

OSURA News



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

July 2022

2200 Olentangy River Road, Columbus, OH 43210 | P.O. Box 14433, Columbus, OH 43214
614-292-2281 • 1-800-762-5646 • osura@osu.edu • osura.osu.edu



By Nancy Wardwell

JULY – It's National Hot Dog Month and National Ice Cream Month – and of course, according to Wikipedia, it is also the month that literally thousands of holidays are celebrated around the world!

Independence Day, the Fourth of July, is the national day of the United States. It commemorates the Declaration of Independence of the United States, which was ratified by the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. It declared that the 13 American colonies were no longer subject (and subordinate) to the monarch of Britain, King George III and were now united, free, and independent states.

July is the seventh month (halfway through the year) in the Julian and Gregorian calendars. It was named by the Roman Senate in honor of Julius Caesar's birth month in 44 B.C. Those of us born under the Zodiac sign of Leo must share the month with Cancer (the crab) even though they claim the first 22 days of the month!

July, on average, is the hottest month of the year – in the Northern Hemisphere. On the other hand, it is the coldest

month in the Southern Hemisphere. Most of the Dog Days of Summer fall in July and are characterized by hot, sultry weather. Dog Days has an interesting etymology.

Canis major is a constellation in the southern celestial hemisphere. The dog reference is because it followed around after Orion, the hunter! The brightest star in Canis major is Sirius. In fact, it is the brightest star in the sky (and sometimes called the "dog star"). Ancient astronomers noted that the annual return of Sirius heralded, and was the cause of the heat, fevers, and even sudden thunderstorms.

Gardeners understand fully the words of poet Ruth Pitter (1941)

**We go in withering July
To ply the hard incessant hoe;
Panting beneath the brazen sky
We sweat and grumble, but we go.**

May your picnics be free of ants and filled with hot dogs, and ice cream. Be safe, be well – and find peace.

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Emeritus Academy

William I. Ausich

Newsletter Editor

Nancy S. Wardwell

OSU Foundation
OSURA Endowment Fund
Number – 605419
OSURA Fund to Combat Student
Food Insecurity – 316596
osura.osu.edu

We have had a very good year – And Look forward to the Next

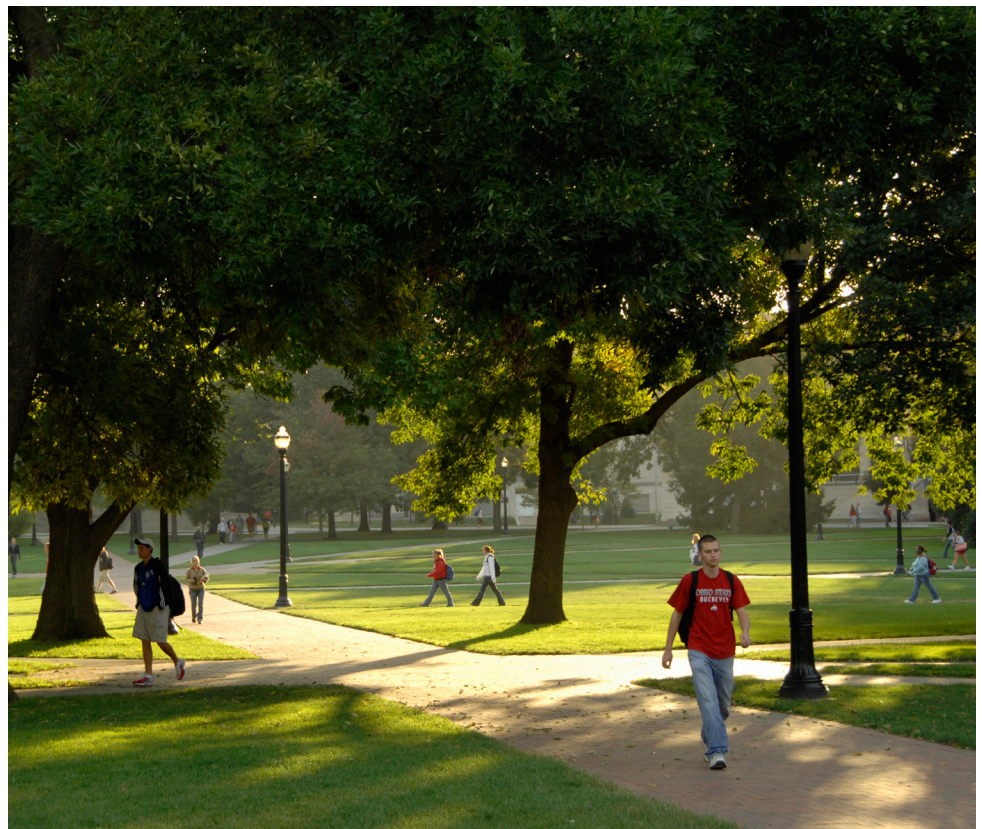
Thanks to President Gemma McLuckie, we have enjoyed a VERY good year! Of course, our greatest accomplishment, thanks to our generous members, is raising the \$100,000 endowment that will be used to ease Student Food Insecurity. As the effects of Covid-19 have waned we are finding ways to cope with its continued consequences. We are looking forward to resuming the full calendar of activities that our members have so enjoyed in the past. If you have an idea for an activity or tour, please email osura@osu.edu – and best, if you are interested in sharing in the planning and conducting of our wonderful programs, please let anyone on the Board know!

Our thanks to Michelle Hobbs, who has served as our capable Secretary; Jerry Dare, Immediate Past President; Shirley Flowers who served as our Secretary and lately, Member at Large; and Suzanne Burge, Member at Large.

We are looking forward to a new group of officers. Hal Noltimier will be our new Board President, Gemma will serve as Immediate Past President, and Sally Dellinger is President Elect.

Pamela (PT) Thomas is our new Secretary, and we welcome new Members at Large, Paula Hook and Mary Jo Fresch. Also, Dorian Torrance is serving a second term as Member at Large.

Finally, it was announced at the OSURA Annual meeting, June 16, that Margaret "Meg" Teaford is the well-deserved recipient of the 2022 OSURA Outstanding Service Award.



Fall Conference Program | September 21, 2022

Theme: *Firm Friendship*

Registration Information: Registration begins Monday, August 1, 2022 at 10 a.m. and will close on Wednesday, September 14 at 5 p.m.

There are two ways to register:

1. Go on-line to <https://osura.osu.edu> and find the event registration link – if you are first-time online user, you must create a password with your email to join the OSUAA online community – There are two login options – Alumni and Friends, or Ohio State Web Login

OR

2. Contact the Engagement Center at the Alumni Association to register and pay over the phone at either 614-292-2281 or 1-800-762-5646.

Review the sessions below, make your selections, then go online, (or call) and make it official. Registration is not complete until payment is made, so have your credit card at the ready. Checks are no longer accepted.

We look forward to seeing you at the conference!

Breakout Session | Group 1

Choose One

1. The James Cancer Diagnostic Center
2. Transforming Central Ohio's Waste into Resources
3. The Changing Face of College Athletics
4. Old Bones From A Frozen Continent

Breakout Session | Group 2

Choose One

5. The Aging Heart
6. Adventures in Broadcasting
7. A Deeper Look at Tai Chi for Falls Prevention
8. Future of the Waterman Agricultural and Natural Resources Laboratory

Breakout Session | Group 3

Choose One

9. Searching for Habitable Worlds and Life with JWST
10. Visiting Your Quarry Trails, Metro Park
11. A Ritchie Boy: One Young Immigrant's Journey to America...and Back to Europe to Help the Allies Win World War II
12. Where is Ohio (and American) Politics Going

Healthcare/Benefits Updates

H-13 – STRS: State Teachers Retirement Systems of Ohio

H-14 – OPERS Funding: Ohio Public Employees Retirement System

Optional Tours: (select one)

Additional \$10 per person

T1 – WOSU Headquarters

T2 – Arne Slettebak Planetarium at OSU

T3 – Combined tour of the Optometry and Dentistry facilities

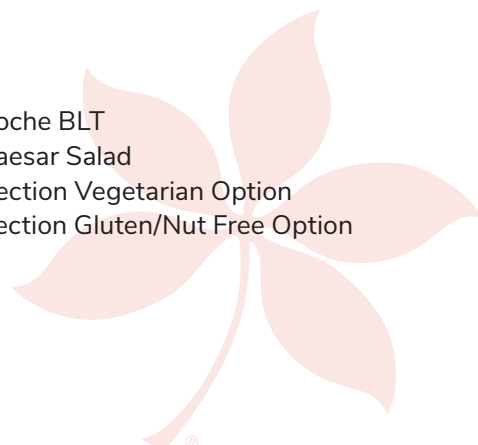
Lunch

L1 – Turkey Brioche BLT

L2 – Chicken Caesar Salad

L3 – Chef's Selection Vegetarian Option

L4 – Chef's Selection Gluten/Nut Free Option



Calendar of Events

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

July

Benefits Committee

No meeting this month – will meet again August 2

July

Board Meeting

No meeting this month – will meet again August 9

July 25 (Monday)

Cultural Arts/Travel Committee

Time/Place: 10 a.m., Longaberger Alumni House

July 27 (Wednesday)

Membership Committee

Time/Place: 10 a.m., Longaberger Alumni House

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

Book Club

The OSURA Book Club is on summer hiatus until September. Our first book of the new reading year will be *The Code Breaker: Jennifer Doudna, Gene Editing, and the Future of the Human Race* by Walter Isaacson. This book reveals what the future may portend.

Contact: Lee Hill (hill.30@osu.edu – Book Club SIG)

SPECIAL EVENTS

July 14 (Thursday)

Coffee Hour for New Retirees

Time/Place: 9 – 10 a.m.
Arranger: Sandy Bell
(sib9716@outlook.com – Membership Committee)

NEW

July 20 (Wednesday)

Union Terminal and the Great American Ball Park & Museum Tour

Cincinnati, OH
Challenge Level 3
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

We will tour Union Terminal train station, Rotunda and Cat Walk and make it to Eden Park for a box lunch. Our last stop will be a tour of the Great American Ball Park and Museum.

Meet by: 7:15 a.m., Tremont Center (Tremont Road, opposite Upper Arlington Library); bus leaves promptly at 7:30 a.m.
Return: approximately 6:30 p.m.

Cost: \$84; cost includes tour fees, box lunch, motor coach transportation, snacks, tips

Registration/Refund Deadline: Register at osura.osu.edu or call 614-292-2281 by July 13.

Arrangers: Jessica Pritchard and Cindy Giles (jppritch6@gmail.com – Travel Committee)

Registration Instructions

- 1. Registrations requiring payment:** Registrations can be made by going on-line to osura.osu.edu or by calling 614-292-2281 or 1-800-762-5646. Your registration is not complete until payment is made, so have your credit card ready. Checks are no longer being accepted.
- 2. Registrations NOT requiring payment:** Registrations will be made through the Arranger's email provided in the description of the event.

CHALLENGE LEVELS

- 1 Light** – may include a few stairs.
- 2 Moderate** – may include a few sets of stairs.
- 3 Moderate +** – may include climbing many stairs and/or uneven terrain.
- 4 High** – may include lots of walking, climbing stairs, hilly walkways and/or extended weather exposure.

September 21 (Wednesday) 2022 OSURA Annual Fall Conference

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Time/Place: 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m., Fawcett Event Center, 2400 Olentangy River Road

Cost: \$30 members – includes continental breakfast and lunch; \$10 extra for optional tours

Registration Deadline: September 14 – Register at osura.alumni.osu.edu, or call 614-292-2281 (1-800-762-5646).

Parking: Free

Arranger: Sally Dellinger (Conference Committee)



Whet your appetite with these lunch options for this year's conference.

Boxed Lunch Choices to select with your Registration:

- L1. Turkey Brioche BLT**
(Smoked turkey breast on buttery brioche bun topped with candied bacon, tomato tapenade and crisp greens)
- L2. Chicken Caesar Salad**
(Crisp romaine hearts with shaved parmesan cheese, croutons, grape tomatoes, grilled chicken breast and Caesar dressing)
- L3. Chef's Selection Vegetarian Option**
- L4. Chef's Selection Gluten/Nut Free Option** (Fawcett Center is NOT a nut free facility)



OSURA Spotlight

Meet **Sandra (Sandy) Bell!**

I have been a lifelong Ohioan growing up in northern Ohio and graduating from Stow High School in 1980, spent 5 years at OSU, graduating in Spring of 1985, and hired on at OSU upon graduation. I began working at OSU in the business office of the Instruction and Research Computer Center (IRCC) in Baker Systems and worked basically in the same area for 32 years, retiring December 31, 2017. The department went through about 5 mergers with other departments over the years and had many different names during that time. Although I began at IRCC, I retired from the departments of the Office of the Chief Information Officer and Office of Distance Education and e-Learning.

Upon retirement, I spent the first year doing the usual cleaning out of the house. Since it was winter, this was something to keep me busy while not working. In the spring and summer, I was able to spend much more time doing outside work in the yard and keeping up the many flower beds I have around the house. My husband and I, along with my dog Colby, also did a few trips including a 10-day trip to South Dakota to visit my sister and her husband. After being retired for one year, I was asked to return to OSU part-time to help with a special project. I am in the process of turning over those duties to someone else and hope to be finished with that by the end of June. I have taken up a couple of new activities in retirement, water aerobics and cardio drumming, to help keep me busy.

In 2018, I joined OSURA in May, went to my first conference



The Bells

in September, and joined the Membership Committee in October. I became the Chair of the Membership Committee in July 2020. I have enjoyed several of the bus trips offered by OSURA as well as visits to local places and other events. I look forward to doing more with OSURA as time permits.

When the pandemic hit, things went a bit crazy. I was working part-time at OSU and trying to figure out how to do everything from home. To help keep in touch with people, I began walking at different parks or other areas with a group of friends every

Friday. We walked all year round in all kinds of weather. We are continuing to do that even now as much as possible. We explored all the Delaware County parks, several of the state parks, found new places we didn't know were there, and completed the Winter Hike Series through the Columbus Metro Parks this winter. I was very thankful for this time with friends as it enabled me to keep in touch with friends whom I used to see only a couple of times a year.

As I continue in retirement, I am looking forward to perhaps doing a little more traveling and finding time to do more of the things that I enjoy but have not been able to squeeze in, such as bicycling, camping and short trips to various places in Ohio. I am especially excited about a trip scheduled for Europe in August.

Those who know me well know that volleyball has played a big part in my social life. I began playing volleyball in my late 20s, where I met Kevin, my husband of 17 years as of April 23rd. Now 33 years later I still play at least once a week with the same group of people. However, there are only a few of the original group still playing. We have added many new faces to the group over the years and have made many new friends. We are a bit slower and not nearly as strong as we used to be, but we are still playing and having fun.

In Memoriam

Margo Ayers
May 25 | OSUMC, 68

Ronald Berggen
May 22 | Medicine, 90

Hilda Clausson
May 16 | OSUMC and OSURA, 93

Nancy Lieftinck
May 21 | Dodd Hall, 89

Bertram W. Livingston
May 12 | OSU County Extension, 86

Clara Mahler
May 20 | OSU Student Health, 102

Ann C. Panich
May 25 | Russian Studies, 88

Stephen Stanley Reichert
May 27 | OSU firefighter and
OSURA, 66

Chester C. Winter
May 5 | Medicine, 99

FROM: The Benefits Committee

OPERS News

By Darian Torrance

The OPERS Board met on May 18, 2022. Here are some highlights from that meeting:

- The Board reviewed and approved a 6-month internal audit plan for the months of July – December 2022.
- Caroline Stinziano, Director-Internal Audit department, presented an update on current internal audit activities and initiatives. She also reported that in December 2021, the external auditing firm Honkamp Krueger & Co. performed a quality assessment of the OPERS Internal Audit Department. OPERS Internal Audit received the highest possible rating of “Generally Conforms.”
- OPERS selected Plante Moran as the external audit firm for the period of January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2025. Representatives from Plante Moran presented an unmodified opinion of OPERS Traditional Pension Plan, Combined Plan, and Member-Directed Plan as well as the 115 Health Care Trust. In the firm’s opinion, as a whole and for each plan, OPERS’ financial statements “present fairly, in all material respects, the fiduciary net position” as of December 31, 2021.
- Jenny Starr and Erica Worley, OPERS Finance Department, presented information from the 2021 OPERS Annual Report. A summary of the changes for 2021 include:
 - Total investment portfolio gain of 15.2% for 2021:
 - Defined Benefit portfolio earned 15.34%
 - Health Care portfolio earned 14.34%
 - Defined Contribution portfolio earned 13.99%
 - Total net position increased from \$114.3 billion to \$127.0 billion in 2021.
- Member and employer contributions increased 3.1% in 2021.
- The pension actuarial assumed rate of return was reduced from 7.2% to 6.9% in 2020.
- Pension funded ratio increased from 82% to 84% in 2021.
- Pension amortization period improved from 21 years to 16 years in 2021.
- Health care funded ratio increased from 104% to 110% in 2020.
- Health care solvency years improved from 23 years to 25 years in 2020.
- New retirees in 2021 increased by 14.6% (8,633 in 2020 to 9,891 members in 2021).
- The average annual benefit at retirement increased from \$30,200 in 2020 to 31,000 in 2021.
- The Board Certified that the employer and member contribution rates for 2023 will remain unchanged from last year, with the exception of the member contribution for public safety and law enforcement. These rates are at the maximum level permitted by statute.
- Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Co. representatives provided comments regarding alternative market return scenarios. This included a bullet point that the “OPERS’ investment consultant’s market value return expectations as of 12/31/2021 were 5.59% for the next 10 years and 6.81% for the next 30 years.”
- Allen Foster and Jeremy Polley, OPERS Benefits Administration, reported that a new disability services provider, Commonwealth Medicine (CWM), was selected in October 2021. CWM is a consulting and operations division of the University of Massachusetts Medical School.



The Benefits Committee is meeting in person, finally – in the Arizona Room at the Longaberger.



- Karen Carraher, OPERS Executive Director, reported that approximately \$225,000 in penalties were paid to OPERS due to health care vendor (Via Benefits) performance service issues during open enrollment (third and fourth quarter 2021 and first quarter 2022). OPERS is working with the vendor to prevent the issues from reoccurring during open enrollment in 2022.
- Tonya Brown, OPERS Member Operations, reported projected rates for 2023 Dental and Vision coverage. MetLife will be the sole vendor that will administer both the dental and vision plans. OPERS did not make any significant plan design changes. Rates for dental coverage are expected to increase by approximately 3.3%. Vision care premium rates are expected to decrease by approximately 22%. This decrease is primarily due to "MetLife's broader provider network, direct contracting with providers," and administrative efficiencies. Open enrollment is scheduled for October 15 – December 15, 2022.
- Attached for your review is an Investments Market Update from the OPERS Board Meeting Packet.

STRS News

By Jerry Newsom

A remarkable amount of disinformation was disseminated during the recent campaign to elect members of the STRS Board, most of it designed to make STRS look dysfunctional.

When consultants hired by STRS painted a much more positive view of the system, the consultants were accused of just trying to please those that pay them. So there was much interest in the "Fiduciary Performance Audit of STRS" and the "Actuarial Audit," done by consultants appointed by an independent oversight agency, the Ohio Retirement Study Council. The reports were issued in May and generally discredited accusations made against the system and supported the accuracy of financial statements made by STRS and its consultants. Prominent accusations were that STRS staff should share in the pain from loss of COLAs (the report said attracting and keeping the talented investment staff at STRS was essential and the staff compensation is consistent with peers), STRS investments have seriously underperformed (actually STRS investments have been in the top 25% compared to peers and STRS is the top performing Ohio fund over the past decade), and STRS pays exorbitant fees (STRS investment costs are closely controlled and are lower than peers). The reports did suggest improvements, especially in communicating to stakeholders, which the Ohio Council of Higher Education Retirees (OCHER), with OSURA's input, has also urged on the Board. Still to come is the report on STRS by the Auditor of State.

In the "Public Participation" session at STRS Board meetings, I occasionally offer my own comments, sometimes conveying opinions I've received from OSURA members. If you have comments about STRS, I'm happy to receive them at newsom.1@osu.edu, so I can see if any sort of consensus exists among OSURA members.

FROM BENEFITS COMMITTEE | ELDER CARE

Life Expectancy

By Meg Teaford

At the May meeting of the Benefits Committee we discussed a recent report that showed that life expectancy in the United States had dropped during the pandemic and that it was lower than the rates in the European Union. We were, of course, concerned that life expectancy had dropped and that we were behind the Europeans.

Here are a few things that I have found in researching this issue:

- This is not a new issue. We have been falling behind the Europeans since 1980.
- It appears that life expectancy among those 65 and older has not been dropping; the impact is rather among those under 65.
- The gap in life expectancy between whites and African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans has been closing.
- Some reports say that smoking and obesity are the major reasons that American life expectancy is lower. But others cite access to healthcare and an under-performing healthcare system. However, access to healthcare has improved first with Medicare and Medicaid and recently with the Affordable Care Act.
- A recent report cites differences in educational levels relate to life expectancy. This is likely because education is often connected to economic status and therefore the ability to access healthcare and to navigate the system improves.

All, of course, has changed with COVID-19 and we'll have to see what the data shows in the post-pandemic world.



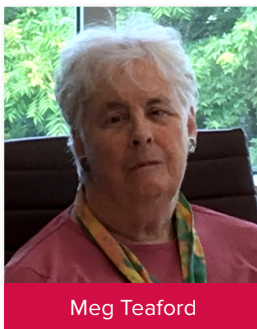
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Longaberger Alumni House
2200 Olentangy River Road
Columbus, Ohio 43210

2022 OSURA Outstanding Service Award Recipient



Meg Teaforde

The 2022 OSURA Outstanding Service Award was presented to Margaret "Meg" Teaforde at the OSURA Annual Meeting held on June 16. Meg served as President of OSURA from 2019-2020, was proactive with the Student Food

Insecurity Endowment Fund, and continues to work with the Conference Planning Committee to secure sponsors, which keeps the conference affordable to you – the members.

Thank you, Meg, for all your hard work.

PERI

PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RETIREES, INC.

If you are a member of OPERS then you probably have received at some time information from PERI. If you have concerns or wish to be more involved, you may wish to join.

THE ORGANIZATION'S MISSION STATEMENT:

To protect and preserve OPERS pension and benefits programs and advocate for changes that are in the best interest of PERI members, while providing value through communications and education of the membership through our districts, local chapters and external partnerships.

The current chair, Richard L. Ross, reports that PERI's efforts are mostly at building relationships with the state legislature and the OPERS Board and staff. Currently the PERI Board is advocating for a review of the contributions made to the health care fund for retirees.

For more information go to <https://operi.org/>