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SSURA news

Working for the wellbeing of SSU retirees by providing and promoting social, recreational, and lifelong learning activities.

Retirement . . . is when you stop living at work and begin working at living.

— Unknown wise person

SSURA Fall Meeting and Local PERS/STRS Meetings

Everyone should plan to attend the Fall SSURA meeting to be held at the SOMC Life Center, 1202 18th Street, Portsmouth. The meeting will begin at 1pm in Room A. Call a fellow retiree and invite him/her to join us.

Health care concerns maintain their priority at the top of the list of retiree concerns as we get ready to move into 2011 and begin realizing the effects of the recently passed federal health care legislation. Initiatives to overhaul state pensions and benefits at the state level are being closely watched around the country as well as here in Ohio.

Our fall meeting is set to coincide with the Fall OPERS Health Care Seminar also held at the Life Center at 10am for those who are not Medicare eligible and again at 1pm and 3pm for those who are Medicare eligible. — Did you call 1-800-222-7377 to reserve your seat?

At 10am on Thursday, October 7th, STRS retirees can meet with an STRS representative John Buch on campus to hear about the upcoming changes in their health care plan. This meeting is open to current retirees and faculty who are thinking about retirement in the next few years. The STRS meeting will be in the University Center room 214. Call Marcia at 351-3220 or send an email to Mtackett@shawnee.edu to hold a place for you at the STRS meeting.

Topics for discussion at the fall meeting include planning for a holiday gathering, suggestions for holiday donations for the needy,



Convocation Clone

Dr. Morris opened the Fall 2010 Convocation with a clone of herself. Thanks to the new Motion Capture lab and Fine Arts Chair Greg Lyons and students, an avatar of Dr. Morris was created and presented as an indication of SSU's move into the 21st century. Take a look at Dr. Rita's "mini me" and see the entire presentation on-line at http://www.shawnee.edu/off/pres/state_of_the_university/09_10/State_of_U_2010-final.pdf

Center of Excellence

Dr. Jeff Bauer is leading efforts to develop a research component at the University with an emphasis on developing faculty research interests and capacity.

By the Numbers

New facts and figures were presented for 2010:

300 full-service and adjunct faculty
300 administrative & hourly staff
4600 students
13,056 alumni

The student count represents a 6.1% increase over last year and is the greatest increase at any of the main campuses of Ohio's universities. This increase represents a 39% increase in the past 10 years. We now have nearly 1000 residential students.

SSU filled 18 faculty positions this past year including 2 new in English, 1 in Math, 1 in Psychology, 1 in Occupational Therapy, and 2 in the M.Ed. program.



Security operations are now in-house and Dr. Morris has begun developing preliminary plans for expanding our security operations into a campus police force.

There's a New Pub in Town

David and Julie Basham are the new owners and operators of the Dickens Pub at 811 Murray Street in Portsmouth (next to the Mitchellace Building). David says that the pub has a decidedly British theme and he welcomes all Shawnee groups, friends and families to visit.

He offered an open invitation for the SSURA to hold meetings at the pub or to come by and visit after our meetings.

Julie will have 35 years of teaching under her belt this year and may be planning on joining us in retirement soon.

Athletics News



An arial view of the new Shawnee Turf.

SSU has changed athletic conferences and is now in the Mid-South Conference. Check out the new soccer field and tennis facilities and stick around to watch a game or plan to attend a volleyball or basketball game in the Rhodes Athletic Center. Find the game schedules for all sports at <http://www.shawnee.edu/off/at/index.html>

New Education Building

The Department of Teacher Education has moved to 945 Fourth Street in the old Social Security Building. The new space houses faculty and administrative offices as well as education classrooms and a media classroom. You are welcomed the stop by and take a tour!

Ramblin' Retirees

Each newsletter we'll take a look at how some of our retirees are enjoying life after work at SSU. In this edition we follow Marcia Tackett and her husband Jerry on a few trips since her retirement in 2007.

One of the first trips Jerry and I took following my retirement was to Costa Rica. We stayed in a mountain resort overlooking the capital of San Jose. Just a few miles from the Tropical Rain Forest, we found the country to be beautiful and the people very friendly. We did, however, notice that there were armed guards at many of the businesses and in residential areas of the city we saw many gated homes with barbed wire above their fences. Apparently drug trafficking is a major problem, so people take extra precautions. We got taxi rides down the mountain to shop and enjoyed the scenery while walking back and never had a problem.

We were in Costa Rica in January 2008 and were told that we picked the perfect time to be there. Apparently Costa Rica has only two seasons – the wet one and the dry one. Thankfully we were there during the dry season!



Overlooking San Juan, Costa Rica



We have taken a couple of Carnival Cruises to Mexico, including a lovely trip that included a tour of the ancient Mayan city of Tulum in December 2008. Our ship arrived at the port of Playa del Carma but couldn't cruise up to the dock because it had been washed away with the hurricanes from the previous season, so we dropped anchor just off shore and took smaller boats to shore. Our excursion to Tulum included a bus ride for about forty-five minutes through some very poverty stricken areas where people lived in shacks built of scrap materials and sometimes even just cardboard!

Our guide was a Mayan descendent and explained about the Mayan calendar and all the other contributions the Mayans made to civilization. When we arrived at the ruins we were stunned by the beauty. Situated next to a beautiful beach with amazing turquoise water and white sand, the remaining structures from the Tulum ruins sat majestically atop a hill. The guide explained how the Mayans tracked the calendar by the way the

light shines through the windows of buildings purposefully placed for sunrise and sunset. It was a very interesting and informative trip. Many more Mayan cities are being uncovered in newly explored areas of the Mexican countryside. You should take advantage of any opportunity to visit these areas and learn more about the Mayan culture.

A friend of ours retired from the railroad (where Jerry worked for 18+ years) and we joined them for a retirement party on Anna Maria Island. The island is in the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Tampa Bay. We were there in September of 2009. Each morning we walked about 2 miles along the shoreline, sometimes over rocks and through the water, to have breakfast on a pier jutting out into the Gulf. The waters around the island are known for having manatee and we saw them many mornings on our breakfast trek.

One of the nice things about Anna Maria Island is that it is not so commercialized and you can really enjoy the beach and feel like you're on your own private island!



In December 2009 we cruised to Nassau and Freeport in the Bahamas. It was a lovely and leisurely trip to the Caribbean and one of the most relaxing vacations we have ever had. We shopped in the Straw Market, strolled the downtown streets and just enjoyed the atmosphere. We watched fishermen row to shore and lay out their shells and starfish on the docks for sell. On board ship we had fun in the casino (no, we didn't win), enjoyed the art auction, and attended several shows. A cruise is just a really fun way to get a lot of enjoyment out of a vacation!

*Mark your calendar for the
October 6th Fall SSURA meeting*

SSURA *news*