



# THE AUAR NEWSLETTER

The Association of The University of Akron Retirees

## AUAR EXECUTIVE BOARD 2020-21

**President**  
Dan Sheffer (330) 836-0150

**President Elect**  
Rita Klein (330) 929-0827

**Vice President**  
Cathy Edwards (330) 896-4059

**Treasurer**  
John Heminger

**Recording Secretary**  
JoAnn Collier (234) 466-8458

**Corresponding Secretary**  
Linda Sugarman (234) 466-0808

**Newsletter Editor**  
Martha Vye (330) 644-7490

**Member at Large**  
Ed Lasher (330) 664-1158  
Tim Lillie (330) 608-8493  
Tom Nichols (330) 281-8596  
Laura Moss Spittler (330) 603-6783  
Richard Steiner (330) 864-2289

**Immediate Past President**  
Neal Raber (330) 688-1742

**Program Committee**  
Tom & Diane Vukovich (330) 733-4608

**Membership Committee**  
Mel Vye (330) 697-5425

**Political Action Affiliate**  
Robert Gandee (330) 864-4659

**Website**  
Dan Sheffer (330) 836-0150

**Finance Committee**  
John Heminger

**Benefits Representative**  
Linda Sugarman (234) 466-0808

**Scholarship Committee**  
Timothy Lillie (330) 608-8493

**Faculty Senators**  
Ali Hajjafar (330) 688-3462  
Robert Gandee (330) 864-4659

**Parliamentarian**  
Carl Lieberman (330) 864-2569

**AUAR Support**  
Alexandra Schwartz (330) 972-6410

**Alumni Association**  
William Kollman (330) 972-2575  
Chris Franz (330) 972-7271

**Institute of Life Span Development & Gerontology**  
Dr. Harvey Sterns (330) 972-7243

**Endowed Scholarship**  
Kim Cole 330-972-7608

**Photographer**  
Ed Lasher (330) 664-1158

**Publisher**  
Anthony Fawver (330) 972-8482

## President's Message

Confession time! I procrastinate. I've lost track of the number of times that I have begun this Newsletter article. The best was yesterday. I had a clean sheet of paper (?), a sharpened pencil and felt the motivation to finally write this article. However, the Sun came out, the temperature was rising to the mid-50s and Therese told me that a single White-winged Crossbill has been sighted at the Secrest Arboretum in Wooster. Well, I ask, "What would you do?" After all, this could prove to be a very exciting find. A life-bird for me. So I dumped the idea of the Newsletter and off we went to Wooster. HOORAY. We found the bird in a Sweet-gum tree along with a flock of Pine Siskins, along with another flock of procrastinators. What a show. Now back to the Newsletter. Sorry, I just remembered that I have a whole tray of salmon pieces, brined and drying in the refrigerator and all ready for the smoker. Well, that killed the rest of the day. So...

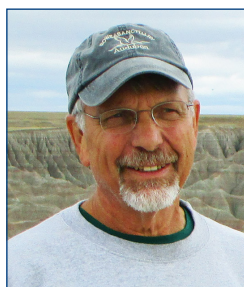
Even with all of the changes and challenges to our lives and lifestyles that we have encountered this past year, I want to thank the Executive Board of AUAR for the way in which they were able to carry on as many of our activities as possible. We found that we could have our monthly presentations using Zoom and that this technology allowed members of our association who live out of the Akron area to join these meetings. I hope we will be able to include remote participation by our members even after we are allowed to meet in person again. I thank Tom and Diane Vukovich for providing us with presenters who were willing to prepare materials for the on-line "luncheons." I can attest that it is very different making a presentation to an audience that isn't in the same room with the speaker. Mark Auburn, Jon Miller, Glenn Atwood and Frank Thomas presented three terrific programs for our Fall series. I'm sure we are all looking forward to the December 16 holiday presentation by Galen Karriker and members of the University of Akron Bands. We have a wonderful list of presentations for our Spring meetings as well. The list can be found in this Newsletter and on our AUAR website. Even though we are planning for these presentations to be on-line, we continue to hope that conditions will change and we will be able to meet in person later this Spring for one or more of the luncheons or the Lobster and Suds party.

One more huge thank you to Linda Sugarman and to my wife, Therese, for helping us when a large number of UA retirees were faced with the loss of our dependent's health insurance. They provided the materials for newsletter articles and many of the updates that were sent to you on our AUAR listserver. It has been a very challenging time for many of you.

Please note that in January, we will form a Nominating Committee for the upcoming election of new members of the AUAR Executive Board for 2021-2022. We will let you know our needs and hope that you will consider being nominated.

In closing, I am surprised at how fast my two years as President of AUAR have passed. Well, actually there were times this year, in particular, that could have passed even more quickly. I have missed seeing you in person and at our luncheons and activities. I have enjoyed the emails and calls from many of you. At the end of June, my duties will

pass to Rita Klein, our president-elect. Rita and the Executive Board of AUAR are going to do a good job for you. The future of AUAR is in good hands.



My very best wishes to all of you. I look forward to seeing and hearing from you. Please join us at our activities whenever you can.

**Dan Sheffer**  
**President 2019 - 2021**

## In Memoriam

*We honor our colleagues and friends for their many contributions in making the University of Akron a better place.*

**Dr. Roger Bain**, 80, passed away on October 18, 2020. He taught Geology at UA for 30 years and served as department chair. Roger retired in 2000 as Professor Emeritus. He loved animals and was active in the Summit County 4H program. Roger and his wife of 54 years, Leslie, loved to travel.

**Dr. Douglas Cameron** died at 79 on December 15, 2020. After teaching math at UA for more than 28 years, he retired as Professor Emeritus. Doug published many papers, a textbook, and 19 novels. He served on the Board of Directors of Akron Golf Charities and he and his wife, Nancy, traveled to 106 countries.

**Robert Carlisle** taught mathematics in the Department of Developmental Programs after retiring from teaching in the Akron Public Schools. He died at the age of 80 on November 17, 2020. He loved the outdoors, playing cards, and volunteering through his church. He and his wife, Loretta, were married 58 years.

**Sarah Chapman**, 33, passed away on September 6, 2020. She was Director of Treasury Services for The University of Akron Foundation. Sarah loved ballet and collected buttons. She leaves behind her husband and their three little girls and her mother, Laura Moss Spitzer, a UA retiree.

**Isiah Daniels**, III, died at 69 on September 20, 2020. He earned his Juris Doctor from the UA Law School and then served the University as Associate General Counsel, Adjunct Professor of Law, and Compliance Officer. He served on numerous Boards of Trustees of local organizations. He enjoyed history, photography, music, reading, and attending Broadway shows.

**William Diley**, 87, passed away on September 14, 2020. He supervised landscaping and grounds maintenance at UA for many years. He was a member of Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity while attending OSU and later helped colonize new FIJI chapters. His wife of 39 years, Kathy, predeceased him.

**Russell Farkas** died at 83 on December 11, 2020. He was a U.S. Navy veteran and retired from UA as a stationary engineer. Russell loved working on antique cars. He was predeceased by his wife, Barbara.

**Frank Flecksteiner** died at 83 on September 16, 2020. He served in the U.S. Navy and retired from UA as an accountant. Frank was a Civil War historian who traveled to battlefields and historic sites. He loved sports and played baseball for many years. He and his wife, Betty Jeanne, were married for 59 years.

**Mary Giffels** was 92 when she passed away on September 12, 2020. She began her career at UA in 1971 and served as the Clerical Supervisor in the Academic Advising Center of University College. She retired in 1988 but later worked part-time as an office aide until 1991. She was preceded in death by her husband of 64 years, Jim.

**Pam Hall** died at 74 on November 14, 2020. She had a Bachelor's degree and an MBA from UA. She retired in 1992 as UA Assistant Registrar. Pam lost her sight in 1987 but handled her disability with humor, grace, and faith. She was predeceased by her husband of 46 years, Al, a UA retiree.

**Tom Herbert** passed away on November 12, 2020 at the age of 83. His entire career was in the electrical field, including 25 years as Professor of Engineering Technology. He retired in 1993 as Professor Emeritus. Tom then consulted with many Ohio municipal electrical utilities and was honored by having a substation named for him. He and his wife of 61 years, Marcy, had a tree farm and sold Christmas trees. They loved going to NYC to see Broadway shows.

**Donald Jenkins** died at 92 on December 14, 2020. He graduated from UA with his Bachelor's degree at 20 and then entered active duty in the Air Force. He served two combat tours in Korea and received many military decorations. In 1958 he went into the Air Force Reserve and was eventually promoted to Major General. He earned his JD from UA and a Master of Laws degree from Western Reserve. Don became a Professor of both Law and Business Administration at UA and later became Dean of the Law School. He served as a Bath Township Trustee for many years and enjoyed sports. He and his wife, Mary, were married for 72 years.

**Sylvia Kenaley** was 90 when she passed away on December 9, 2020. She had a long career at UA as a secretary. She was predeceased by her husband, Eugene. Sylvia loved to swim, boat, and watch sports, especially the Browns. She was very active in her church.

**Gaynor Lanik** passed away at 91 on August 27, 2020. After getting her B.S. in Nursing, she moved to Hawaii where she met her husband, Emil. They were married in the Pearl Harbor Naval Base Chapel. He predeceased her after 43 years of marriage. Moving to Akron, she joined the UA faculty and was one of five faculty members who formed the College of Nursing. She earned her MSN and Doctorate in Nursing at UA. She sang in her church choir and cherished the time she spent in her Bible Study group.

**Richard McGraw** died at 86 on August 27, 2020. He served in the U.S. Air Force and later had jobs in acoustics and radio engineering. He retired from the UA School of Communication as Administrator/Adjunct Professor with thirty years of Service. He was instrumental in upgrading the student-run WZIP radio station to a first-class professional status. He was inducted into The Broadcasters Hall of Fame. Richard's wife, Millie, preceded him in death.

**Timothy Reilly** was 83 when he died on November 5, 2020. He was manager for printing services at UA, retiring after 28 years of service. He loved Corvettes, animals, and his church. His wife of 40 years, Janice, survives him.

**Lena Rinella-Moore** passed away on September 16, 2020 at the age of 97. She retired from UA as a secretary. She loved going shopping and to the movies. She was preceded in death by her first husband of 56 years and her second husband of 15 years.

**David Robinson** died at 82 in September of 2020. He worked at NASA's Lewis Research Center before becoming a professor at UA's Community and Technical College. He had a Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering and a Master's in Engineering. He retired in 1996. He used the law Degree he earned at UA to practice elder law from his home. He was active at UA, in the community, and at his church. David is survived by his wife of 60 years, Laura.

**Kristina Schaaf** passed away at 64 on September 11, 2020. She worked at the UA Information Technology desk for many years and was an exemplary employee.

**Andrew Scheks** died on November 22, 2020 at 79. He was born in Yugoslavia and came to Akron as a teenager. He worked at UA for 31 years. Andy was very knowledgeable about all aspects of HVAC. He could repair anything and was described as the "strongest guy on campus." Andy is survived by Anna, his wife of 53 years.

**Betty Sheets** died at 93 on November 12, 2020. She worked jobs she could do during her children's school hours and then took a job at UA when they were grown. She retired as a secretary. Betty enjoyed water skiing, boating, and golfing with her husband, Allen, who preceded her in death. She leaves behind a very large family including 46 great-grandchildren and 5 great-great-grandchildren.

**Dr. Baffour Takyi** died of Covid-19 on November 18, 2020, at 64. He was born in Ghana and earned his Bachelor's in Sociology there. He taught in Nigeria and moved to the U.S. in 1983. He obtained his Master's and Doctorate in New York and worked there before coming to Akron in 1997. He was a professor of sociology and served as the Director of the Pan-African Studies Program from 2005 to 2011. Each year Baffour and his wife would host a houseful of international students for Thanksgiving. Family members said he was the first in the family to attend college and he used part of his salary to help other family members attend also.

**Edwina Wagner** died at 90 on December 6, 2020. She worked in the Special Programs Department at UA and retired in 1993. Edwina worked with professors to create non-credit class offerings. After retiring she became a Guardian Ad Litem, helping children through their court cases. Win also volunteered at Hospice and was honored as Volunteer of the Year in 1996. She loved reading, history, politics, and animals. She and her husband, Gene, were married 42 years before he predeceased her.

**Jacqueline Wilbanks** died at 81 on September 29, 2020. She had Bachelor's and Master's degrees from KSU and a Doctorate in Education from UA. She taught in the Canton City Schools for 30 years. After she retired from teaching, Jaci became Certification/Licensure/Coordinator for the Office of Student Services at UA's College of Education. She was preceded in death by her husband Damon.

**Editorial note: Please alert us to any member of our "University Family" whom we have overlooked.**



# AUAR Celebrates UA Sesquicentennial



**Dan Sheffer, Diane and Tom Vukovich**

2020 has been a year to forget! The COVID-19 pandemic and the budgetary crisis at The University of Akron, resulting in layoffs and the loss of retiree dependent health insurance benefits, are just two of the dark chapters we would like to forget.

Amid these negatives, The University of Akron was planning to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the institution on 10-10-20. A "black tie" event was to be held on that Saturday evening. Needless to say, plans were revised and alumni and friends and students around the world were asked to help celebrate virtually.



**Dan Sheffer, Sharon and Bob Gandee and Diane Vukovich**

Despite a lack of enthusiasm, a few AUAR Executive Board members decided that we would put aside the falsehood of the UA "Promises Made, Promises Kept" slogan and celebrate the good years. It seemed fitting that such an event should include recognition of UA retirees and a reminder of their contributions to the University's history and traditions now being celebrated.



**Loren Hoch, Denny Klein, Diane Vukovich, Rita Klien, Pam Rupert, Tom Vukovich, Bob Gandee, Dan Sheffer, Sharon Gandee and Ed Lasher**

The University's Alumni Office organized a "150 Celebrations Around the World" event and asked alumni, friends, and students to register their celebration party to be held on 10-10-20. It was reported that over 2,200 individuals

from California to Maine and in countries including Egypt, Canada, and India organized parties and contacted the Alumni Office. Those who did so received a "Party Pack" of items and an invitation to join a live, virtual celebration broadcast. Pictures could be displayed on Instagram or Twitter and later sent to the Alumni Office to be included in the University's Archives.



**Pam Rupert and Loren Hoch**

The AUAR group convened at 7 p.m. at The Winery at Wolf Creek. Attendees included Dan Sheffer, current AUAR President; Diane & Tom Vukovich, AUAR Past Presidents; Rita Klein, President-Elect and husband, Dennis; Pam Rupert, outgoing AUAR Newsletter Editor; Loren Hoch, former Board Member; Ed Lasher, former President & current Board Member; Robert Gandee, former President & AUAR Faculty Senate Representative and wife, Sharon. We were able to secure two outdoor patio tables and enjoyed wine and snacks while waiting for the virtual celebration to begin.



**Rita and Denny Klein, Diane and Tom Vukovich**

At 8:30 p.m. the group used laptops and cell phones to view the celebration, which was hosted by Willy Kollman, Asst. V.P. Alumni Relations & Executive Director, UA Alumni Association. The program included taped video messages of congratulations from Ohio Senator Rob Portman, Governor Mike DeWine, and Ohio Department of Higher Education Chancellor Randy Gardner. Involvement by UA students featured music by the marching band and the UA choir. The program concluded with a toast

by President Dr. Gary Miller and his wife, Georgia and a ceremonial "lighting" of Buchtel Hall.

If you would like to view the virtual celebration, Google: University of Akron Celebrating 150 years.

"Hail We Akron." May The University of Akron once again rise up from the ashes and regain its prominence as an institution of higher education bringing opportunity and "extraordinary experiences to students in and out of the classroom."

As UA retirees, we celebrate our contributions and wish the institution renewed success in the years ahead.

---

# AUAR Meetings Go “Virtual” September-December!

---

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, AUAR on-campus, in-person fall luncheon meetings were canceled. Instead, the presenters agreed to join us “virtually” via ZOOM.

During the summer, AUAR President, Dan Sheffer, used ZOOM to present a “trial” program to work out the details and make sure we could successfully reach out to most of our members.

On September 16, 2020 the first fall meeting was held. Dan, with the help of Mel Vye, worked out the technical aspects of ZOOM, and Dr. Mark Auburn and Dr. Jon Miller were our guest speakers. Their topic was “Hail We Akron!,” the book which Mark edited and that The University of Akron Press, under the leadership of Jon Miller, published in celebration of the University’s 150th anniversary.

Mark explained that the book is not a chronicle of the past 50 years of the University. Rather, it is a “snap-shot” produced in a “landscape format.” The publication is a series of stories and photos depicting what the institution did and was like from 1970 to 2020. The book does not contain everything and is simply a “grass roots” report with the content being “crowd- sourced.”

Starting in 2017, alumni, current and former employees, local business and political leaders, and friends of the University were asked to submit materials to be considered for inclusion in the print edition. About 70,000 words were submitted and then reduced to about 43,000 words and 293 images. Many of the pictures were obtained from the UA archives. The result is a 212-page, hard bound “coffee table style” publication similar to one featuring Stan Hywet Hall and Gardens.

Many AUAR members submitted items to the edition with the “king” being Ken MacDonald, Director of Sports Information, Emeritus. Using his extensive files, Ken wrote over 30 articles about UA sports teams.

Jon began showing the “audience” pages from the book as Mark noted that the publication was “independent of the University” with no review or input from the current administration. He and Jon utilized a “peer review” process and the expertise of the nine current faculty members who make up the UA Press Editorial Board. It was the Editorial Board that gave final approval to the content and design.

Jon explained that as the content was gathered, he and Mark reached out to the UA School of Art and a team of students to design the layout of the publication. This “Design By Nine” group developed several models for consideration. Once the design was selected, the students worked on various chapters for submission to the Editorial Board.

The result is a very readable, eye-pleasing publication that covers the third phase of transition of the institution from Buchtel College to state status to its place as a major institution of higher education that we retirees helped to develop.

Just as the “UA story” continues, so does the project. Plans are to produce another book in “black and white” in soft-cover and to develop an “on-line” presence to allow people to add stories as well as materials Mark and Jon could not find space for in the current hard-cover “Hail We Akron!” production.

## About Our Presenters

Dr. Mark Auburn is no stranger to AUAR luncheon audiences. A 1967 alumnus, son of President Norman P. Auburn, former Dean and Provost at UA, he has been a luncheon speaker several times. Last year, Mark delighted us with a review of his book, “In the President’s Home: Memories of the Akron Auburns.” A few years earlier, he told us about his “life-changing” experiences on safari in Africa.

Dr. Jon Miller joined the UA faculty in 2000. He is Professor of English and has led The University of Akron Press since 2015. Jon is an alumnus of the University of Delaware and earned his Ph.D. at the University of Iowa. He is the author or editor of 5 books and specializes in nineteenth century literature.

## Ordering the Book

The full name of the publication is “Hail We Akron! The Third Fifty Years of The University of Akron, 1970-2020. You may order a copy from the UA Press on-line at: <https://www.uakron.edu/press/> USE DISCOUNT CODE: UAP30 for 30% off the list price only directly from the UA Press.

It is also available at Amazon or on campus at the B&N Bookstore or from your local book seller.

---

## October Meeting – India Travelogue

---

The October 7 retirees’ meeting was again held virtually via ZOOM. Dr. Glenn Atwood took us on a journey that he and his wife, Mary Ellen, (also a UA retiree) took in 2004. Glenn’s interest in India started in 1954 when he met Mary Ellen at Iowa State University. Mary Ellen’s family had lived in India when her father was the Ford Foundation Representative to India, Nepal, and Pakistan. Mary Ellen attended high school in India and graduated from the Woodstock International School. Glenn and Mary Ellen were married 10 months after meeting and in 1956 visited her family in India.

*cont. page 4*

---

# October Meeting – India Travelogue *cont...*

---

The 2004 trip was sparked by Mary Ellen's 50th high school class reunion and Woodstock's 150th anniversary. They spent a total of 7 weeks revisiting interesting places and other sites they missed during their first trip.

India, a large southern Asia country, is bordered by the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal between Myanmar and Pakistan. With a population of over 1.3 billion and encompassing 1.3 million square miles, it is slightly more than one-third the size of the United States.

People in India speak more than 1,000 languages and dialects with Hindi the national language and primary tongue of 30% of the people. Hindu is the primary religion for approximately 80% of the population with 12% being of the Muslim faith.

Glenn took us on a pictorial tour of their visits to a multitude of cities, shrines, temples, and landmarks. Their two-month journey covered the western part of India from the foothills of the Himalayas to the southern tip of India.

The first slides were places visited in Amritsar, Punjab India. Included were pictures of the Golden Temple, the preeminent spiritual site of Sikhism. Here they viewed a diorama depicting the story of the Sikh religion and of Lord Hanuman, the Monkey God.

Glenn explained that Sikh men do not cut their hair or beards and can always be recognized by the turbans they wear. We saw pictures of a huge food preparation and distribution system at the Golden Temple. The Sikh followers serve up to 10,000 complete hot meals a day to anyone regardless of caste, creed, or religion.

In Agra they visited the huge Red Fort and also Gandhi's Cremation Garden. In New Delhi a featured site is the Victory Tower built between 1442 and 1449. It is a nine-story structure built of red sandstone and white marble.

Of course, a trip to India is not complete without a visit to the Taj Mahal, which is also in Agra. This beautiful mosque was built between 1631 and 1648 by Shah Jahan as a tribute to his favorite wife, Queen Muntaz Mahal, who died while delivering his 14th child.

The Amber Fort in Jaipur was their next stop. This opulent 16th century Maharaja's place was constructed using a unique blend of both Hindu and Muslim designs. Here, the couple also visited the Jantar Mantar, an 18th century astronomical observatory. The huge sundials, dating to 1724, are still amazingly accurate.

Next they traveled to Jodhpur, also called the Blue City. Many of the older buildings are painted or constructed with blue materials as a way to ward off mosquitoes. Here they stayed in a very adequate tent room and rode camels on a local safari. Earlier at the Amber Fort, they were transported up the hill to the Fort entrance on the back of an elephant (4 riders per animal seated back to back). Mary Ellen said that she prefers the elephant ride over the temperamental hump backs.

Then it was off to Ranakpur and the Jain Temple and Udaipur with its five-star world class Taj Lake Palace Hotel. This outstanding hotel was built on an island in 1743 as a palace and restored to its pristine glory with 65 luxurious rooms and 18 grand suites. It gained world renown when the James Bond film "Octopussy" was filmed on site. It served as the secluded lair of the film's eponymous, "Bond Girl."

At Khajuraho they visited temples decorated with erotic, sexually explicit sculptures. (Bet that caught the attention of Neal Raber!) There are many theories about who and why these sculptures were part of the temple architecture. We'll leave it to you to do the research!

At the Ellora Caves, Glenn and Mary Ellen visited the Kailasa Temple. It is the largest temple in the world that is carved out of a solid piece of rock.

While in Varanasi, they witnessed ritual bathing in the sacred Ganges River and the cremation pyres along the shores operating 24/7.

Besides seeing these impressive cities and sites, Glenn described the everyday life of the people. He showed pictures of a snake charmer, the use of donkeys, motor scooters, tractors, and three-wheel bikes to transport people and goods, and women washing clothes along the river banks and fetching water from public wells.

The couple also visited the many open-air shops that line the streets. Here you can watch workers at fabric shops, wood carvers and expert artists doing intricate inlaid stonework. Such items are great souvenirs to bring home as lasting reminders of travel in exciting foreign lands.

India has many fine, luxurious hotels, but it is the unique living quarters that many times are the most memorable. For example, the Atwoods spent a few nights in a "tent" hotel and several days cruising the rice paddies in a houseboat, which was completely outfitted with all the amenities.

While Mary Ellen traveled to the Woodstock School, located near Mussoorie in the foothills of the Himalayas, Glenn visited Dharamsala, India. He was present when the exiled Dalai Lama visited a Tibetan elementary school there. Dharamsala is home to the largest Tibetan temple outside of Tibet.

Shortly thereafter, Glenn joined Mary Ellen for her high school reunion. The Woodstock School was founded in 1854 as a mission boarding school and by 1928 became an International School with a full American coeducational program. Mary Ellen lived in India for two years, spending the first year traveling the country before attending Woodstock. She graduated for the high school in 1954. Glenn and Mary Ellen enjoyed meeting her former classmates even though the outdoor banquet was held on a cool October evening.

Travel is such a rewarding experience. The world traveling Atwoods have certainly had many adventures visiting numerous countries over the years. We appreciate having had this opportunity to join them in reliving their return trip to India 50 years after their initial visit.





**Michael and Linda Sugarman have been members of the UA family since 1970. Mike was professor of education in the College of Education and Linda was professor of accounting in the College of Business. Let's get acquainted or reacquainted with them.**

*Martha: I understand that New York is your home state. Mike is from Buffalo and Linda is from metropolitan New York City. Tell us about your meeting and your teaching prior to coming to Akron.*

**Linda:** We met in Trenton, New Jersey. I was teaching at Mercer County Community College and Mike taught at Rutgers in New Brunswick, NJ. We were married in 1969 on Long Island.

*Martha: You have an interesting story about your getting employed at UA, Linda, and in the process getting the name Sugarman.*

**Linda:** We had been married about one year when Mike came for an interview at The University of Akron and accepted an offer in the College of Education. At one point during his interviewing, Mike called the Accounting Department at UA to inquire about a position for me but there were no openings at that time. Mike's name was not recorded by the department, but the chair remembered that someone coming to the Technical Education Department had a wife who was an accounting teacher.

We came to Akron in July 1970 to find an apartment. I brought one dress with me just in case

we went to a nice restaurant. We were sitting in the faculty lounge (a beautiful one at that time) calling apartment listings from the newspaper. Mike's department chair walked in and told us that he had set up an interview for me for the next day, as Accounting had just called over trying to find out what new education faculty member had a wife who taught accounting since there was now an opening. I put on my dress, prepared a handwritten resume, and went for an interview the next day. My resume had the heading Linda Ellison (my maiden name) and in parenthesis, I wrote "married to Michael Sugarman." The dean offered me a contract that same day but it was for Linda Sugarman. I accepted the offer and that's how my professional name came to be Linda Sugarman.

*Martha: Mike, I think you're the person who started the B.S. in Technical Education.*

**Mike:** I joined the new BS/MS program in Technical Education in its second year; actually the program was started by Bob Andreyka. Many of our first students came from law enforcement in the early years because of a federally funded program. Several area police chiefs were graduates of our program as well as two FBI agents who became instructors at the FBI Academy. The major purpose of the program was to prepare instructors for employment in two-year colleges and adult training programs.

Formerly, my interest in law enforcement intensified while receiving advanced training while serving in a Military Police unit in the Army National Guard.

I developed a continuing interest in the field of physical security, and later on Linda and I published and made presentations in the areas of basic computer security, physical security, and the security of aging populations.

Upon receiving my doctorate in Higher Education at SUNY-Buffalo, I was employed in the State of Michigan, Bureau of Higher Education, as a program approval specialist working with the development of two-year college technical curriculums.

My next move was to develop a graduate program in Business Education at Rutgers University and then on to The University of Akron.

*Martha: I can remember that the Tech Ed program enrolled a lot of students at one point.*

**Mike:** Yes, the program's growth was in part because of Caesar Carrino in the Evening College; he counseled a lot of evening students and directed them to Technical Education. My undergraduate degree was in Business Administration, so I had knowledge of other fields from which our students came.

*Martha: Linda, tell us about your teaching in the College of Business and where were you housed in 1970.*

**Linda:** Leigh Hall was the home of CBA at that time and most of my classes were in that building. I taught accounting to sophomores and juniors.

*Martha: Mike, I learned that you were involved in AUAR's founding in the mid-90s.*

**Mike:** We were at an event at EJ Thomas Hall and I mentioned to Tim Dufore of the University Development Office that it would be nice to have an organization for retired faculty. Tim invited Linda and me for lunch, and we threw around some ideas about a faculty retirees association. Later Tim, Harvey Sterns and I got together to work on ideas for an emeriti college for retired faculty. Meanwhile, Bob Ferguson was trying to start a chapter of OCHER at UA. Dr. Ruebel, president at the time, asked Dr. Walton, his executive assistant, to talk to both groups to see if we needed two groups or one. Both groups decided it would be best to have one retiree group open to all retirees. A working group headed by June Burton was then formed to draw up the constitution and bylaws, drafted by Carl Leiberman. The Faculty Senate and the Board of Trustees approved the work of this group and that is how AUAR was formed.

*Martha: Linda, you've been very active on AUAR's Board. Tell us of your contributions.*

**Linda:** I've been the benefits representative for many years, almost from its beginning. When AUAR was permitted representation on Faculty Senate, Don Gerlach and I served as the first two

representatives. Mike has also served on the Board. Most recently, I have also taken on the job of corresponding secretary.

*Martha: At one time, there were three Sugarmans at UA.*

**Linda:** Yes, our whole family was there for a time. Mike and I were faculty and our son Rick went to day care and kindergarten at the University's nursery school, which is no longer in operation.

*Martha: For several years after retirement, you spent time in Florida during the winter. Tell us where you went and what you enjoyed during your stays there.*

**Linda:** We stayed in Delray Beach, north of Fort Lauderdale, where I had a half share in a condo. Since we both enjoy photography as a hobby, with nature being our favorite subject, we spent a great deal of time photographing wading birds at the Green Cay and Wakodahatchee wetlands, parts of Palm Beach County's water utilities wetlands. Also, we photographed on Sanibel Island. We have had photos exhibited at the Summit Metro Parks photo exhibit and at the Cleveland Zoo.

*Martha: Tell us of your travels in retirement.*

**Linda:** We've enjoyed many week-long cruises mostly in the Caribbean. Our travels have taken us to Europe, Canada, and various places in the US, such as New England, Alaska, the National Parks, and the Pacific coast. In all our travels, Mike's favorite spot was Morocco.

*Martha: We've all been dealing with the corona virus pandemic for the last eight months. What has been the worst part for you?*

**Linda:** The worst part has been not being able to see our son and his family in person. We zoom and do FaceTime with them, but it's just not the same. In October, we zoomed and were able to watch our two grandchildren, ages 12 and 13, carve their jack-o-lanterns.

*Martha: Thank you, Linda and Mike, for sharing with us your experiences at UA and your life in retirement.*

---

# November Presentation - Cites Goodyear Aerospace's Contributions to National Security

---

AUAR's third virtual presentation was held on November 18, 2020. Dr. Frank Thomas, Associate Vice President of IT Emeritus, talked about several projects he worked on while employed by the Goodyear Aerospace Division before joining The University of Akron.

One such project was for the U.S. Navy. Frank's team was asked to determine the "radius of kill" of the SUBROC missiles used on the Polaris class submarines. The concern was the safety of our subs once the torpedo was launched and detonated. As a result of their study, the Navy scrapped over 100 of those missiles since the "kill radius" would have included the ship that launched the missile attack.

You may remember the U.S.-Russian U2 incident back in 1960. The U.S. Air Force used these U2 high-altitude planes to perform photographic reconnaissance deep into Soviet Territory. Goodyear Aerospace helped to develop "side-sweeping" radar that enabled mapping from as high as 72,000 feet. Francis Gary Powers, the pilot of a U2 spy plane, was shot down by the Soviet Air Defense in 1960. He spent 3 years in a Soviet prison before being released in a prisoner exchange for Russian spy, Rudolf Abel.

Later during the Vietnam War, Goodyear Aerospace developed an early warning system for U.S. aircraft. It informed the pilot when an enemy missile was launched at the plane. The early warning allowed the pilot to take evasive action and avoid the attack. A camera was also developed that could see through jungle foliage along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. That invention was a big aid to the U.S. military operations.

Frank also described how the old SAM (Surface to Air Missile) first used in World War II became useful during the Vietnam War. By upgrading its guidance, it could knock out a bridge structure rather than just destroy the upper portion of bridge, which could be easily rebuilt. Destroying bridges was vital to hindering the movement of supplies by the enemy.

Contributions to the U.S. space program were also cited. The Company built miniature circuit boards for the Apollo Project. These were essential in determining the exact time to fire rockets to set the space craft into the correct orbit.

Frank also worked on the Boeing 747 planes, which were built in 3 sections in Arizona. He designed rivets for use in these sections.

Lastly, Frank contributed to the redesign of the Goodyear blimps in 1968. Just like in the movies, he met with other team members in a bar to discuss designs. He later obtained a small notebook, where he discovered ideas that were written in pencil years earlier. Those ideas led his team to abandon the football shape and move toward the more cigar-shaped blimp design. That was long before the newest blimps were redesigned in 2014. Wingfoot 1 was the first of the new generation with "NT" (semi-rigid New Technology) that we see flying over Akron today.

After his interesting career at Goodyear, Frank brought his computer and math skills to The University of Akron on December 7, 1970. He retired December 31, 1995, after being instrumental in taking the University into the Computer Age.

---

## AUAR SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

The Scholarship Committee is one of the most important ways that members of the AUAR can continue to support students at The University of Akron with scholarships. The Committee meets in the Spring to evaluate candidates whose names are provided by the UA Financial Aid office.

In the recent past, it has selected two or more students with scholarship funds, depending on the contributions received from members of the AUAR and the performance of the Scholarship Fund endowment itself, which is administered by the University of Akron Foundation. It's important to the future of the fund and to the future of each year's two or three deserving students that your contributions continue. Please contact the UA Foundation to make contributions to this fund.

Tim Lillie, retired education faculty member, is the new (as of December 2020) chair of the Scholarship Committee; other members include Carl Lieberman, the former chair, continuing on the committee along with Bill Beyer, June Burton, and Velma Pomrenke. Tim can be contacted at [timothylillie@gmail.com](mailto:timothylillie@gmail.com).

---

## AUAR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Kristina Berube received an award for the whole year. A housewife and mother, she is returning after a number of years away from her studies in Early Childhood Education. From Wadsworth, OH, she is a senior with an excellent GPA.

Mikayla Brown's award is for the fall semester only. She also is an Early Childhood Education major with a high GPA and comes from Litchfield, OH. She lost her father recently and has had a serious financial need; this scholarship has helped her to get to her graduation this fall semester.

Emily Taylor will receive her award for the spring semester. Her major is Exercise Science and she is finishing courses to gain entrance into a physical therapy program. A senior from Mount Perry, OH, she has been a student athletic while at UA.



# December Holiday Program Uplifting

The AUAR virtual meeting on December 16 was both entertaining and informative. Our guest presenters were Dr. Galen Karriker, Director of Bands and Associate Professor of Music and Dr. Andrew Feyes, Assistant Director of Bands and Director of "Ohio's Pride," The University of Akron Marching Band.

They first gave the 28 retirees, who connected from home via ZOOM, an overview of the organizational structure of the School of Music and their respective responsibilities. They went on to describe the many challenges presented and adaptations required to teach in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Galen and Andy then proceeded to illustrate the results of their new teaching methods by entertaining us with virtual performances by the bands.

First up were two virtual pieces done for the University's 150th Anniversary Celebration in October – the "UA fight song" and "Fiat Lux," a piece commissioned for the 150th Celebration. Galen and Andy explained that each musician is first recorded separately, and then all the recordings are pieced together so that what you see and hear are the musicians in separate "blocks" on the screen, but all playing in unison. Truly amazing!

For the 2020 Ohio Band Directors Conference (held virtually, of course), Galen and Andy organized a virtual Honors Band. The Band was composed of 88 high school students. Each submitted their part virtually to be fused into a group performance, which was presented virtually.

A final example of this type of virtual collaboration of talented musicians was made by members of the UA Concert Band. They performed "Let It Snow – A Very Merry Heart & Soul" selection featuring the layering of a variety of Christmas songs over a background of a rendition of "Heart & Soul."

Based upon questions after the presentation, a large portion of the retirees attending felt that the use of Microsoft Teams, individual recordings, and the other high tech recording methods and programs used by the presenters and other music faculty members were remarkable adaptations to more standard teaching methods. Several mentioned they were happy to be retired and not have to face the obstacles presented by having to teach virtually.



The meeting was so full of explanations, examples, and questions that we ran over our normal allotted time. No one cared. We just clicked off from home and settled back into our new normal as we await our turn to get the COVID-19 vaccine.



## THE ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON RETIREES

### E-mail Digest

SPECIAL EDITION

The E-mail Digest is a daily compilation of announcements sent Monday through Friday to faculty, staff and contract professionals. The digest contains announcements of all events of interest on campus. Retirees who would like to keep up with UA activities and receive the digest in their inbox can do so.

To be put on the guest list of recipients of the digest, send an email message to [bobk@uakron.edu](mailto:bobk@uakron.edu) (Robert Kropff). Type *Digest Subscription* in the subject line of your email and request to be added to the subscription list in the message portion.

---

# FACULTY SENATE FALL 2020

---

## **During the Fall Semester 2020, the activities of the Faculty Senate included the following:**

- Approved course proposals and program proposals brought by Curriculum Review Committee.
- Approved the list of graduates for the Summer and Fall 2020 semesters.
- Approved changes to the General Education model requested by Gen Ed Committee.
- Approved a motion brought by the Academic Policies Committee regarding creation of a link containing University policies for students that faculty may choose to refer to on their syllabi.
- Approved a motion brought by the Academic Policies Committee regarding counting the last attempt of a repeated course for university requirements.
- Approved a motion brought by the Academic Policies Committee regarding creation of criteria for a part-time student to be included on the Dean's list.
- Approved a resolution brought by Undergraduate Student Government (USG) representative regarding endorsing the adoption of Credit/No Credit offerings to students for the Fall 2020 semester. According to this, students could petition to have their final grade converted to a Credit / No Credit. The process for this petition involved the student submitting a request outlining the reasons for their request and being submitted to the faculty member and chair of department
- Approved a motion brought by the Academic Policies Committee regarding changing four-digit course code from numbers to alpha codes (for example the code for English Department changes from 3300 to ENGL).
- Approved a motion brought by the Academic Policies Committee regarding name changes for the College of Health Profession (CHP) and schools within the college, Summary of name changes:
  - Department of Social Work to School of Social Work and Family Sciences
  - Department of Disaster Sciences and Emergency Services to the School of Disaster Science and Emergency Services
  - School of Sports Science and Wellness Education and the School of Nutrition and Dietetics merged to School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences
  - CHP to College of Health and Human Sciences

*For more details please visit faculty senate web page at [uakron.edu](http://uakron.edu)*

---

## Keeping in Touch with You

---

In this time of very limited opportunities for actually getting together for social events or meetings, it is very important that we take advantage of alternate ways to communicate with one another. Two avenues that we have now are the AUAR Web page and Updates that are sent using email and US Mail.

**AUAR web page.** If you have not yet had a chance, why not take a few minutes and explore our web page. We regularly add information to keep you up to date on our group opportunities for socializing or other special events in the Akron area, your benefits, and the latest actions of the AUAR Executive Board. You might wish to know a bit about our history, our constitution, and our organization.

The AUAR web site is located at [www.uakron.edu/auar](http://www.uakron.edu/auar). Enter this address once and bookmark the page for future visits. Once in our AUAR home page, you can click on any of the topics listed on the left-hand edge of the page to automatically go to information you are interested in reading. Topics include: History, Board Members (with contact information), Constitution, Board Minutes, Luncheons/Speakers, Special Events, Newsletter (current and past editions), Announcements, Post-Retirement Benefits and Membership Brochure (information and application). The home page also has a link to the contact list of all retired faculty and staff of The University of Akron. If you have suggestions for items to include on our web page, please let us know.

---

# Keeping in Touch with You *cont...*

---

**Updates.** When there is information that we feel you need to know about immediately, we use email or US Mail. So far since March 2020, we have sent out numerous letters with important information for our members. Several problems have occurred and we would ask your assistance in fixing these issues. First, there are over 400 members who are on the AUAR list server that is used for sending email messages. We are thankful that so many of you have chosen to get your updates using this method. It saves us a tremendous amount of time in US Mail preparation and also saves us the cost of postage. Unfortunately, some members have contacted us citing problems receiving these emails. One solution might help if you would change your email address on our list server from the one that uses uakron.edu and replace it with the email address that you commonly use, i.e., your gmail or yahoo or whatever email server you most commonly use or check. Just send your desired email address to [sheffer@uakron.edu](mailto:sheffer@uakron.edu) and we will see that the list server address is modified.

To those members who are still receiving all information by US Mail, please consider changing your method of receiving communications from AUAR to using email if you have a computer or cell phone with internet access. Be assured that the AUAR Newsletter is always sent to all members by US Mail.

---

## A SYNOPSIS OF THE NOVEMBER 2020 STRS REPORT TO OCHER

---

This is a condensed report of G. Newsom's (OCHER's oversight at the STRS Board Meetings) report presented to the November OCHER Board Meeting, addressing the September and October 2020 meetings of the STRS Board. If one would like to read a much more detailed summary of the STRS funding and investment strategies, you may do so by locating the report on the AUAR website ([www.uakron.edu/AUAR](http://www.uakron.edu/AUAR)) under the OCHER tab.

### **STRS Board Meeting September 2020**

The September meeting of the STRS Board was its annual investment seminar, which had been postponed from the Board's March Meeting. Not a surprise, uncertainty in the market was clear. In attempting to achieve the designated STRS rate of return on investments, 7.45%, the fund managers are forced to take greater risk. In the face of the lack of progress in the Congress with the stimulus package, the pandemic, and the presidential election anxieties, the STRS rate of return for August was +3.82%, and for September it was -1.38%.

### **STRS Board Meeting October 2020**

The STRS Board's consultant (Cheiron) indicated that the Board's assumed rate of return, 7.45%, exceeds the consultant's expectations, and they do not recommend improving retirees' benefits without increasing the contribution rates for the active teachers or employers. Callan (another STRS Consultant) projects that rate of return for the current STRS asset mix to be 7.24% over the next decade. The STRS Board has the prerogative of determining the assumed rate of return on its assets, but not without the oversight of the Ohio Retirement Study Council, which compares the Board's assumed rate of return to the prudent estimates of the consultants. Cheiron's best estimate for the assumed rate of return is between 6.75% and 7.25%, which is only slightly removed from the current rate. There will be additional estimates in the future as the economic impact of the pandemic and the associated Federal Stimulus Packages crystallizes.

The lower interest rates of the Feds, also, place an additional drag on pension systems struggling to achieve their assumed rate of return. As these pressures continue to burden public pension funds causing financial havoc, it is speculated that there will be increased discussion to convert these plans to Defined Contribution Plans. The effect of long-term low interest rates, in general, is not limited to the public pension funds, but to the wider economy, especially the middle class. A Washington Post article claimed that 73.3% of the middle class's wealth is in pension funds compared to 2.2% for the upper class. A National Conference on Public Employee Retirement System (NCPERS) study has determined: when the inequality ratio (ratio of between the bottom and top quartiles) is increased in a state by 1, there is an 18% decrease in the state economic growth. This, in turn, not only places an additional burden on the individual, but on the communities at large.

Because the Health Care Fund has experienced fewer claims during the pandemic, everyone participating in the Fund will receive an additional \$250 in their December pension payment (Tax Free).

The current terms for Board Chair, Rita Walters, and Board Member, Bob Stein, will conclude in August 2021. An election for these two positions will be conducted in the spring.



# AUAR SPRING 2021 SPEAKER SCHEDULE

The Spring Semester Schedule is as follows:

## February 17, 2021

*Dr. Paul Weinstein*

*The Swinging (back and forth) Generations:  
The Pendulum Theory of American Political  
History*

## March 17 2021

*Mr. Victor Fleischer*

*Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company:  
A Photographic History*

## April 21, 2021

*Dr. Harvey Sterns*

*The City of Akron: Is it an Age-Friendly City?*

## BOARD MEETINGS 2021

**Feb. 25   March 25   April 22   May 20   June 24**

### Our Motto

*People say interns and new hires are the promise of the future.  
Let's not forget that retirees are promises kept.*

## AUAR Membership, Human Resources

The University of Akron • Buchtel Commons, Akron, OH 44325

If you haven't renewed your AUAR membership for the 2020-2021 year, it is time to do so. Don't forget our Scholarship fund where we provide some funding for a worthy student. Please complete the items listed below, and mail your check or checks to the address below.

If you have an e-mail address, please submit it.

Name: First \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues are \$12.00; make checks payable to "AUAR"

Scholarship Donation \_\_\_\_\_; make checks payable to the U of A Foundation

The AUAR Newsletter is a biannual publication of the Association of The University of Akron Retirees (AUAR), c/o Talent Development & Human Relations Department, The University of Akron, Akron, OH 44325-4730.

AUAR members receive our newsletter automatically. Because of COVID-19 concerns, The Board meets on the 4th Thursday of the month using Zoom.

If you have questions about the organization or to keep abreast of events and issues pertinent to all UA retirees, visit our website at [www.uakron.edu/auar](http://www.uakron.edu/auar). The newsletter editor, Martha Vye, can be reached at [vye@uakron.edu](mailto:vye@uakron.edu) or 330-644-7490.

If you are interested in entertainment within the Akron area, check into our web site and view the events listed under the Special Events Menu. Just Log on to [www.uakron.edu/auar](http://www.uakron.edu/auar) and click on the Menu "Special Events" or type [www.uakron.edu/auar/special-events.dot](http://www.uakron.edu/auar/special-events.dot)

AUAR Newsletter printed and designed by The University of Akron Printing & Copying Services 2021

Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
The University of Akron

The Association of The University of Akron Retirees

Human Resources  
Akron, OH 44325-4730  
330-972-7096

