

EMERITUS & ANNUITANT NEWSLETTER

A Publication of the SIUC Emeritus and Annuitant Association

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SURS Executive Director, Dan Slack to speak at Spring Meeting

Dan Slack, executive director of the State Universities Retirement System of Illinois (SURS) since December, 2005, will be the speaker for the general meeting of the SIUC EAA on April 27, 2007 at the Dunn-Richmond Center at 10:00 a.m.

Bruce Appleby, SIUC-EAA President, commented, "We hope the third time is a charm, Slack has been scheduled to speak to us twice previously, but professional and personal obligations made it impossible for him to come."

Slack was General Counsel of SURS from September 1998 until May 2006 and Associate Executive Director from 2003 until December 2005. His involvement with SURS started in 1991, when he provided legal advice to SURS as outside counsel.

The topic for his talk will be *Current Issues Affecting Your Retirement Plan*. Since the FY 2008 budget is being argued in the Illinois legislature as we go to print and since there are many bills being proposed that will affect SURS and higher education in general, Slack's talk will be a good way to catch up on what is happening in Springfield and find out where your pension might be headed.

To register for the luncheon following the meeting, complete and return the registration form that was sent to members under a separate mailing or contact the Constituent Relations and Special Events Office at 618-453-5306.



Dan Slack, SURS Executive Director

Emeritus Faculty to meet

The next meeting of the Emeritus Faculty Organization will be on April 27, 8:30 a.m. at Dunn-Richmond. Mike Lawrence, Director of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute will be the guest speaker. All members of the Emeritus Faculty Organization and the Emeritus and Annuitants Association are cordially invited to attend.



Winter on campus

We are pleased once again to publish photos taken by Emeritus Jim Martin. Jim captured the beauty of the SIUC campus with his camera after a February visit by Jack Frost.

Jim's retirement hobby of digital photography was recently featured in the *Southern Illinoisan* newspaper and the *SIU Alumnus* Magazine.

He commented that the SIU campus is a place of beauty that not only offers the many examples of the serenity of nature but is also the natural habitat for a wide variety of wildlife that finds the SIU campus home. We appreciate Jim's keen eye and talent in capturing and sharing these wonderful pictures of SIUC.

Photo by: Jim Martin
Date: 2/1/2007
SIUC Campus Lake

INSIDE THE COVERS

Articles

SUAAction Fundraising	3
Rec Center Fee Increases.....	3
HRS Discount Store Drugs.....	3
Civil Service Council Update	5
Faculty Association Update	5
Membership Matters.....	11

Features

President's Message	2
Chapter Happenings.....	4
Out & About	5
Issue Featured Guest.....	8
Health Care Q & A.....	6
Golden Opportunities.....	11
Calendar of Events.....	11
Board of Directors.....	12

Visit EAA on the Web!
www.siu.edu/~siuc-eaa/

President's Message



Bruce Appleby

*G*reetings,

As I write (in mid-February), Springfield is quiet and nothing much seems to be on the horizon. That is not comfortable, as we all know that things will start going soon and we may, yet once again, find ourselves caught in a mess of actual threats to our retirement system and implied cuts to our benefits.

In December, the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, a bipartisan fiscal think tank based in Chicago, released a 38 page study of the public service pension debt in Illinois. I'm not sure if you want to read the whole thing, as it is discouraging.

The study revealed that Illinois' "worst-in-the-nation unfunded pension liability" has, in the last two years, grown by more than \$7 billion. (*That's billion, not million!*)

This debt increase is mostly due to the state's failure to make its full pension payments in the 2006 and 2007 fiscal years. The skipped payments must be repaid with interest that compounds annually.

Funding gains were made in FY 2004 when the state issued pension obligation funds to pay down the debt. The result, once again, is that the state owes more than \$42 billion to its pension funds for public

employees.

Illinois has the nation's fewest state employees per capita. Illinois ranks 42nd in state spending per capita.

Illinois' public pension benefits are no better than the national average. The report states that "the pension debt can only be solved by adding revenue." The report goes on to state that the solution to the pension debt issue can only be solved by "fixing the state's poorly designed tax system that doesn't grow with the economy."

In order to better respond to the issues brought up by their report, the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability has joined with a number of statewide retiree organizations to form the Illinois Retirement Security Initiative, "a partnership dedicated to ensuring that public retirement benefits are both properly financed and designed to attract high-quality employees to the public sector."

As we all know, the recent failure to properly fund pensions is a continuation of a pattern of under-funding that started more than 30 years ago and is the fault of both political parties.

Modernizing the state's tax system through comprehensive reform, through the framework of such bills as SB/HB 750, would possibly generate renewable revenue to pay the pension obligations, enhance funding of public education and grant tax relief to 60% of Illinois' taxpayers.

This study, along with the recent public declaration by Henry Bayer, AFSCME Executive Director, that state income taxes must be raised, is serving to fuel the fire in Springfield and elsewhere.

A recent AFSCME publication titled *Three Myths About State and Local Government Pension Plans* deals with these issues, specifically looking at the misinformation that is circulating in recent media reports about state and local government pension plans. These recent reports, along with public statements about the pension plans by elected officials, are fueling the push for replacing defined benefit retirement plans with defined contribution plans. We've looked at this in earlier issues of this newsletter.

AFSCME, in the "three myths. . ." article, points out that many media reports give the impression that taxpayers pay all of the public pension benefits. Again, we all know that we have paid regular contributions to the retirement system and our plan, like others, has invested our assets and earned additional income. "From 1982 through 2005, taxpayers paid 24% of the total amount paid into public plans, with the remaining 76% coming from invest earnings and employee contributions. Every dollar taxpayers paid into public plans generated an additional three dollars, to be returned to the economy as retirement income."

The more and more redundant argument that converting to a defined contribution plan would save money still carries on. Any new defined contribution plan established for new employees would be an additional cost to the government. As AFSCME points out, any arguable savings from conversion to a defined contribution plan would like take 10 to 15 years to realize a savings.

According to a 2006 Social Security Trustees Report, the U.S. population age 65 and older will double over the next 25 years. ASFSCME points out that a result of the movement to defined contribution plans means that the income of many future retirees will be significantly less than their pre-retirement income. Almost all of us who are already retired have done so under a defined benefit plan. We must make it clear to those now joining the system that their choice of a defined contribution plan will be detrimental to them and to the system.

This is the last "President's Message" I will be writing. Serving as President of the SIUC Emeritus and Annuitant Association the last two years has been an education for me. I didn't realize the kind of political and legislative issues that would become a part of my life as I've tried to relay to you what is happening to our pensions and what might happen. I can only hope that as things change in Springfield (and they will, they most definitely will), you keep yourself informed through this newsletter and through such sources as SUAA Talk on the internet. Keep up the good fight in protecting your pension and benefits as well as the pensions and benefits of those yet to retire. I thank you for the privilege of serving as your president.



SUAAction sanctions chapter fundraising plan

In January 2007, SUAAction sent to all chapters of SUAA an e-mail asking each chapter for support in a voluntary fundraising campaign, part of an effort to move SUAA's advocacy mission into the political arena.

You may recall from previous newsletters that the SUAA Board of Directors approved the concept of organizing a political involvement committee in March of 2005. This political involvement committee evolved into SUAAction, which sponsored a round of political involvement training sessions around the state to educate members on how to get involved at the local level. The board of SUAAction has set a future goal of \$1.2 million by 2012, a goal of commitment to be reached by requiring gradual increments in solicitations and contributions.

The hope is that enough money can be raised through the voluntary methods so there will be no need to move to a phase where there would be obligatory or invoicing solicitation. The graduated goal is to reach \$100,000 before the October 2007 board meeting.

Each chapter has been given a money amount for the chapter's responsibility/goal, an amount determined by the percentage of total membership to be found in the chapter's membership. SIUC EAA is 6% of the total enrollment, so our goal is to raise \$6,000 by October, 2007.

Later in January, SUAA sent to all on their e-mail list an e-mail titled "Since You Asked . . .," an attempt to clarify the earlier e-mail and to answer possible questions that might come up. Voluntary contributions are falling far short of the projected needs to be raised within five years from now, the 2012 presidential election cycle. During the second year of the formation of these activities, when it became apparent that the totally voluntary donations were not going to reach the desired goal, discussion began to consider moving to an obligatory fundraising plan with an opt out provision.

Because chapters had not initiated local fundraising campaigns during this second year, SUAAction determined each chapter's share of the goal. Western Illinois University has undertaken a fundraising project and exceeded the desired amount.

At a special meeting to address this request, the SIUC EAA Board of Directors voted that we should sign the form pledging to participate in the SUAAction voluntary fundraising campaign. The President was also directed to include a series of questions that the Board has about the process and about how the funds are to be raised and how the funds are to be disseminated.

At the April 27, 2007 meeting of the membership of SIUC EAA, there will be a report on the responses to the questions presented, as a result of the meeting of the Board of Directors of SUAA on March 13, 2007 where the entire process will be discussed. On April 27, the entire membership of SIUC EAA will be asked to indicate how it wishes to proceed on this matter.

Rec Center fees to change

Those of us who are regular users of the Recreation Center know what a good bargain it is. To have to pay for similar services and facilities in the private sector would cost two or three times as much.

As you may have seen in the *Daily Egyptian* or the *Southern Illinoisan*, fees for students are going to go up next year. The pending increase in minimum wages, increased utility costs, increased university service charges assessed to auxiliaries, and the decline in student enrollment are all factors that have led to the increase in fees for the students.

Since the Recreation Center exists primarily for students and we pay a fee to enjoy the same facility, it is only logical that the fees charged to emeriti should increase, too.

Starting with the fees assessed in August of 2007, the admission fee for emeritus, restricted, (not for use after 4 p.m.) will be \$277 for the year (August 11, 2007 to August 11, 2008). The fee for emeritus, unrestricted, will be \$325. For the emeritus restricted, this represents an increase of \$35 per semester and for the emeritus, unrestricted, this represents an increase of \$25 per semester.

The charge for lockers and for towel service will stay the same.

HRS news

Generic prescription update

According to the limited information that Human Resources Services received last fall about the Discount Store Drug Programs, i.e., Wal-Mart's \$4 Generic Drug Program, members of any State of Illinois benefit health plan should present their pharmacy card when filling a prescription and will be charged the published price of the discounted drug (and not the regular pharmacy plan co-pay). Insurance cards are required for all prescriptions, even with discounted drugs.

Additionally, MCAP participants who have elected an EZ Reimburse Card will not be able to use their card at these discount stores. Reimbursement for out of pocket expenses must be submitted with a claim form and all appropriate documentation.

Questions regarding these Discount Programs should be directed to the individual benefit plans on the member's insurance card. You may also refer to the Wal-Mart website regarding their plan.

Benefit's Choice period

The annual benefit's choice period is May 1 – 31, with changes going into effect on July 1, 2007. Members should be receiving their benefit's choice booklets around the first week of May.

Chapter Happenings

Emeriti gather for holiday luncheon



Ballroom B was filled with lots of good cheer when the Emeriti gathered there for its annual Holiday Luncheon. Members were seated at elegantly decorated tables featuring brightly wrapped holiday packages spilling their festive contents onto the table tops. Anita Hutton provided a medley of seasonal piano selections during the dinner hour. The Little Egypt Barbershop Quartet provided entertainment following lunch.

Special thanks go to Cindy Miller and her staff for handling arrangements for this very special event we all look forward to each year.

Bookstore Greeters on the job

And yet once again, the Bookstore Greeters were on the job the first week of classes--January 15 through January 19. A reduced number of people were there this semester, reduced because we didn't need as many with the shortened week and reduced because there were fewer people who signed up to help.

PLEASE consider helping with this activity. We receive \$600 each semester from the University Bookstore for doing this. This \$600 per semester provides the main funding for the four scholarships we give each year to deserving undergraduate students. The activity is rigorous and the book bags can be very heavy, but the interaction with students and being a part of another semester at SIUC makes it worth your time. Two hours during the week is not a great deal of time. Many have volunteered for four hours or even six hours during the week.

Here's a list of the names of the people who helped the first week of Spring semester, 2007. Those names followed by asterisks are those people who were there for two or even three sessions. Please consider answering the request for help for the opening of Fall semester, in late August of this year. Add your name to this list!

BOOKSTORE GREETERS, SPRING, 2007

Bruce Appleby*	Mary Mantovani *
Richard Bradley	Barbara Meier *
Margaret Buser	Fred Moehle *
Joe Cash *	Roland Person *
Ann Dilliard *	John Pohlman *
Bill Doerr *	Mary Pohlman *
JoAnn Flanigan	Bob Radtke *
Charles Frank *	John Roseberry *
Doris Freitag	Regina Shelton
J. C. Garavalia	Russ Trimble
Jack Graham *	Eileen Trout-Ervin *
Nancy Hartman *	Bill Vicars *
Marvin Kleinau	Joyce Webb *
David Koster	Harvey Welch
Dennis Laake	Roy Weshinsky *
Duncan Lampman	Monica Wilson *

Golfing with the Emeriti

The Spring 2007 Emeritus and Annuitant Association 4 person Golf Scramble will be held at Stone Creek Golf Club, Makanda, Illinois on Monday, April 30, 2007 (rain date of May 7, 2007). Cost for green fees, cart, and box lunch will be \$26. There will be a \$5.00 fee to cover prizes and mulligans. Please bring exact change for this.

Tee time is at 9:00. Please arrive by 8:30 to register and pay fees. Teams will be comprised of 4 players. You may enter as an individual and be placed on a team or enter as a member of a team. Special events will be held on selected holes.

Come join us for a fun day of golf. Complete and return the registration form that was included in the special events mailing sent to members in late March. For further information contact Farrel Olsen at 529-5134 or farols@msn.com or Oval Myers at 549-5997 or omyers@siu.edu

We will enjoy lunch after our golf at the Club House where awards will be presented.

January blood drive

The EAA 2007 Blood Drive was held on Tuesday, January 23rd and Monday, January 29th in the lower level of the Student Center. We are happy to report that the Drive exceeded the 25 pint/day goal resulting in a successful drive. T-shirts were given to those who donated.

Volunteer workers were: *Imogene Beckemeyer, William Doerr, Duncan and Wilma Lampman, Nadine Lewis, Mary Perkins, Roland Person, Nancy Pfaff, Roy Weshinsky, and Mary Mantovani.* A BIG THANKS to all volunteers, both those who worked and those who volunteered but weren't called. Please continue to volunteer even if you didn't get to work this time.

The next Drive will be in late September, 2007. Let's see if we can beat our January donations!



EAA Bookstore Greeters, Monica Wilson and Nancy Hartman, take a break during their shift at the University Bookstore.

EAA out and about

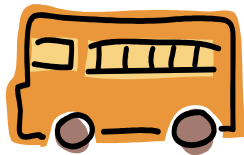
We're going to Springfield

The first twenty people to sign up for our first overnight trip are in for a real treat. We will leave the south Arena Parking Lot at 8 a.m., May 4 for Springfield, IL. Upon arriving in Springfield, we will lunch at Suputo's restaurant near the Capitol. Afterwards we will tour the historic Ihles Home, the Old State Capitol, and the Illinois State Capitol. Following our tours, we will check into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Hotel. The evening will begin with dinner at the Chesapeake Seafood House and then we will attend the evening performance of *The Last of Mrs. Lincoln* at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum.

Following breakfast at the hotel, Saturday morning will be spent at the Abraham Lincoln Museum. Our group will board our bus for home at noon.

Cost for the trip is only \$140 per person based on hotel double occupancy (\$280 per couple). Cost for single room requests is \$190.

To register for this trip, complete the Springfield Trip Registration form included in the March special events mailing to members. You may also contact the Constituent Relations and Special Events office at 618-453-5306.



Constituent Relations & Special Events office moves

The Constituent Relations and Special Events office recently moved from its Elizabeth Street location to Kesnar Hall, 1225 Douglas Drive (commonly known as Greek Row). The department is located on the second floor, Room 207. The Mailcode remains the same (6525) as well as the phone number (618-453-5306).

For those of you who drop off paperwork, mail information, or need to personally visit this office, please be advised of its new location.

Fall trip to see Crazy For You in Kirkwood, Mo.

On Oct. 6, 2007, the Emeritus will travel to Kirkwood, Mo., to see the new Gershwin musical *CRAZY FOR YOU*. Top-dancing cowboys and beautiful Follies girls join forces to create show biz magic in this jubilant song and dance extravaganza. Acclaimed as the greatest dance show of the past two decades and featuring a glorious collection of Gershwin tunes, *CRAZY FOR YOU* is a treat for the entire family. Its got rhythm, its got music and its at Stages! You can't ask for more.

This trip is open to the first twenty people who reserve their tickets. To be placed on the reservation list, contact Dee Brown at 618-549-4440.

Civil Service update

The members of the Civil Service Council continue to serve on search committees as constituent members. Some of the current searches on which they participate, not inclusive, are Chancellor Search Advisory Committee; Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management; Search Committees for Deans of College of Education and Human Services, College of Liberal Arts, and College of Science; and Director, International Programs and Services.

The Council members also serve on all-University committees including the Chancellor's Planning and Budget Committee and University Joint Benefits. The Council invites members of the University community to address the group and keep the staff up-to-date on current policies and goals. President Poshard and Interim Chancellor Dunn joined the meeting recently.

Monthly, the Council welcomes reports from Human Resources (Kathy Blackwell), School of Medicine Civil Service Council (Tom Shea) and the Emeritus and Annuitant Association (Pansy Jones).

The meetings of the Civil Service Council are open and everyone is invited to attend.

Faculty Association update

The SIUC Faculty Association (representing tenured and tenure-track faculty) and the university have negotiated a new four-year contract. The agreement calls for an average increase in salary of about 3 percent each year. It also commits the university to a pay-out of \$3.25 million for additional "equity" raises for faculty members whose salaries are below salary levels at a set of "peer" institutions. These equity adjustments will not fully resolve the long standing SIUC salary deficit, but they are viewed -- by both the union and university administrators -- as a significant step in the right direction. Members of the Faculty Association approved the new contract by a large margin in a vote the first week of March. Final approval of the pact by the university Board of Trustees is expected to take place at the next meeting of the Board.

Photo by: Jim Martin
Date: 2/1/2007
SIUC Campus Lake

Once a Saluki, always a Saluki!

Health Care Benefits Q & A

Last year, the University Joint Benefits Committee (a university-wide, constituency based group that looks at and deal with benefits for University employees) and the Emeritus and Annuitant Association put out two different question-and-answer sheets that dealt with what was happening with our pensions. This year, the Joint Benefits Committee and the Emeritus and Annuitant Association has put together another q & a, one that deals with health care benefits. Bruce Appleby represents The Emeritus and Annuitant Association on the Joint Benefits Committee.

Please look these over and go to the web sites for further information.

Health Care Q's & A's for University (i.e., State) Employees

1. Does the Illinois Constitution protect your health care benefits in the same way it requires the state to protect your pension benefits?

No, there is no constitutional protection for health care benefits. Potentially, your health benefits are even more vulnerable than your pension benefits.

2. Is the state considering making changes to state employee health care coverage?

It appears that no changes are currently in proposal. However, this is subject to change due to the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Rule #45. This legislation requires that all state, county, and local governmental bodies must show the "projected future cost" of all non-pension (i.e., health insurance) costs on their financial reports beginning in FY-2008. These "projected costs", obviously, will run into the billions of dollars. This raises just concern that when these estimates of future costs are published, there will be an effort to cut back on state-paid health insurance.

3. Who bargains your health care benefits for you? Do you have a place at the table?

As a legal matter, the state is required to negotiate in good faith with all certified bargaining units. The same is true of public universities, and bargaining is over "wages, hours, and other conditions of employment." Health Insurance is therefore a "mandatory" subject of bargaining.

Since 1985, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 31 negotiates health care benefits with Central Management Services (CMS). As the State of Illinois' largest union, the negotiated benefits are historically extended to all employees under the/affected by the State's program. Employees and retirees enjoy benefits today, including dental, vision, coverage for physical exams, etc. and you pay a lower percentage of the cost of these benefits than ever before.

4. But don't all SIUC employees contribute to Medicare as a back-up plan?

Not necessarily. Any employee hired after March 31, 1986, contributes to Medicare. Those employees who were hired on or before March 31, 1986, however, do not contribute to Medicare unless they recently elected (through the SURS Medicare Referendum) to start contributing to Medicare beginning with salary earned on or after September 1, 2006.

5. If you lost State of Illinois health care coverage through Central Management Services (CMS) upon your retirement from the university, would you still be able to rely on Medicare?

Well ... that depends on whether or not you are Medicare *eligible*. Medicare is provided to those who have 40 or more Medicare credits upon turning 65 year of age or older. If you are a contributor to the plan, you earn a Medicare credit for each \$1000 you earn in salary. You may earn no more than 4 credits in a calendar year, which is equivalent to \$4,000 of your income. Thus, on average, it would require at least 10 years to amass the required 40 Medicare credits. These amounts, however, are subject to change every January 1. You can, therefore, rely on Medicare **only if** you meet the criteria stated. If you are not yet 65, you could find yourself in serious jeopardy if you are relying solely on Medicare for your health care coverage.

It bears noting that some employees may qualify for Medicare coverage based on their spouse's Social Security credits or ex-spouse (if they had been married 10 years) and if s/he has earned the requisite number of Medicare credits to qualify: Most people 65 or older are eligible for Medicare hospital insurance (Part A) based on their spouse's (or divorced spouse's) work record, and that spouse is at least 62 (your spouse does not have to apply for benefits in order for you to be eligible based on your spouse's work). For Medicare Medical Insurance (also known as Part B), almost anyone who is 65 or older or who is under 65 but eligible for hospital insurance can enroll for Medicare medical insurance by paying a monthly premium. Aged people don't need any Social Security or government work credits for this part of Medicare.

(http://ssa-custhelp.ssa.gov/cgi-bin/ssa.cfg/php/enduser/std_adp.php?p_faqid=400)

Continued, page 7

6. Upon retirement, how serious is losing your State of Illinois Health coverage if you still have Medicare? What benefits would be lost?

If eligible for Medicare, it will become available on the first day of the month that you turn 65 years old. Without State of Illinois coverage, retirees younger than 65 years of age would be without health care benefits until becoming Medicare eligible. For those individuals not eligible for Medicare (or until they become eligible), other health care coverage would need to be purchased by these employees.

For example, you could pay for COBRA for 19 months. Even after you 65, you may wish to add supplemental insurance to pick up expenses and services that Medicare will not cover. For example, Part D prescription benefits.

7. If State of Illinois coverage is lost, do all doctors and medical care facilities accept Medicare payments?

No. Some doctors do not accept Medicare patients at all. Others may accept Medicare patients but not accept the Medicare approved payment amount for the medical services received. In either situation, this could result in greater and often significant out-of-pockets expenses for the patients.

8. What can you do to remain informed of the issues that could possibly impact your health care benefits?

Join the SIUC Emeritus and Annuitant Association (the local chapter of the State University Annuitant Association). This is the only voice that collectively takes on the issues involved in your pension and benefits. Dues are only \$27 a year. Active employees can pay annual dues through a single payroll deduction transaction. Retired employees can do the same or opt to pay \$2.25 a month through a payroll deduction plan.

Contact your governor, state senators, & state representative and express your concerns about this issue. Their identities and both e-mail and snail mail addresses can be obtained through the website: www.elections.state.il.us/DistrictLocator/AddressSearch.aspx

Much of the information shared within this sheet has been sourced from investigations and reviews conducted by John Terwilliger. To receive his interesting and provocative commentaries, go to www.SUAATalk@lists.eiu.edu to add your e-mail address to his mailing list.

For more information regarding Medicare,

visit <http://www.medicare.gov/> > www.medicare.gov

For more information regarding Social Security,

Visit <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/> > www.socialsecurity.gov

For more information regarding your retirement benefits,

Visit the websites of the **State Universities Annuitants Association (SUAA)** at www.suaa.org and the **State Universities Retirement System (SURS)** at www.surs.com

This information provided to you by the SIUC Joint Benefits Committee and the SIUC Emeritus and Annuitant Association.

Harvey Welch named Carbondale 2006 Citizen of the Year

Emeritus member Harvey Welch was honored by the Carbondale Chamber of Commerce by being named the 2006 Citizen of the Year on January 26, 2007. Welch received the award from Helen Deniston who had won the award in 2005. In her presentation of the award to Harvey, Deniston said he was chosen because of his years of service to the youth of Carbondale, his church activities, state and local fundraising efforts and serving on the police and fire commission since 1977. Welch also serves as a commissioner on the Carbondale Park Board.

Congratulations Harvey on your well deserved honor. We applaud your achievement.

Issue Feature -

Ella Lacey...

The Emeritus and Annuitant Association is pleased to present this interview with Emerita Dr. Ella Lacey who has taken on an exciting second career as a world peace volunteer. Since her retirement from SIUC, Ella has taken her professional skills and her desire to help others to several third world countries. This issue will feature Part I of her intriguing and fascinating experiences as she has worked to bring medical relief to children and others in far away places.



Dr. Ella Lacey, pictured in Malawi, Africa, where she was stationed with the Peace Corps.

EAA: Describe your career at SIUC. In what capacities did you serve? How many years were you with the University?

As is true for countless others, SIUC has been more than a career experience for me. It has been my primary setting for career preparation, career implementation and career consolation. I mention preparation because I am a three degree graduate of SIUC, with major concentrations in psychology, rehabilitation and health education. The phase of implementation, though it began before I finished my preparation, actually has 22 years in its column, a period during which I served SIU School of Medicine, first as Field Coordinator assisting with the community component, especially moving the area from use of locally-owned funeral home hearses for emergency services to federally approved and staffed emergency vehicles. After the preparation phase was completed, my implementation phase moved to the tenure track faculty line, first as assistant then as associate professor in Behavioral and Social Sciences, a period during which I also coordinated the Office of Community Health Program Development. The consolation phase is more about what I see as an opportunity to assist the University in meeting its commitment to appropriately encourage and enable women to advance professionally; my appointment is very short-term while a permanent director is being recruited.

"...people past age 55 can continue to make a valuable contribution at the worksite or in the village", "America is not an all white country", "professors can work with the common people", "women can build houses, too". - Ella Lacey.

EAA: Upon your retirement from SIUC in 1995, did it take you some time to determine what you would do after retirement or did you already have that figured out?

By actual retirement time, I did, in fact, have it figured out. About two years prior to retirement, when I "floated" the idea of retirement to my adult children, the rehabilitation major among them became concerned that retirement without a plan might cause me to deteriorate. This concern empowered me to think broadly of what I would really like to do and it was then that volunteer service and Peace Corps came to mind. I initiated my application process one year prior to my targeted retirement date.

EAA: How did you become involved with the Peace Corps? Were there any special requirements that you had to meet? Did you have input into your assignments and the locations? How was it determined where you would be assigned, what your responsibilities would be and what populations you would be working with?

Prior to the retirement horizon mentioned above, Peace Corps did not seem real to me; it seemed to be a great idea for someone, but more like a missed opportunity for me. Getting admitted did require tests of physical and mental stamina as well as assurances of cultural sensitivity. Some of these tests were essential while others may have been more of a judgment call on the part of the screener, so it was necessary for me to challenge and win rulings related to judgments about my being categorized as overweight on some weight tables, being a "picky" eater because I had early in life chosen not to eat poultry or game, and being in an age category where an annual mammogram is prescribed but desiring placement on a continent where that service is rarely available.

Africa was my continent of choice for two main reasons: 1) economic and social indicators about poverty, threats to health and extreme lack of resources and 2) my personal desire to connect with my African heritage. Peace Corps, nationally and later in country of assignment, made all decisions about the particular country and the nature of my assignments – my preparation in community health was undoubtedly an asset when they considered the needs of the country. Thus, I achieved an ideal match – a child survival specialist in a maternal and child unit of a district health office in a beautiful, peaceful African country that at the time happened to be the 8th poorest country in the world. I influenced my assignment so that I was able to implement the "training the trainers" model of my academic preparation for in-service training



Ella pictured at market in Malawi, Africa. 1996.

...a woman who takes her world to heart.

of public health staff.

EAA: *In words, paint a picture of Malawi; the people and their customs and how they lived, where you lived, the economy, what your day consisted of, etc.*

Malawi is a beautiful, mountainous, moderate climate country with a plethora of flowering bushes and trees. Its people are some the most friendly and warm-hearted one could ever expect to encounter. Its economy is just the opposite – it has declined from 8th poorest to 1st poorest in the past ten years, the value of its money, the kwacha, has dropped markedly. Even when I was a Peace Corps Volunteer there, 1995-97, on my living allowance of \$80 to \$120/month, after paying my household worker, buying my food during the month and taking care of my utility bills, I was able to establish a travel fund savings account.

In Peace Corps, volunteers always establish a regular work schedule, compatible with host country staff, so at a district health office (DHO), I always worked at least a five-day week, sometimes six, and during special campaigns, seven days a week without question or expectation of compensatory time. The work day was 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., with lunch being 12 noon - 2 p.m. My typical work day started at 6; my household worker came in at 6:30 (or on signal of open curtain), prepared my breakfast of two peanut butter sandwiches, two bananas, a glass of fresh juice or a bowl of fresh fruit and my first cup of tea of the day. I left home at 6:50 and walked (or hitched a ride) mainly downhill the three miles to the DHO. Because I lived farther away from the worksite than the Malawian staff and could not go home for lunch, I was able to negotiate flex-time and leave work by 4:30, which also allowed me to “beat the darkness” on my uphill climb of one and one-half hours.

During the work day, I planned and conducted trainings for the staff, analyzed data or traveled with community health nurses or sanitation workers to health centers when both vehicle and fuel were available. On Saturdays, I used the same early morning routine, but instead of going to the DHO, except when requested, I would go to the market in town (1/2 the distance of work), to the post office and just “mill around” in town for two or three hours. I would return home, have a light lunch, dismiss the household worker, sit on my front porch and read until I was tired of the process, give myself a leisurely manicure and pedicure, read some more, experiment with a recipe; e.g., fresh lemon meringue pie. On Sundays, I sometimes slept as late as 8 a.m., prepared my own typical breakfast, took a long exploratory walk of 6-10 miles, sometimes to visit a PC colleague, sometimes to a Malawian home, a botanical garden or just a random walk, often sort of fairy tale style with a group of unknown children.

EAA: *Did you have any language barriers to contend with? If so, how was that resolved with the people you were serving? How long did you serve in Malawi?*

Peace Corps requires a two year commitment of service, preceded by a three-month training period. During training, language preparation was an obligation; this was accompanied by a 10 week immersion into a Chichewa speaking host family. At the end of training, I passed language competency at the intermediate level. Fortunately, English is the official language in Malawi, so many officials and school-going children understood English in the cities, however, my Chichewa, supplemented by gestures and charts, was necessary in the villages and at health centers.

EAA: *Are you still with the Peace Corps? If not, how long did you serve and what do you feel your greatest accomplishments were with that organization?*

My period of assignment totaled 2 ¼ years. I could have easily extended my time for one year, but after having been away for so long, I was ready to see if my position in my nuclear family was still intact.

Though I worked hard as a Peace Corps Volunteer and felt that I was making a contribution at the time, I often wonder what was my real contribution. I suspect that much of it was in the intangibles – “people past age 55 can continue to make a valuable contribution at the worksite or in the village”, “America is not an all white country”, “professors can work with the common people”, “women can build houses, too”. . . I got at least as much from the experience as I contributed. And near the end of my stay, I knew real satisfaction when a very influential village chief made a formal land, housing and servant offer that requested me to stay in their village and continue to advise them! This was only topped by laudatory remarks made by many of my fellow PC volunteers who saw me as having helped them to transcend artificial barriers of race and age.



Ella Lacey with her Peace Corps graduation class.

Julia Andrews celebrated 71st birthday with special song. Born Julia Elizabeth Wells on October 1st, 1935, in Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, actress/vocalist Julie Andrews, made a special appearance at Manhattan’s Radio City Music Hall for the benefit of the AARP on her birthday last October. One of the musical numbers she performed was *My Favorite Things* from the legendary movie *Sound Of Music*. Here are the lyrics she used:

Maalox and nose drops and needles for knitting, Walkers and handrails and new dental fittings, Bundles of magazines tied up in string, These are a few of my favorite things. Cadillacs and cataracts and hearing aids and glasses, Polident and Fixodent and false teeth in glasses, Pacemakers, golf carts and porches with swings, We remember our favorite things.

When the pipes leak, When the bones creak, When the knees go bad, I simply remember my favorite things, And then I don’t feel so bad.

Hot tea and crumpets and corn pads for bunions, No spicy hot food or food cooked with onions, Bathrobes and heating pads and hot meals they bring, These are a few of my favorite things. Back pains, confused brains, and no fear of sinnin’, Thin bones and fractures and hair that is thinnin’, And we won’t mention our short shrunken frames, When we remember our favorite things.

When the joints ache, When the hips break, When the eyes grow dim, Then I remember the great life I’ve had, And then I don’t feel so bad.

Ms. Andrews received a standing ovation from the crowd that lasted over four minutes.



March Madness

Saluki Basketball Champs score double-double's in the Valley



This year's basketball season will be long remembered for both the men and women's teams' accomplishments. It is with great Saluki Pride that we congratulate both teams for their great efforts and achievements on and off

the court. The 2007 season resulted in the women and men's teams both winning the Missouri Valley Conference play. Both teams went on to NCAA play. The women lost in their first round game against Drake. Following their NCAA loss, they were invited to the NIT Tournament where they won their first game and lost in second round play. And not only did the teams win the Valley championships, the head coaches for both the women and men were named MVC Coach of the Year! It has definitely been a year of double-doubles.

After winning the conference league play, the men lost the MVC Championship game to Creighton. However they were chosen as a 4 Seed in the NCAA pairing and played their first two games in Columbus, Ohio, beating Holy Cross in the first round and Virginia Tech in the second round. From there the men advanced to the Sweet Sixteen play-offs in San Jose, CA., where they battled a terrific Kansas team and lost by only 3 points.

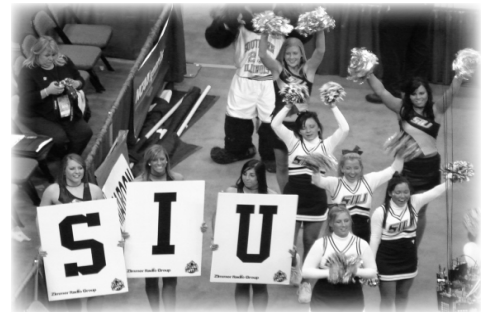
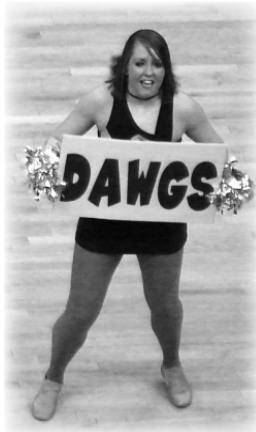
Both Coach Dana Eikenberg and Coach Chris Lowery along with their coaching staffs are to be congratulated for bringing both teams to great heights, successful seasons and Saluki basketball at its best. The players have all been a credit to SIUC and have represented their school in the utmost ways, always playing with respect, enthusiasm, and pride. They also have proven themselves well academically and are great role models for prospective young players and students. In addition,

the student fans who comprised the Dawg Pound added a sixth dimension to the season by faithfully cheering the Dawgs on to victory, both at home and away. The pep band, cheerleaders, and Saluki Shakers, game announcers and many others who made the games interesting, entertaining, and fun are to be commended for the electric atmosphere that filled the Arena on game nights.

It goes without saying that many of the fans who enjoy the Salukis the most are Emeritus members. Emeritus season ticket holders are numerous who faithfully gather at the Arena on game nights to take in the excitement of Saluki basketball. Many made the trip to St. Louis to cheer on 'our' team during the Missouri Valley Conference tournament. Two weeks later, another great showing of Emeritus appeared in Columbus, Ohio, for the NCAA tournament games held there. While many of us sat in nosebleed sections at heights that made us dizzy at both tournaments, we were there just the same to cheer on our beloved Dawgs.

To all the senior players, spirit leaders, and band members, we salute you and wish you all bright futures. We

are proud of you and hope you will always cherish your Alma Mater. We agree with the men's basketball team's motto. *'We are (in-deed) Family!'*



Time to get your Emeritus shirt for spring & summer activities



Maroon vests inscribed with EMERITUS & ANNUITANT VOLUNTEER featuring the Pulliam Clock Tower insignia and Southern Illinois University Carbondale (in white lettering) can now be ordered by contacting Emil Spees (618-549-5980 or Spees1@aol.com). Vests in small, medium, large, and extra large sizes cost \$14. Wear these spiffy vests to all your Emeritus Volunteer activities to reflect your commitment toward the betterment of our university and community through EAA. Maroon knit golf shirts, with EMERITUS & ANNUITANT ASSOCIATION inscribed in white with the Pulliam Clock Tower are also available. Shirts are \$22 for sizes up to XL They are perfect to wear to all EAA warm weather activities and outings.

Extra large sizes are also available with pricing increases of \$1 for each size over XL.

Golden Opportunities

The Illinois Retiree Volunteer Program in Carbondale grade and middle schools is still needing volunteers to tutor and mentor students in not only academic subjects but also in other school related activities. Please contact Mary Simon at 457-8856. Please consider volunteering for an hour or so.

Volunteer for one of the many upcoming EAA activities! See related newsletter articles for opportunities.

SIUC-EMERITUS-L - JOIN NOW

SIUC-EMERITUS-L is the name for the Association's new mailing list system that facilitates the distribution of e-mail postings from one person to all persons subscribed to our list. The new list operates through LISTSERV software on a UNIX server managed through SIUC's Information Technology department.

The purpose of offering this service to Association members is to advance the ability to quickly communicate information to subscribers that is of importance to university employees and SURS annuitants. For those with Internet connections and e-mail, subscribing to the list is quite simple by completing the following instructions.

- Send an e-mail to: LISTSERV@SIU.EDU
- The subject line can be ignored.
- The text of the e-mail should contain the following command:
SUB SIUC-EMERITUS-L firstname lastname

Example:

To: listserv@siu.edu

From: Jane Doe

Subject:

SUB SIUC-EMERITUS-L Jane Doe

After sending the above e-mail, the person will receive a subscription confirmation and will be added to the list. To leave the list, an e-mail is sent to LISTSERV@SIU.EDU with the message command: UNSUB SIUC-EMERITUS-L.

Membership Matters

Membership in the State Universities Annuitants Association (SUAA) is open to

- Retirees from Illinois public universities, community colleges and other SURS agencies
- Spouses and survivors of retirees
- Active academic professionals, administrators, faculty, and all support staff

Membership is held through our local chapter SIUC Emeritus and Annuitants Association. Annual SUAA dues are currently \$21 and local EAA dues are \$6.

To join you may either

- Call the SUAA Central Office at toll-free 888-547-8473
- Go to www.suaa.org and click on the blue tag that says "Join"
- Call Carolyn Donow at 457-7695
- Send message to cdonow@siu.edu.

You can apply for membership through our Website at:

www.siu.edu/~siuc-eaa/

To keep up-to-date with news from SUAA, join the LIST-SERV for SURS Retirees. The listserve is maintained by John Terwilliger, a SURS retiree who resides in Charleston, IL. To subscribe log on to:

This website provides the necessary sign-on procedures to join the LIST-SERV

<http://lists.eiu.edu/mailman/listinfo/suaatalk>

Calendar of Events

April 25, 2007 - Higher Education Lobby Day, Springfield, IL.

April 27, 2007 - Spring General Membership Meeting

April 28, 2007 - Civil Service Council Yard/Craft Sale, Arena Parking Lot, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

May 4 - 5, 2007 - Emeritus Overnight Trip to Springfield

May 11 & 12, 2007 - SIUC Commencement

June 11, 2007 - SIUC Summer Session Begins

August 4, 2007 - SIUC Summer Commencement

August 20, 2007 - SIUC Fall Semester Begins

October 6, 2007 - Emeritus Trip to Kirkwood, Mo. to see *Crazy About You*

Mark
Your
Calendar

The Emeritus Association Newsletter is published three times a year by the office of Constituent Relations & Special Events, Southern Illinois University Carbondale.
Editor-in-Chief, Nancy Hartman

Attn: Emeritus Association Newsletter
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414803

Hello from SIUC



Photo by: Jim Martin
 Date: 2/1/2007
 SIU Campus Lake

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Jiffy Directory

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State Universities Annuitant Assoc.. (SUAA)	www.suaa.org
State Universities Retirement System (SURS)	www.surs.org
SIUC Human Resources	www.siu.edu/~humres/
SIUC Credit Union	www.siucu.org/
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