

## JIM CLEMMER

By Allene Phy-Olsen

On Christmas Eve, 2018, Austin Peay State University and APSURA lost one of their most valuable and loved members. Jim Clemmer had lived a rich, full life, attaining his three score and ten years and was only a few months short of the extra decade which, according to the Bible, may be gained through strength.

From its beginning, Jim was active in our retirement organization. He had served as chair, had attended regional conferences on our behalf, and had made presentations at national retirement conventions. He initiated, edited, and published our attractive newsletter. His influence brought us many new active members, and he successfully prevailed on more affluent members to make substantial donations to our scholarship funds.

After some thirty-five years of teaching at Austin Peay, Jim retired as Professor of English, Emeritus. During this time, he developed a widely recognized program in business English, taught and administered special enriched programs, and is credited with a major part in computerizing the campus, bringing us into the third millennium. Everywhere he went in town, and beyond, former students, who not only remembered the excellence of his teaching but his personal kindness as well, greeted him affectionately.

As a colleague, he was never too busy to help another professor struggling with a new computer program, moderate a conflict, or sense when a co-worker needed encouragement. His discretion and judgment on committees could always be trusted. Although Jim had strong convictions, he was tolerant of the opinions of others. In fact, some of his closest friends did not share his political views, but that made no difference in his regard for them or his pleasure in their company.

Austin Peay was fortunate that Jim chose to practice the teaching profession here, because he had numerous talents. He first studied music with his piano teacher mother, eventually developing into an accomplished and widely recognized pianist. He could have made this his career. One of his favorite stories was of the time in Kansas City when he was asked to perform at a Harry Truman rally. He was to



introduce the President by playing “The Missouri Waltz.” Although the sheet music was in front of Jim, the stagehands miscalculated and all the lights on stage went dark just at the moment Truman was announced. Unable to read his score, Jim quickly improvised “The Tennessee Waltz” for the President’s entrance. Years later, Truman revealed that he had never liked “The Missouri Waltz” anyhow, which, through no fault of his own, had somehow become his theme song.

Before returning home to Tennessee, Jim spent two years of his youth as a social worker in New York. He also had a lifetime interest in medicine and medical technology and could have worked successfully in these areas. His articles appeared in a number of health and popular medical journals. Not always satisfied with medical treatments he received, he spent hours researching in Vanderbilt’s medical library and made several discoveries of his own, ahead of Vanderbilt doctors. His last presentation at ASURA’s Impact program reviewed some of this research.

Rest in peace, Jim. Your passing impoverishes us all.



### APSURA MEMBERS REGISTRATION FORM

New member  Renewing member  Retired faculty or staff  Associate member

Check both above-right boxes if your spouse or partner is joining or renewing as an associate member.

Dr. \_\_\_ Mr. \_\_\_ Ms. \_\_\_ Mrs. \_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of member: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of spouse/partner: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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:  Group travel;  Athletic events;

Cultural events;  Social events;  Scholarship activities;  Seminars;  Community Work;

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Dues for Austin Peay State University Retirees Association

**Make checks payable to APSURA and due to Covid-19 concerns for 2020-2021 mail form and check to Sharon Silva, 325 Kimbrough Rd, Clarksville, TN 37043**

Regular (APSU Retiree) Membership  \$25 Associate Membership  \$25

5 year Membership  \$100 Lifetime Membership  \$500

Additional donation for Scholarship Fund \_\_\_\_\_

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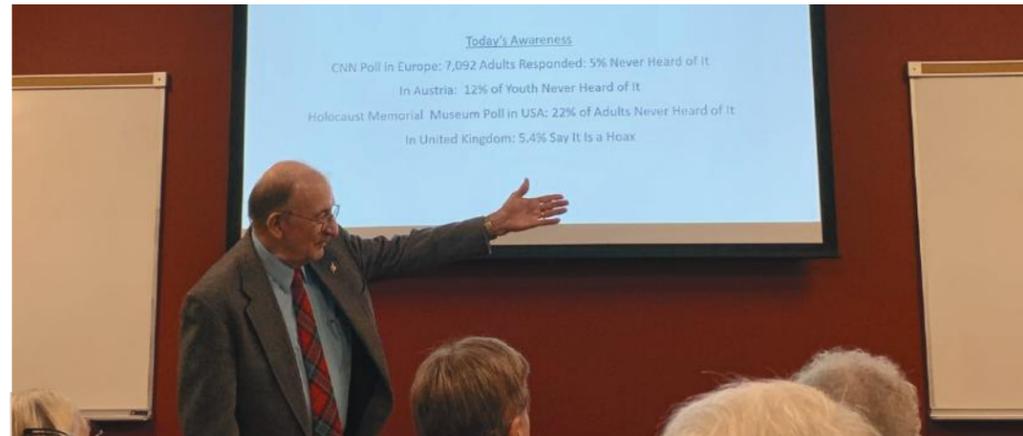
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## CONNECTION MEETINGS *and October Luncheon*



## Members as of June 2020

Your officers and directors appreciate each one of you. For questions about your membership status contact membership director Nancy Smithfield at [smithfieldn@apsu.edu](mailto:smithfieldn@apsu.edu) or treasurer Sharon Silva at [silvas@apsu.edu](mailto:silvas@apsu.edu)

- |                   |                     |                  |                     |
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| Bob Adams         | Solie Fott          | David Kanervo    | Robert Rogers       |
| Darla Adams       | Meredith Gildrie    | Ellen Kanervo    | Shelia Ross         |
| Lawrence Baggett  | Richard Gildrie     | Kathryn Kemmerly | Linda Rudolph       |
| Mary Emma Barnes  | Becky Glass         | Phil Kemmerly    | Steven Ryan         |
| Al Bekus          | Sara Gotcher        | Bradley Kirtley  | Sharon Silva        |
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| Anne Der          | Kenneth Johnson     | Sharon Ridenhour | Barbara Wilbur      |
| Joe Filippo       | Ted Jones           | Mitch Robinson   |                     |

## Publication Information

The APSURA Newsletter is published three times a year by the Austin Peay State University Retirees Association. A supplement to the Newsletter, 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 [apsu.edu/retirees-association](http://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 to Floyd Christian at [christianf@apsu.edu](mailto:christianf@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 Floyd Christian at [christianf@apsu.edu](mailto:christianf@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.

Please let us know of retirees who for some reason are not receiving the Newsletter, and of errors or needed changes in your own name and address. If you would prefer not to receive the printed copy of the Newsletter, please notify Membership Director Nancy Smithfield ([smithfieldn@apsu.edu](mailto:smithfieldn@apsu.edu)). If you are not a member of APSURA but would like to receive the Newsletter via email, please notify Nancy Smithfield and provide your email address.



APSURA brings beautiful people together! On Thursday, March 21, 2019, two dozen strong enjoyed a special evening of dining and theatre in the Queen City.

What better place than to begin at Edward's Steak House, a family owned, family run favorite. Met at the door by the charming and congenial Mrs. Shephard, we were quickly and efficiently seated and prepared for a sumptuous meal.

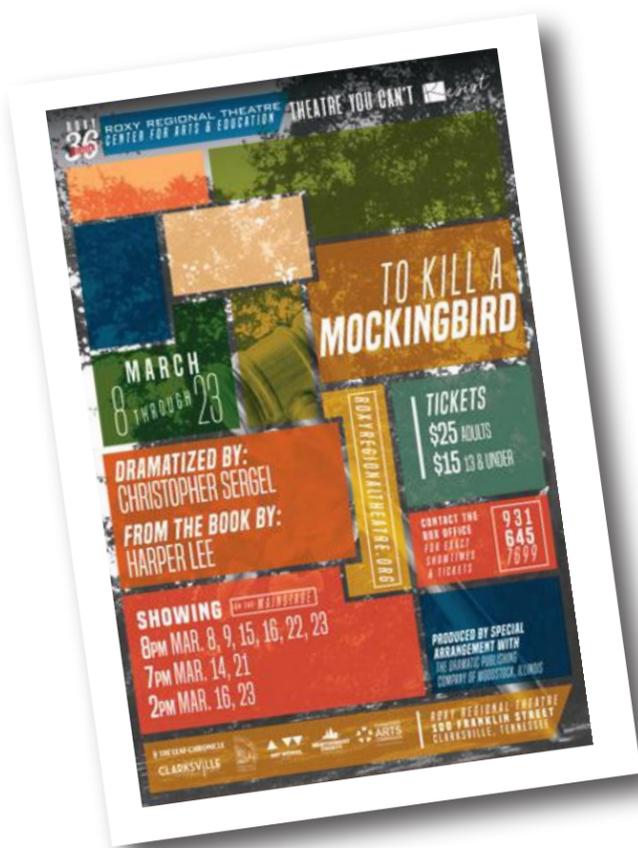
Placed in small groups to maximize opportunities for discussion, we enjoyed the abundant, freshly prepared dishes that Edward's serves so well. Steaks, seafood, chicken—each dish was designed to delight.

Thoroughly satisfied with food for the body, we bolted straightaway for food for the soul. Awaiting our arrival immediately across the street at the Roxy Theatre was a performance of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Director Ryan Bowie addressed the audience prior to the play. He thanked one and all for attending and noted with great delight the full house that had gathered in anticipation of the event.

Let the play begin! We were then treated to an exceptionally fine performance of a modern classic *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The actors, fueled by a warm and friendly house, received a standing ovation, testimony to the audience's appreciation of a job well done.

In attendance under the APSURA banner were David and Ellen Kanervo, Phil and Kathryn Kemmerly, David and Nancy Smithfield, Carl and Janet Stedman, Jerry and Eloise Weatherspoon, Al and Nancy Irby, Dewey and Helga Browder, Linda Nichols, Ken Grambihler, Hazel Irwin, Betty Lambert, Hester Crews, Thelma Watson, Barbara Wilbur, Sharon Silva, Solie Fott, and Joe Filippo.



## APSURA Scholarship Endowment reaches \$ 25,000 goal

*By Sharon Silva, Treasurer*

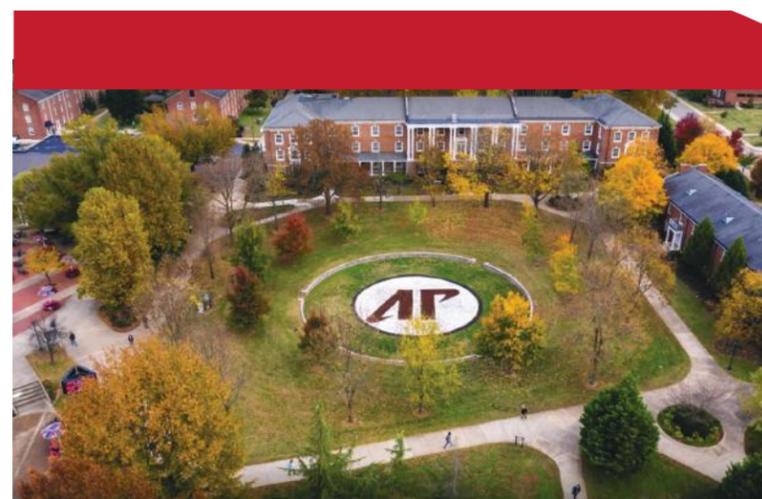
In the summer of 2019, the APSURA board of directors worked with the University Advancement Office to finalize the details of the APSURA Scholarship Endowment. Thanks to the contributions of APSURA members, and many generous gifts that were received in honor and memory of our beloved Jim Clemmer, the endowment reached the target goal of \$ 25,000 in the spring of 2019.

The inaugural APSURA board of directors, under the leadership of Al Bekus, is to be commended for their work of creating a scholarship that will exist in perpetuity. The endowment is now accruing interest and the first award from the accrued interest should be made in the 2022-2023 year.

In the interest of providing a scholarship sooner rather than later, the 2019-2020 board of directors recently approved awarding a \$1,000 scholarship for the 2020-2021 academic year. This award will be made from funds in the APSURA dues account. APSU students who are dependents of currently employed faculty and staff members will receive consideration if the established criteria are met successfully. The application and full description can be found on the APSU scholarship web site.

In closing, THANK YOU for your membership contributions. Your generosity has played a large part in the completion of this endowment which will provide scholarships for countless years to come.

For more information on the specific criteria and the application process for eligible students, please contact Sharon Silva, silvas@apsu.edu.



### OFFICERS

- Floyd Christian, President
- Carl Stedman, Vice President
- Carlette Hardin, Secretary
- Sharon Silva, Treasurer
- David Kanervo, Past President
- Jim Thompson, Parliamentarian
- Nancy Smithfield, Membership Director
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- Cheryl Holt
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- Allene Phy-Olsen
- Barbara Wilbur

### MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

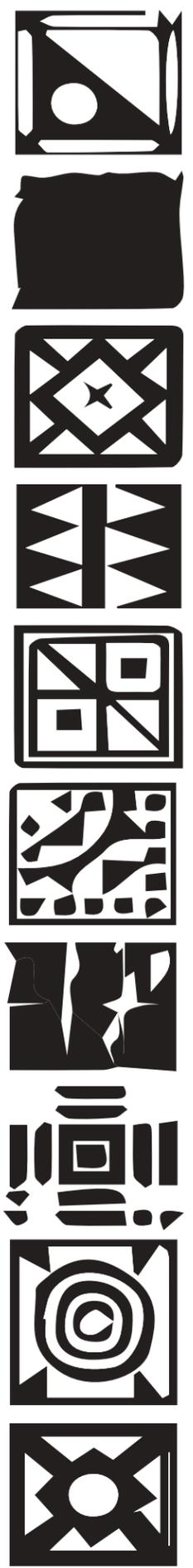
- Nancy Smithfield
- smithfieldn@apsu.edu

### ADDRESS

- APSU Retirees Association
- Box 4426
- Clarksville, TN 37044

### ON THE WEB

- [apsu.edu/retirees-association](http://apsu.edu/retirees-association)
- [currently under reconstruction]
- Soon you will again be able to consult our website for current and past issues of our Newsletter and NewsNotes, a retirement checklist, and information on retiree benefits



# AFRICAN SURPRISES

by FLOYD CHRISTIAN



Over the years, through a Methodist-related development office in Nashville, Aleeta became more and more acquainted with Africa University in eastern Zimbabwe, formerly known as Rhodesia. This connection became a steady pull for her to go there. One key distinction about this small Methodist school, currently serving about 2700 students, was that students are recruited from the entirety of Africa, but upon graduation are encouraged to return to their home countries as leaders.

For me, as we were landing in Johannesburg after our long trip from Atlanta, I felt like I was coming home. Each spring semester I enjoyed beginning work with my mathematics history students by studying the evolution of humankind (homo sapiens), the origins of which occurred in Africa. And each time I ended our studies with the conclusion that we were all African in our ancestry. So we Americans are all African Americans!

When I asked a friend what our colleagues might be interested in about our African trip, she immediately said that she wanted to hear about the animals. Our most vivid experience with them was at Kapama Private Game Reserve in northeastern South Africa, near Kruger National Park. Kapama Reserve was formed from farmland purchased by the Roode family (Johann and wife Lente, children Bernard and Adine), and ultimately became a sanctuary for wildlife and a job source for local people.

Our group flew in comfortably to a nearby local airport, where our first animal sightings were warthogs scattering at the treeline boundary area of the runway! The airport buildings and parking area were simple and nonintrusive, consistent with the type of terrain later described by one of our guides as "savannah woodland."

During our first evening safari, our open-vehicle driver gave very simple directions if we were to encounter any animals which might seem

frightening: "Be quiet and do what I say!" I immediately trusted him. And as we progressed through several more viewing excursions, Eben (short for Ebenezer) taught us the surprising lesson that since the animals had not experienced violence from the trucks or viewers, they had learned to be somewhat comfortable with our incursions. This was a very important lesson for us to remember when a lioness walked by our parked truck during a night viewing and calmly looked us over. We spotted cubs some distance back.

Our group heard slightly different definitions for the term Big Five, but Eben listed this impressive group of animals as lion/elephant/white rhinoceros/leopard/African buffalo. Our group as a whole sighted all of these (Aleeta and I missed the leopard)! Eben remarked that the meanest and most unpredictable of this bunch was the buffalo. However, I had further thoughts about this during a different tour when a frisky, young white rhino decided to stop playing with a companion and actually charged our parked truck with us inside watching. I am very happy to say that he changed his direction from our truck when he was about 30 yards away. Although young, he seemed very big - probably close to two tons!



In general, human communities in Africa have put pressure on animal habitats, to the extent that some species are endangered; there continues to be increasing pressure on more rural populations to use land for food and raising livestock. In Zimbabwe this problem is compounded by mismanagement of the money supply. We were told by a local that in earlier times Zimbabwe was the breadbasket of southern Africa, but that through mismanagement of farm assets, this distinction was compromised.

In their beautiful publication "Africa University: Thy Wonders Displayed," the South Carolinian visiting academics C.L. ("Ab") Abercrombie, G. R. Davis, Terry Ferguson, and Chris Hope list four human activities necessitated by subsistence living in less developed surroundings of AU: burning of grasslands to aid small-game hunting, subsistence gold panning, wildlife snares, and gathering of firewood. Their studies led them to the conclusion that these activities simply were not sustainable. They refer to America as a "lifeboat" for our "wounded homeland" Africa.

Yes, in Capetown and Johannesburg, Aleeta and I enjoyed city infrastructures and surroundings which reminded us of city communities in the United States. We were amazed at the six powerful waterfalls in northwestern Zimbabwe which form the famous Victoria Falls, collectively more than a mile wide and complete with rainbows. We learned of the reverence that Africa holds for Nelson Mandela and his long walk to freedom. But indeed, during the last week of our visit, Aleeta and I visited Africa University near Mutare, Zimbabwe, and Aleeta's dream was fulfilled.

During our four-hour trip from our airport in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, to Old Mutare, we noticed the greening effect of more generous rainfall typical of the mountainous eastern border with Mozambique. Huge granite outcroppings were noticeable in



every direction for much of the trip. After a warm greeting at AU, and consistent with the focus of AU on agriculture/health, business/leadership, and ministry/social sciences, Aleeta was guided to a social studies class and I joined a beginning calculus class. We immediately knew that there was going to be some work going on!

Our visiting with students and staff, along with a cordial visit with the president of the university, encouraged Aleeta to begin work on a student exchange program between AU and APSU. For both of us, our views of Africa and its people have become more sharply focused and memorable. Want to finish with a beautiful fact? There is a graduate student studying mathematics and computer science at Austin Peay...from Harare!

