomat  
Who carried on his shoulder a Siamese cat  
Ain't it hard when you discovered that  
He really wasn't where it's at  
After he took from you everything he could steal  
How does it feel, how does it feel?  
To have on your own, with no direction home  
Like a complete unknown, like a rolling stone  
Ahh princess on a steeple and all the pretty people  
They're all drinking, thinking that they've got it made  
Exchanging all precious gifts  
But you better take your diamond ring, you better pawn it babe  
You used to be so amused  
At Napoleon in rags and the language that he used  
Go to him he calls you, you can't refuse  
When you ain't got nothing, you got nothing to lose  
You're invisible now, you've got no secrets to conceal  
How does it feel, ah how does it feel?  
To be on your own, with no direction home  
Like a complete unknown, like a rolling stone



*Released in 1965, the eponymous magazine concluded that "Dylan transformed popular song with the content and ambition of 'Like a Rolling Stone'."*

## WSURA Adopts the Raider Food Pantry

Food insecurity in cities across the country has been well documented in recent years, and the Dayton area is no exception. This problem seems particularly visible around the holidays when stories of community efforts to help those in need show lines of cars or crowds surrounding volunteers at donation locations. Sadly, this is not simply a seasonal issue, and it may be a surprise to some to learn that the lack of food is a concern impacting many people beyond the poorest in our communities, including college students.

Wright State University has been working to confront food insecurity since 2009 when it established what was then called the Friendship Food Pantry (FFP). Located in a small space in Allyn Hall and operated by a dedicated group of volunteers, the FFP provided the foundation of a critical support service to caring and confidentially assist students who were without the resources to cover basic food needs. Renamed the Raider Food Pantry (RFP), the program and its services are an extension of the Student Advocacy and Wellness Center (SAWC), which is an advocacy/case management service for students.



*Kathy Morris, WSURA's liaison to the Raider Food Pantry, delivered a couple of carloads of food donated by board members at the December meeting. In addition to our food drive, WSURA voted to donate \$500 to the Raider Food Bank!*



According to Tylar O'Neal-White, student advocate and case manager, the RFP is an important piece of a larger student service, because "students usually have needs outside of food, and the SAWC can help address those needs."

The Raider Food Pantry currently supports about 30 students per week and is open from Wednesday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm in 055 Student Union. In the spring of 2020, the RFP started a free lunch program, setting out microwavable meals for students to grab as needed, no questions asked. O'Neal-White said that more than 500 lunches have been provided, and the program has helped eliminate the stigma of accepting help from the RFP. Assisting in the overall operation this year are two undergraduate social work students who are earning internship credit for their efforts.

Wright State retirees will be pleased to know that WSURA has decided to provide ongoing support to the Raider Food Pantry by way of an annual financial contribution and through the collection of the pantry's most needed items at our meetings and events. Just as WSURA encourages member contributions in support of scholarship initiatives, the organization also encourages members to contribute gifts earmarked for the Raider Food Pantry. Those gifts may be made via the Wright State University Foundation's online giving website. Checks may be made payable to the WSU Foundation with "Raider Food Pantry" designation in the memo line.

*By Kathy Morris*

### How You Can Help

**By Check** made out and mailed to:

Wright State University Foundation  
3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy.  
Dayton, OH 45435-0001

**Write: Raider Food Pantry on the memo line.**

**Online:**

The Foundation accepts online donations for the food pantry with a credit card.

**Kroger shopper:**

You can designate the pantry for the Kroger Community Awards program (Search: Wright State University Food Pantry, Organization Number BQ791)

## Fall Outings

Retirees enjoyed two lovely outdoor fall events. Following a convivial patio lunch at Jimmie's Ladder, about a dozen gathered at Woodland Cemetery and Arboretum on October 4 for a tour. Our guide, the Reverend Doctor Kent Berghuis, was excellent. His regular job is as lead pastor of First Baptist Church on Monument Avenue. He also has years of university teaching experience. We know all this because your *Extension* editor conducted a brief interview while we waited for everyone to gather. The weather was perfect, and Kent was full of fascinating information about the 100,000-plus Daytonians buried there beginning in 1841. Notables include the Wright brothers, Erma Bombeck, Charles F. Kettering, and our own Elizabeth Hardin.

More than 3,000 spectacular trees adorn the 200-plus acre site, including 25 varieties of stately Oak trees that are native to North America. Woodland has received ten "State Champion Tree" awards and is recognized internationally as an accredited arboretum in the Morton Register. A highlight of our tour was the incredible view of the city of Dayton from the highest hilltop in the park. It was almost as if you could reach out and touch the Kettering Tower.

Just a few weeks later, on November 9, we visited Carillon Historical Park, with Tom and Nancy Thickel serving as guides. The air was a bit cooler, but it was another sunny day. Carillon focuses on Dayton history with a strong emphasis on transportation and innovation. It seems as if there is always more to learn about the Wright brothers and the beginnings of flight. Carillon's Wright brothers collection is probably second only to that at Dearborn, Michigan's Greenfield Village. In addition to bicycles and planes, there were trolleys and trains and even a section of the Erie Canal. Two hours is not enough time to see everything at Carillon, and that will become even more difficult (but perhaps less tiring) once the current renovations, which will include a railway train for visitors, are completed. This trip also included a nice long lunch, with a few cocktails and beers and lots of laughter, at Jimmie's Ladder on the covered patio.

All retirees are welcome to join us for these outings. For now, we are still planning mostly outdoor events. Once spring arrives, we plan a trip to the Beaver Creek Wetlands. Watch your email for notice of times and places.

*By Mary Kenton*



*From the Top:  
Jimmie's Ladder on the patio,  
The Wright Brothers Memorial at  
Woodland Cemetery,  
Carillon Park Trolley House,  
The 1905 Wright Flyer III*

## COVID-19 Zoom Discussions

More than two dozen logged in on November 15 to learn more about COVID-19 from Wright State's own experts. Dawn Wooley, Ph.D., professor of neuroscience, cell biology and physiology gave us a basic science background of viruses. She earned her Ph.D. in Virology from Harvard University and her PowerPoint presentation helped us better understand the pandemic that has overtaken the world. Glen Solomon, M.D., professor and chair of internal medicine and neurology, followed with a focus on patient care. He has been on the front line in COVID-19 patient care and offered good advice, stressing the importance of getting vaccines. WSURA thanks them for their time and expertise and for answering so very many questions!

## Van Gogh: The Immersive Experience

About a month ago, my daughter, Darcy, and I went to the Lighthouse ArtSpace in Columbus to view the Van Gogh Immersive Experience.



"Immersive" is no exaggeration!

A huge room is transformed into a continuously moving gallery of Van Gogh's best known works (think sunflowers, starry night, self-portraits of the artist). It's the visual version of surround sound! Paintings familiar to most people move continuously around the walls, but also project onto the ceiling and floor. The images are displayed as a 45-minute continuous loop of the artist's paintings. The wildly colorful scenes morph as they slowly move around the room, enlarging, shrinking, and merging.

Darcy tended to follow an image around the room, while I was inclined to pick a wall space and watch the flow of color across a stationary point. Either way, the images flow continuously, filling your eyes with more than your mind can quickly process.

The colorful, flowing images are accompanied by music that is sometimes low and soothing, sometimes rousing and loud. At some venues an online narrative is provided prior to your visit. This was available for the Columbus event but we didn't notice the link beforehand. Pay more attention than I did and perhaps you'll get an advance lesson about the man and his art.

The number of visitors in the exhibit is strictly monitored and social distancing is provided with seating on chairs, benches, and in floor circles. Masks are required.

If you are interested in this amazing multimedia journey featuring the works of one of the great artists of the post-Impressionist period, you can see this exhibit in Columbus until February 26 and a similar one starting June 22 in Cincinnati. (<https://vangoghexpo.com/cincinnati/>) I hope you'll consider making the trip.

If you would like to learn more about Vincent Van Gogh's life and art, watch the WSURA event calendar and your e-mail for news of the workshop later this year led by our artist-in-residence and Van Gogh scholar, Gary Barlow.

*By Joyce Howes*

## WSURA Board 2021–2022

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## Student Loan Debt

Paying for higher education in the United States has always presented a problem for some students and their



families. Harvard established a loan program in 1840. The federal government began to play a larger role in assisting families and students in paying for higher education after World War II. One of the earliest federal programs was the GI Bill passed in 1944 to encourage returning soldiers to attend college. The National Defense Education Act followed in 1958. As a country, it seemed important for us to stay ahead of the rest of the world (especially the Russians) particularly in science and technology. In 1965, the Guaranteed Student Loan Program was introduced as part of the Higher Education Act. No doubt, this legislation helped the nascent Wright State University. The Basic Educational Opportunity Act, better known as the Pell Grant, came into being. In 1992, FAFSA, the Free Application For Federal Student Aid, appeared along with Stafford Loans.

Outstanding student debt currently exceeds \$1.7 trillion, more than national credit card debt. More than 44 million students took out loans averaging approximately \$29,000 each. Over half of the students who graduated in 2019 had some level of debt. As of late 2020 most of that debt is not actually being repaid. Delinquent loans, defined as overdue by more than 90 days, comprise 6.5 percent of the total. Other groups, have deferments (\$114.4 billion), or forbearance (\$887.4 billion), or are in a grace period (\$43.7 billion). Repayment accounted for 4 million people and \$14.7 billion. A shocking 3.2 million Americans owe \$100,000 or more in student loans or \$580.3 billion of the total.

Clearly, student debt is a huge financial problem for millions of Americans and it's also a political hot potato. It's easy to get lost in the data. It is important to remember that all the numbers come down to individual students. I recall a conversation I had with a student maybe 15 years ago. She had a dorm room but was commuting to classes from home because she had roommate problems. I urged her

to try to resolve the roommate issues, pointing out that she was paying dearly for the room. She indignantly informed me that SHE wasn't paying; it was part of her financial aid package. She represents for me the many, many 17- or 18-year-old students for whom the whole financial aid process is perhaps more complicated than they can grasp. Most of the borrowers are not old enough to rent a car or a hotel room, yet they sign on for what may turn out to be a lifetime debt. After all, college is the key to a good job and a good life.

Unfortunately, even for those who graduate and get a good job, the debt can be a drag on the rest of their lives. Many put off having children or buying a home until the debt is paid off. Much of the outstanding debt will never be repaid because the recipients did not graduate and literally do not have the means to make any payments. Others were lured into predatory training programs and borderline bogus schools. Think Trump University. Some of those loans have been forgiven, but not all. Currently, borrowers are enjoying an extended payment pause from the Biden Administration until at least May of 2022. Many think that is not enough. Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and many other elected Democrats advocate canceling all student debt. Journalist Katrina vanden Heuvel says such a move would be "as strategically smart as it is morally urgent." President Biden is hesitant, worrying about the optics of paying off loans for those who went to Harvard or Yale, but "fewer than 1 percent of borrowers attended an Ivy League college," reports Annie Nova for CNBC. Biden is being urged to act before the midterms, because failing to do so may hurt Democratic prospects. Perhaps his frustration with other stalled legislation will prompt him to issue an executive order to fulfill the campaign promise he made to "forgive all undergraduate tuition-related federal student debt from two- and four-year public colleges and universities and private (historically Black colleges and universities) and (minority serving institutions) for debt holders up to \$125,000."

Note that only tuition-related debt would be forgiven. Former Wright State President David Hopkins often argued that tuition (even ever rising tuition) was not the problem. The real problem, he said, with student-loan debt was that they borrowed money for living expenses. It was in his interest to minimize tuition as part of a larger problem: higher education was becoming unaffordable for many Americans. When I attended Wright state in the 1970s, I was



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able to pay for tuition and books out of savings from the job I quit to go to college full-time. Tuition was, I believe, \$240 per quarter. I don't remember it going up during the time I was an undergrad. When I started work in the Honors Program in 1976, the \$1,000 Honors Scholarships we awarded were enough to pay tuition and buy, at least, some books. By the time I retired in 2010, tuition was \$2,599 per quarter, or \$7,797 per year. Add \$1,800 for books and supplies, and students needed 10 times what they did in 1976 just to stay even.

I graduated without any student loan debt. I think the same is true for most other people in my age group. Even my working-class parents were able to send my sister to an out of state college in the 1960s. Of course, she worked during the summers and contributed what she could. Realizing that his parents could not afford much, my husband took a year off between high school and college and saved his money. Along with odd jobs during the school year and summer wages, he managed to complete a degree with no debt. We all have our stories. We were lucky to live in a time when public colleges and universities and even many private schools offered a first-rate education to working class students at a cost that left us debt free. That is why as a taxpayer I favor freeing the millennial generation from their student-loan burden. It is the right, the morally urgent thing to do.

*By Mary Kenton*

*David Rathmanner compiled and posted the statistics  
used in this article on June 2, 2021.*