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Newsletter of the Austin Peay State University Retirees Association

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Photo: Treasurer Nancy Irby presents Aleeta Christian a certificate of appreciation and bracelet in thanks for her service as president of APSURA



Officers for coming year elected May 6

The APSURA annual membership meeting was held on May 6, and it was well-attended and enjoyable. The gathering featured refreshments, a good bit of socializing, and the election of two new officers and three new board members for the coming terms. David Kanervo and Floyd Christian were elected president and vice-president, and Nancy Smithfield, Eloise Weatherspoon and Joe Filippo were chosen as new members of the board. Barbara Wilbur and Nancy Irby will continue in their three-year terms as secretary and treasurer, and continuing board members are Phil Kemmerly, John Butler, Mitch Robinson, Jim Clemmer, and Aleeta Christian as ex officio.

Officers and board members ending their terms of service were Aleeta Christian and Hester Crews, president and vice-president, and board members Ann Harris and Al Bekus. All were thanked for their good service and hard work through the years, and they were presented certificates of appreciation, Amazon gift cards, and bracelets created by Bob Privett as tokens of our gratitude.

In her final address as president Aleeta recounted some of the highlights of the past years and her hopes for the future of our association. She urged our continued active involvement in THERA and AROHE, the state and national associations of university retiree groups, and the continuation of our outreach to new retirees in our "Straight talk about retirement" seminars and elsewhere. She stressed the uniqueness of our wholly egalitarian association as compared with many of those at larger universities, which tend to be stratified among staff, faculty and other employees.



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Gallery: May events



APSURA meeting



ROMEOS breakfast



Garrison Keillor
at the Ryman





President White's inauguration. Photo by Taylor Slifko.

A retiree at the Inauguration

Aleeta Christian

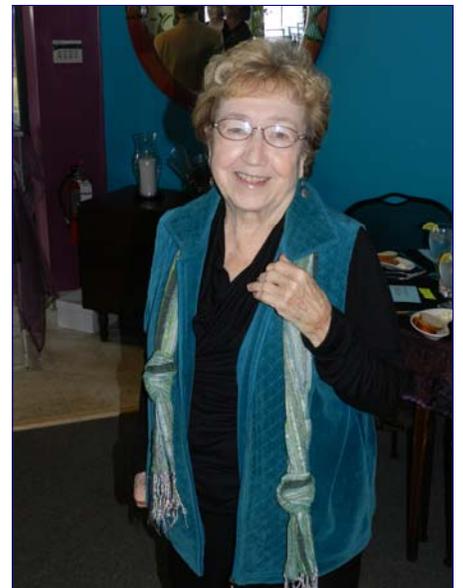
On March 23, a bright, clear Monday morning, I was privileged to participate in the inauguration of Dr. Alisa White, the tenth president of Austin Peay State University, representing the APSU Retirees Association. I was excited about this opportunity. I had located my fancy regalia from the back of a storage closet, shaken it out and once again donned it, including that strange six-cornered hat. I felt really dressed up. Standing outside the Mabry Concert Hall with many old friends and a number of young-looking and unfamiliar faculty, I waited until the grand music swelled and I marched in, surprised to be on the very front row. I surveyed two rows of dignitaries on the stage, and saw Dr. White, our APSURA Patron, down on the far left. She looked so very happy.

A rather solemn ceremony but with the lightness of joy ensued. Senate President Dr. Mercy Cannon welcomed attendees, and Wesley Foundation Campus Minister Jodi McCullah prayed. Then the dignitaries trooped to the podium. Messages were brief, sincere; sometimes they were amusing. Student Government president, National Alumni Association president, Fort Campbell Colonel, County Mayor, were just a few giving best wishes and praise for Austin Peay State University. Finally the star dignitary, Governor Bill Haslam, appeared, and he wooed the audience with his praise of APSU and of Dr. White as the perfect fit for these times.

Dr. Rodney Mabry, President of the University of Texas at Tyler, who first encouraged Dr. White to apply for our presidency, gave an inside look at her academic background. She has achieved so much at several universities in several states, from which APSU will benefit. He told us that she can say No, which also seemed to please this audience. Dr. Mabry was a warm, genuine advocate, and a firm endorser of the decision of the many who brought Dr. White to us. Then Dr. White spoke. And, ah, what a reward.

The theme of this inauguration was Jonathan Swift's line, "Vision is the art of seeing what is invisible to others." Dr. White reacted to this thought with "Transformation occurs when the potential that is visible to some becomes visible to all." Her observations and ideas simply popped, both long and short views, and the audience was convinced and enthralled with her thoughts. I felt a deep satisfaction that APSU was in good hands and a bright future was already carrying us along.

Gallery: Gorgeous Luncheon-goers



APSURA hosts Commissioner Candice McQueen

Ann Harris

The Retirees Association held our second annual gala Spring Luncheon on March 12, with Dr. Candice McQueen, Commissioner of Education, as the dynamic guest speaker. The luncheon was held at The Looking Glass restaurant, which once again provided fine food and service to APSURANS and special guests including Mayor Kim McMillan and APSU President Dr. Alisa White.

In her address Commissioner McQueen shared her viewpoints relating to the Department of Education's strategic plan for 2015. She focused on the topic "Organizing Priorities: Success after Graduation," and she began by listing the major educational strides Tennessee has already made in improving educational outcomes. Among these were the fact that elementary and middle schools possess the fastest improvement among states on 4th and 8th grade NAEP data and consistent gains on TCAP every year since 2010 assessment. She also stated that our high schools have the fastest growing graduation rate of any state, and that Tennessee's ACT statewide average has increased to 19.3.

McQueen emphasized that even though these achievements are substantial, one of our greatest challenges in Tennessee is that our students are struggling in the immediate years following high



school. She prioritized five strategic initiatives that will impact this debilitating lack of readiness for either careers or postsecondary education. The initiatives are organized around strategic priorities including ensuring that very young students gain the basic skills, and that educators are provided thorough training and support. Related priorities are ensuring that middle and high school students are prepared for college and workforce needs, and that individual districts are empowered to make the best decisions for their schools especially as regards at-risk students.

McQueen said it is a great time to be students, teachers, and administrators in Tennessee schools as the focus remains on achievement and overall success. "Tennessee is headed in the right direction. We are making a real difference in the lives of our children and the future of our state. My goal is for every graduate to be college and career-ready so they can succeed in the future. I want Tennessee to continue to set the pace and lead the nation in the reforms and innovations that are making a real difference in the lives of our students."

Lunch and a Roxy play—a great combination

Everyone knows that many of APSURA's activities revolve around food. Our luncheons, symphony trips, Greenway walks, and even our train rides all begin or end with food—or, as in the case of our great train trip to Cookeville last fall, the food comes in the middle—the neat little bistros lining the rejuvenated downtown streets. Aleeta, Hester and Jim learned at the big national AROHE conference in Minneapolis last August that this food-centric approach to life is a central feature of virtually all retiree groups, including those from the Tennessee universities represented in THERA.

On April 4 a number of us combined lunch at the new Hops Road restaurant (where Brunie's used to be) with a terrific performance of *Tuesdays with Morrie* at the Roxy. We were impressed by the varied and somewhat unique pub-style menu items at Hops Road, with good service to match.

The play was a perfect showcase for actor Jay Doolittle from Knoxville, who has been a Roxy favorite in many past plays. The play presents an extended reunion between a retired university teacher, played by Doolittle, and a former student, which over several years evolves

into a poignant non-lecture for the student on the meaning of life. This theme was especially suitable for our audience of retirees who over the years have had relationships with students evolve into life-long mentorships and friendships.



We hope to repeat this Roxy-and-food experience several times during the coming year, and to add similar events as our attention is brought to them. We solicit input from members on likely candidates for such adventures.

Your board is always open to new ideas for activities that will be of interest to other AP-SURANS. To guarantee the popularity and success of any new endeavor, though, let's be sure to pair it with an excursion to an eatery!

New option for dues payment

Jim Clemmer

The time for APSURA dues payment is coming around again soon—and, once again, we greatly appreciate your continuing membership in this wonderful organization. Dues are due by July 1 to APSURA, Box 4426, Clarksville, TN 37044. Your board has come to believe that a main problem with paying dues isn't the money--\$25 is not a major hurdle for most; it is, rather, the nuisance factor. Most of us receive renewal requests daily for everything from AARP to ZZounds, and we simply get tired of the constant hassle of writing and sending checks and going through endless payment menus online. Often I myself just begin putting them in a pile to "tend to later," and sometimes "later" never comes.

The \$500 lifetime membership is a continuing option, of course, and a number have chosen that route. But others decide that for one reason or another they don't want to do that. One said recently, "I just consulted my actuarial tables, and they advise me not to engage in any long-term commitments." And, as you know, the \$500 is a direct contribution to the APSURA scholarship fund in the APSU Foundation, and as such it does not contribute to our operating expenses.

We have come up with a new option we believe would simplify payment for you, and would also ease record keeping for our treasurer: \$100 for a five-year membership. This way you won't have to contend with yearly payments, and as something of a perk you will, in effect, get one year's membership free. And this money will become part of our operating fund, with any remainder after five years going to the Foundation. However you choose to pay, the officers and board very much appreciate your continued support and endorsement of our efforts.

Publication Information

The APSURA Newsletter is published quarterly by the Austin Peay State University Retirees Association. A supplement to the Newsletter, the APSURA NewsNotes, is published occasionally to update APSURA members on time-sensitive coming activities and events, both those in which APSURA is participating officially and others recommended by APSURA members. Both the Newsletter and Newsnotes are available at www.apsu.edu/retirees-association.

We invite APSU retirees to send us specific information about coming activities and events you believe will be of interest to APSU retirees. Please send to Hester Crews at crewsh@icloud.com, to Jim Clemmer at clemmerj@apsu.edu, or to APSURA at the physical address below, and include exact dates, times, locations, deadlines, costs, etc. We also welcome the submission of original articles for possible publication in the newsletter, especially descriptions of your accomplishments, travels, discoveries, and other experiences as APSU retirees.

Submissions are limited to 500 words and a maximum of three high-resolution photographs. Send texts as regular email (no tabs) or Word attachments to Jim Clemmer at clemmerj@apsu.edu with photographs sent individually as separate jpg files. Or you may submit typed manuscripts and good-quality photo prints to APSU Retirees Association, Box 4426, Clarksville, TN 37044.

Officers

*Aleeta Christian, President
Hester Crews, Vice-President
Nancy Irby, Treasurer
Barbara Wilbur, Secretary*

Directors

*Ann Harris
John Butler
Mitch Robinson
Phil Kemmerly
David Kanervo
Al Bekus (ex officio)*

Publicity Director

*Jim Clemmer
clemmerj@apsu.edu*

Address

*APSU Retirees Association
Box 4426
Clarksville, TN 37044*

On the Web

www.apsu.edu/retirees-association

See our website for current and past issues of our Newsletter and NewsNotes, a retirement checklist, and information on retiree benefits.



APSU Retirees Association
Box 4426
Clarksville, TN 37044

APSURA New Members Registration Form

Retired faculty or staff

Associate member

Check both of the above boxes if your spouse or partner is joining as an associate member as well.

Dr. ___ Mr. ___ Ms ___ Mrs. ___ Other preferred title _____

Name of member: _____

Last

First

Middle

Name of spouse/partner: _____

Last

First

Middle

Address: _____

Number and Street (Apartment Number)

City

State

Zip Code

Telephones: _____ E-mail addresses: _____

Former department: _____ Years of service _____ Year you retired _____

Activities in which you would like the APSURA to be involved (check all that apply): Group travel; Athletic events; Cultural events; Social events; Scholarship activities; Seminars; Community work; Other _____

Annual Dues for Austin Peay State University Retirees Association are:

Regular (APSU Retiree) Membership \$25.00 Please send to APSURA, Box 4426, Clarksville, TN 37044

Associate Membership \$25.00 5 years for \$100

Additional donation for Scholarship Fund _____ Lifetime Membership \$500