

The Society of Senior Scholars

Enhancing Lives in Retirement
for Colorado State's Faculty

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Colorado State University
Continuing Education

www.learn.colostate.edu/seniorscholars

From the Editor

Welcome to the first edition of the newsletter of the Society of Senior Scholars (SSS).

You may wonder why we are putting more electronic stuff on your screen. There are 3 reasons. The Senior Scholars are expanding their program offerings. Keeping every retired faculty member aware of new opportunities is key to the SSS mission. Second, by creating opportunities for a range of activities, we open the chance for social and professional networking within the retired community. Third, SSS is strengthening its ties with CSU's higher administration to better meet the needs of faculty retirees. Our partnerships with President Tony Frank, Interim Provost Rick Miranda and with the

Faculty Council are growing, and our members should be kept in the loop. The Society can be your link to express views and concerns to CSU's leaders.

This newsletter, as with other initiatives in the 2009-2010 year, is an experiment. We want to grow to help you better. Your feedback and comments are solicited. You can contact us through the listings on our website, under the "Contact Us" section at the end of this newsletter, or by e-mailing me directly at rlaw@colostate.edu.

Robert Lawrence
Newsletter Editor

Upcoming Events

Speaker Series:

The Speaker Series this fall and spring is being offered jointly with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Our exciting program is listed below. Note that we now meet at 3:00-5:00 p.m., at a new location, the Colorado Welcome Center, corner of Prospect Road and I-25.

Nov. 16, 2009: "Recent Research on Alzheimer's," Paul Bell, Dept. of Psychology

Dec. 14, 2009: "Forensic Entomology," Boris Kondratieff, Dept. of Bioagricultural Sciences and Pest Management

Jan. 25, 2010: "Taking Care of Other People and Not Just Yourself: Lessons Learned from Family Caregiving Research," Christine Fruhauf, Dept. of Human Development and Family Studies

Feb. 22, 2010: "Exploration of Music Therapy," Michael Thaut, Dept. of Music

Mar. 22, 2010: "Accelerating Hope: Cancer Research Initiatives at CSU and the Supercluster Strategy," Stephen Withrow, CSU Animal Cancer Center

Apr. 26: "Q & A on the State of the University," Interim CSU Provost Rick Miranda

From the Director

Welcome, Senior Scholars, to the first issue of your Society's newsletter. This is a new initiative for us and I hope you find it useful and informative.

We began the 2009-10 academic year with several new pieces of our programs designed to expand or enhance opportunities available to faculty retirees. One is this newsletter, ably edited by Bob Lawrence. Our renewed website, <http://www.learn.colostate.edu/seniorscholars>, will serve as the primary point of entry to our programs and to contact our management. One highlight on the site is the complete text of our Guide for Faculty Considering Retirement. Harry Edwards serves as reluctant webmaster. With time, we will continue to enrich our online content, not only with CSU's offerings but also with a regular scan of programs offered to seniors by other institutions in the region. To supplement our successful Seminar Series, the society offers an Excursion Series, organized by Jack Hautaluoma, which provides occasional outings to local historical and cultural sites.

During the past summer your Society launched three initiatives aimed at bettering conditions for retirement among CSU's faculty. First, we found that retired faculty are not covered in any formal policy sense on campus. With strong support from President Tony Frank and Provost Rick Miranda, retired faculty are being included in the CSU Community for e-mailed news, updates and other publicity from the President's office. Second, amendments to the Faculty Manual

have been submitted to Faculty Council that would identify retirees as a class of individuals worthy of CSU policy support. Finally, we identified a problem that there are no standard guidelines covering how departments should treat their retired faculty with respect to continued contact, access to college, departmental and university benefits, and the like. A set of guidelines, in the form of a checklist, was developed for consideration by the Provost's office as possible standardizing policies and procedures.

I sense that the Society is emerging into a strong, effective organization serving CSU's retired faculty. I trust each of you will find our offerings of interest. Let us know if there is anything you want us to think about as we move forward.

Jerry Eckert
Director



The Oral History Project

CSU has been blessed with faculty who have made great contributions to scholarship and creativity during long careers. Their stories often convey insights to the institutions origins and history that are unavailable elsewhere. In 2008, some Senior Scholars saw the need to record the career histories of CSU's longest serving and most influential faculty while they still lived.

The Society of Senior Scholars, the Provost's Office, and the Archival Department of Morgan Library have combined to design and carry out an oral history project focused on retired faculty. Each interview is

conducted by an experienced faculty member and is audio and video recorded. These records will be permanently archived at Morgan Library.

It is said that the artist, Paul Gauguin (1846-1903), on recovering from depression caused by his daughter's death, produced his masterpiece. He titled it: "Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?" This is the question that our oral history project tries to answer, along with the derivative question of how these personal journeys have molded Colorado State University over the years.

Living Fully in Retirement: Dr. Carol Mitchell

This space in each edition of the newsletter will feature the continuing adventures of a “retired” faculty member.



Our first issue brings you the professor with the bright blue hair, Dr. Carol Mitchell from the English Department. She came to CSU in 1970 with degrees from Indiana University in English, Comparative Literature, and a Ph.D in Folklore. After four years in transitional

status she “retired” in 2008. As to the blue hair – Carol recalls the 1950s when her mother and her friends added a slight bluish tint to their white hair which otherwise had a tendency to turn a bit yellow. As a little girl she thought someday “I’ll have really blue hair.” And so, for a number of years Professor Mitchell has sported bright blue hair. The hair and the professor both will be featured in this fall’s OSHER course offerings in a class on Paleolithic and Neolithic Goddesses.

Carol writes:

Retirement took some getting used to, but I am learning to enjoy my freedom from schedules and time constraints. I seem to enjoy what I am doing more, even just errands like grocery shopping, or going by Ace for something for the garden or house. I even enjoy my driving more and am learning to stay within the speed limit since I have no need to hurry. I now wonder how I ever got all of life’s necessities done before I retired!

It is such fun to do reading or research for myself, not just for classes. I no longer have to rush through new research on Paleolithic art or new archaeology from ancient Greece. Much new research was done while I was teaching Goddess Religions. I must now modify my ideas of the ancient world. The theory of ancient goddess worshiping matriarchies dates from the late 1800s. Marija Gimbutas’ *Gods and Goddesses of Old Europe*, published in 1974 raised awareness, as did the contemporary Goddess Spirituality Movement. Unquestionably, goddesses

were important in polytheistic religions around the Mediterranean, however, until the feminist movement, scholars more often focused on the gods and priests and male oriented aspects of religion. But the theory of goddess religion(s) in the Paleolithic and Neolithic periods has been very controversial among archaeologists and anthropologists. So much of my reading is focusing on that controversy.

I began my reading with Neolithic Greece and came forward into Classical Greece rather than backward into the Paleolithic. Archaeology in Greece is producing new information about rituals and festivals, priestess- and priesthoods, and new temples, etc. so that our understanding of ancient Greece is changing significantly.

Finally, I couldn’t stand not having a class to tell about all this interesting material (and my friends could only stand so much). People ask, how long has it been since you went to Athens and its Acropolis? Did you know that they excavated a number of shrines around the bottom of the Acropolis and opened the area for visitors before the Olympics? So I volunteered to teach for Osher. I have found that it is great fun to talk with adults who join the Osher classes - so nice not to have tests and papers to read. But I must get better at getting them to participate in discussions rather than just lecturing. I do like organizing material for teaching purposes because it helps me remember better, and I see ideas more clearly.

I’ve had time to become better friends with my computer. While I was still teaching, I used slides and transparencies, thinking PowerPoint was not worth the time for my few remaining years. Now that I have the time, I tackled PowerPoint and found that it opened up a wealth of on-line photographic resources on archaeological sites and paintings and sculpture. My Osher class is now largely PowerPoint based.

Now, I that I have the time for both the reading and gardening, not to mention the time I take for lunches and coffee with friends and for yoga, I find myself wondering if my experience is typical for many retired academics.

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at CSU

SSS is pleased to offer several programs jointly with the Osher program during the 2009-2010 year. Kevin Oltjenbruns, Osher co-director, offers the following:

What do the Society of Senior Scholars and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at CSU have in common? For one, members of each organization have a shared passion for learning. The report that the Society of Senior Scholars filed with Faculty Council for its biennial review stated the following: *“A major goal of the Society of Senior Scholars is to strive for the continued intellectual, creative, and social activity of retirees. ... This objective has been addressed through integration with the developing Osher Foundation Grant.”*

The Osher Institute, administered through CSU's Division of Continuing Education, is one of approximately 120 Institutes funded across the nation by the Bernard Osher Foundation. We enter our third year of programming in Fall 2009 and are excited that a number of CSU's retired faculty/senior scholars have offered courses during past years or will do so in the fall. These faculty members include:

Jim Boyd	Bob Hoffert	Kevin Oltjenbruns
Loren Crabtree	Sandy Kern	John Roberts
Frank Ethridge	Bob Lawrence	Peggy Short
David Freeman	Dean Miller	James Work
Bill Griswold	Carol Miler	Bob Zimdahl
Harold Franklin	Howard Nornes	

Additionally, a number of other faculty have given lectures in either topical series or as part of our members' Perk Series. This year that series will be co-sponsored by both SSS and the Osher Institute.

We typically offer courses along a number of themes: global/cultural awareness; environmental sustainability; historical contexts; current issues; facets of the Rocky Mountain region; enjoying the arts; life transitions; and more. Course offerings and membership information can be found by visiting Osher's website at <http://www.learn.colostate.edu/osher> or by calling 491-5288 to request a catalog.

We would be delighted if you would join us – either as a course participant or by suggesting a particular class by contacting Kevin.Oltjenbruns@colostate.edu.



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