

Rutgers AAUP

Emeriti

Reporter

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THE CHAIRPERSON'S CORNER

Shanti S. Tangri

Welcome to Academic Year 2008-09, and to the new and cheery offices of AAUP-AFT at 11 Stone Street in New Brunswick. The offices are centrally located just off College Avenue on the College Avenue Campus, and easily accessible. Come visit and say hello to the dedicated staff! And see the creative work of our Vice Chairperson Don Borchardt displayed on the walls of the new office. We may have more displays of artwork of our members in the future, when facilities are available. This is a modest beginning of a project we first discussed several years ago, about the paintings of Don, Norman Eiger, Shirley Geismar and others.

We expect to continue our lunchtime round-table discussions on vital issues of our time, led by knowledgeable scholars, as well as poetry readings, and other activities when possible.

Come share your knowledge, experience, wisdom, and ideas with your present and/or former colleagues. Retirement need not be a time to retreat, but, rather, an opportunity to do what you have always wished to do but didn't have time to do. Indulge your curiosity about fields cultivated by your intellectual neighbors. Your suggestions for our activities are eagerly awaited.

Membership dues are only \$10 a year. They have not been raised for several years, in spite of inflation. Thanks to the administrative support of the AAUP-AFT and a modest subsidy, we can operate with a small budget and enjoy complete autonomy in our activities. Hope to see you at the next meetings. Join the Planning Committee if you can spare a little time.

The Emeriti Assembly and the Rutgers Department of Economics will co-sponsor an Economic Policy Forum to be held on Monday, October 27, 2008, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. in Center Hall at the Busch Campus Center. Speakers include Economics Department faculty members Rosanne Altshuler, Eugene White, Thomas Prusa, Hilary Sigman, and Anne Piehl on various economic topics. A Q&A session will follow their presentations. This is a free event open to the public.

ELECTION ANALYSIS

The Emeriti Assembly will co-sponsor ***The Presidential Election of 2008 - An Early Analysis*** scheduled by the Rutgers RFA (Retired Faculty Association) at The Rutgers Club on Wednesday, November 12 at 9:30 a.m. In the September RFA BULLETIN Executive Director Todd Hunt wrote "When Prof. Gerald M. Pomper, Board of Governors Professor of Political Science at the Eagleton Institute of Politics, finished his early analysis of the so-called 'Super Tuesday' primaries just a week after they happened last February, the consensus was 'Please do this again after the national election in November'. And the will of the people is honored." Reserve for yourself and guests at 732-932-3807 or at thunt@scils.rutgers.edu.

POOL PARTY

Isabel and Mel Wolock hosted their "Pool Party" which has been an annual event of the Emeriti Assembly for several years. Members of the EA and staff of the AAUP-AFT office enjoyed food, beverages, and lively conversation around the swimming pool in the backyard of the Wolock's residence in Metuchen on Wednesday, August 20th, at 12:00 noon. Spouses and guests were also invited. There was a good turnout. Thank you to the Wolock's! It was a pleasant social gathering.

LEADERSHIP AWARD

Professor Emeritus Ted Kruse was the recipient of the 2007 Richard Wasson Leadership award established by the Emeriti Assembly in 1999 in honor of our Founder and first Chairperson. Professor Kruse has been Secretary for our Assembly for more than four years and has written minutes of the meetings and taken notes on scheduled special events. Because of his work, it has been possible to publish articles in our newsletter. He formerly served a term as Rutgers Chapters of AAUP and was active in special meetings of the Executive Council. After retirement, he supervised Summer Session Physics laboratories for the Physics Department in New Brunswick. He has also served on the Board of Education in Piscataway and also served as its president. Professor Kruse gave a special presentation for the Emeriti Assembly entitled "Energy." Ted's wife, Margaret, has also written reports for the Emeriti Reporter and attended many of the events. She was also active with the Friends of the Rutgers Libraries.

Ted and Margaret have recently sold their house in Piscataway and moved to the Edgewood Retirement Community in North Andover, Massachusetts, where they will be closer to their daughter and grandchildren. Their interest in the arts has already taken them to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and they will be exploring the museums in near-by mill towns such as Lowell and Lawrence.

Upon arriving in North Andover, Ted wrote a letter addressed to the Emeriti Assembly. He said, "My association with the Emeriti was one of the most pleasant and stimulating of my New Jersey retirement." He admired the successful efforts of Shanti, our present Chairperson, and Don, Vice Chairperson, and all who were able to find interesting topics and speakers on serious subjects, with ample opportunity to participate in discussion. He said, "The Emeriti Assembly is a proper academic organization."

Thank you Ted, and Margaret. And congratulations!

AN INTERVIEW WITH BJ WALKER, Staff – Rutgers Chapter of AAUP-AFT By Isabel Wolock, AAUP Emeriti Assembly



BJ with son Sam and daughter Lindsey

What is your title at the AAUP-AFT?

My title is Staff Representative. When I was first hired it was as the Association's "Grievance Administrator." This title was, over time, abandoned in favor of a title shared by most of us on staff – each "rep" title is associated with a different area. For example, we have staff representatives in membership, legislative, contract administration, finance, etc.

What kinds of roles and tasks does this position entail?

Our staff works as a team though we have primary responsibilities in different areas. Mary Gibson and I are the grievance area representatives -- responsible for administering the negotiated grievance procedures and making sure that all members have fair access to those processes. We're generally the first contact when problems arise with regard to an individual's work or work environment and are available to confidentially talk through a situation and/or answer questions about work rules, etc. We help members think through and strategize about the most constructive approaches to work issues/problems. If informal efforts to resolve disputes are not successful, the negotiated grievance procedures may be utilized and we represent and advocate for employees in these processes. This involves representing faculty, TAs/GAs and EOF Counselors at meetings, mediations, arbitrations, etc.

We also are able to serve as a sort of clearinghouse of information to members – on practices in departments and units, faculty governance and academic freedom issues, workload questions, evaluation procedures,

legislative news and issues affecting higher education in New Jersey and the profession nationally. Through contact with our members in different departments, units and campuses, we gain, I think, a unique perspective on the “state of the University.”

For how long have you been involved with AAUP?

I've been on staff since January of 1991 – almost 18 years.

How did you first get involved with AAUP?

My husband Joel and I moved to New Jersey when our daughter Lindsey was around four years old – in 1988. We both agreed that we would live in NJ “five years max” – we knew no one here except for a colleague my husband would be working with in New York. Neither one of us knew anything about the state but I did know that I didn't want to raise our daughter in the big city (it was an alien place to me at that time) and, so, we randomly picked Edison on the map because it was a town close to a train station.

I was working for a labor arbitrator in Edison when I saw an ad the AAUP had placed in the newspaper. I responded to it and was offered an interview. I like to tell the story of driving up for the interview at the AAUP in the old barracks on Livingston Campus. I parked the car and then immediately put it in reverse thinking “do I really want to work in a place that looks like this?” (Anyone who has visited there knows what I'm talking about.) I did go in and was expecting a one-on-one interview when I was led down a long narrow hall and told, “The Doctors will see you now.” The door opened and there were no fewer than ten people sitting around a table . . . Norman Washburne, Jack Nelson, Miles Galvin, Dan O'Connor, Mary Gibson, Wells Keddie, to name a few. To say that I was surprised is an understatement – I had never been to a group interview and certainly not with a group of university professors. It was intimidating.

What kinds of experiences or education led to your employment with the union?

I grew up in a largely military and shipbuilding town (Hampton, Virginia) and wasn't exposed to unions or anything to do with the labor movement until I moved to California after high school. I applied for an internship with an independent union that represented County employees when I was going to school there and my experience in that job was a really good one. After working with the staff reps and seeing how the union was able to be an effective voice for the workers, I was hooked.

What are the things you find most satisfying about your AAUP-AFT work?

It's been very rewarding professionally. It was a long learning curve and it took years to feel somewhat settled and to gain confidence in the position. I've had the benefit of working with wonderful people who have taught me how to be a good and careful advocate. The issues can be very complex and representation of a membership that is highly educated and sophisticated presents its own challenges. At the same time I've enjoyed and had the privilege of meeting faculty from so many different countries and cultures – people who are committed to higher education and who teach and do research in an incredible range of disciplines and areas. I'm terribly impressed by the work the faculty do and I get to read and learn about that work everyday. How lucky is that?

It's also been very rewarding personally. The term “jobs with justice” comes to mind – the AAUP-AFT has been a good employer by providing good benefits and a supportive work environment – I have great colleagues. I've been allowed to grow in the position and have always felt that my work and efforts are respected and appreciated. In turn, I have a strong commitment and loyalty to the organization.

If you were to do it all over again, would you pursue the same career or would you choose another one?

I would choose to have been born with musical or artistic talent -- I have none. I've always appreciated the way musicians or artists, when they're playing an instrument or painting, seem to be in a state of “flow” – very engaged and connected with what they are doing and also able to share the results of their work with others.

At one time, I thought I would like to be a social worker. Helping those who don't have, or haven't yet found, their own voice would be very rewarding. There's a terrific need today in health care (especially with elderly care) for patient advocates. The system is so overwhelming, even for someone who has the wherewithal to deal with bureaucracies. Those who are already burdened by illness easily become lost – feeling powerless and overwhelmed in this horrible health care system we have. I realized early on that working with children's services (which I considered at one time) would simply be too much for me, too heart wrenching and not something I would be able to compartmentalize from my personal life. I have terrific respect for people who are able to be of service in the face of great tragedy.

Is there any one event or experience or person that had the greatest influence on your life?

Sorry, too many experiences and people -- it's really impossible for me to pare it down to “greatest.”

Is there any personal information that you would care to share?

a. Family

Lots of extended family – mostly in Virginia and also in Florida. I'm one of four daughters – the youngest and thus the name Billie Jo (named after my father William when it was clear there would be no more tries for a son.)

My husband, Joel Stein, works as Publisher for Momentum Press. Our daughter is living in Boston and works as a paralegal for a law firm specializing in immigration. Her degree is in Spanish and she has her sights set on law school. Our son, Samuel, will soon be 13 -- he attends middle school in Highland Park. Our kids are 11 years apart in age and my husband and I joke that poor Samuel is getting the dregs in the parenting department.

b. Hobbies and interests

Being outdoors is top on the list. I love the woods and enjoy hiking and backpacking. There's never enough time for road trips (car or bicycle) and fewer things better than reading mysteries on the beach -- preferably with an ice cold Corona in easy reach.

NUTRITION

Hans Fisher, Rutgers Professor Emeritus, Nutritional Sciences Department, Cook College, spoke to the Emeriti Assembly on April 30, 2008, in Lucy Stone Hall, Livingston Campus. Speaker Hans Fisher reminisced briefly about the early days of the AAUP at Rutgers, before and after faculty collective bargaining certification. Major achievements included raising of faculty salaries, the faculty leave system and establishment of the Alternate Benefit Plan.

The following notes from Professor Fisher's presentation were written by Professor Ted Kruse, Secretary of the Emeriti Assembly.

Professor Fisher began his discussion of **Nutrition for the Retired Faculty** by citing the book Evolutionary Biology of Aging by Michael R. Rose (University of California), on longevity from an evolutionary perspective. The goal of nutrition should be compression of last days after a meaningful life. To this end, certain emphases are recommended.

Exercise Aerobic exercise (e.g. swimming) strengthens heart and lungs; resistance exercise (e.g. captive or free weights) strengthens muscles, tendons and joints for flexibility. These are as important as food. Exercise equipment can be found in fitness centers on the Rutgers campus as well as in near-by communities at the YMCAs.

Nutrition A low fat, high fiber diet is best. A variety of foods should be eaten in moderation, as many nutritious foods also have small quantities of harmful components. Ample hydration assists in the processing of food and in flushing of toxins.

Per gram, fat provides 2 1/2 times the calories that carbohydrates do. Fat is implicated in heart disease and certain cancers.

Soluble fiber masses stimulate nerve endings to induce peristaltic waves in the thirty to fifty convoluted feet of the intestinal tract. They help scour the bends which may otherwise trap fecal matter, engendering harmful bacterial and protozoan generation of toxins. Colon cancer is due, at least in part, to such.

Water-soluble fibers can lock up saturated fats and cholesterol. They can attach to other toxic materials, e.g. food dyes. Fiber helps control the rate of sugar absorption, assisting in control of diabetes.

We eat too much protein; we should drink enough fluid to dissipate the toxic metabolites produced. 100% cranberry juice (Whole Foods, Trader Joe's) is very helpful in preventing urinary tract infections by preventing certain bacteria from attaching to the walls of the tract. Cranberries and blueberries are very high in anti-oxidants. (Trader Joe's has a mixed juice: 1/3 cranberry, 1/3 blueberry, and 1/3 pomegranate).

Supplements Some are fat-soluble and stored, e.g. vitamins A and E; others are water-soluble and are excreted. One-a-day vitamins and over-dosage should be avoided.

Following are some of Professor Fisher's comments on supplements and vitamins:

- Vitamin E inhibits nitrate and nitrite conversion to nitrosamines. Becomes pro-oxidative at high dosage; take minimum dose.
- Vitamin C also inhibits nitrate and nitrite conversion to nitrosamines.

- Vitamin D promotes absorption of the calcium in calcium carbonate (200 units D with 600 milligrams CaCO₃).
- Vitamins B6, B9, B12 can be helpful in reducing high levels of homocysteine, which is a major risk factor for heart disease, as significant as cholesterol. Homocysteine testing is recommended.
- Zinc is important for skin. There is plenty in pots and pans.
- Omega 3 (fish oil) helps prevent some arthritis.
- Lycopene is a good anti-oxidant.
- Lutein is an anti-oxidant occurring naturally in green, leafy vegetables, helpful in preventing macular degeneration.
- Aspirin is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug which has an antiplatelet or "anti-clotting" effect, used in long-term, low doses to prevent heart attacks and blood clot formation in people at high risk for developing blood clots.

Medicines Statins such as Lipitor and Zocor help remove plaque from arteries. They also help prevent osteoporosis.

Following Professor Fisher's presentation was an informal question and answer period which provided an interesting exchange of information. Professor Fisher was thanked for his presentation regarding nutrition for the retired faculty.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

September is time for all members to renew membership. This is a reminder to renew today. Checks for \$10.00 should be made payable to Rutgers AAUP Emeriti Assembly and sent to Rutgers AAUP-AFT, 11 Stone Street, New Brunswick, N.J. 08901-1113. This is the membership fee for September, 2008 through August, 2009. Thank you for your prompt attention so that the Emeriti Assembly can continue its activities.

**EDITOR:
DONALD BORCHARDT**



Below is a list of organizations and their contact information including web sites you may find useful:

Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters, AAUP-AFT
11 Stone Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1113
Phone: 732-964-1000
Fax: 732-964-1032
E-mail: aaup@rutgersaaup.org
www.rutgersaaup.org

Sign up with Rutgers AAUP-AFT's Action Center:
<http://www.unionvoice.org/rutgersaaupaft/home.html>

American Association of University Professors
1012 Fourteenth Street, NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005-3465
Phone: 202-737-5900
Fax: 202-737-5526
E-mail: aaup@aaup.org
www.aaup.org

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-879-4400
www.aft.org

AFT's Web Page for Retirees:
www.aft.org/retirement/index.htm

Rutgers University's Web Page on Retiree Services:
<http://uhr.rutgers.edu/ben/RetireeServices.htm>

AARP
601 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20049
Phone: 1-888-OUR-AARP (1-888-687-2277)
www.aarp.org

AARP NJ
Forrestal Village
101 Rockingham Row
Princeton, NJ 08540
Phone: 1-866-542-8165 (toll-free)
Fax: 609-987-4634
E-mail: njaarp@aarp.org
<http://www.aarp.org/states/nj/>

**NJ Department of Treasury
Division of Pension & Benefits**
Links for retirees:
<http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/retiree-home.htm>

MISSION AND MEMBERSHIP

The Mission of the Emeriti Assembly is to sustain and enhance the personal, intellectual and University interests of retired faculty. These interests will be met through meetings, special programs, a communications network, and work with other groups concerned with retiree issues. All retired faculty individuals, who are members of AAUP-AFT, are eligible for full membership. Non-voting, Associate Membership is available to retired faculty who are not AAUP-AFT members.

Membership extends from September through August. If you are not a paid member you may fill in the application form below. Your membership enables us to continue to publish the newsletter and make plans for the activities during the year. Membership in the Emeriti Assembly also entitles you to an associate membership in the Rutgers AAUP-AFT Chapters. Some Emeriti also continue AAUP National dues and membership.

Name _____ Telephone () _____
Street Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zip Code _____ E-mail Address _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Enclosed is my check for \$10.00 payable to Rutgers AAUP Emeriti Assembly.
<input type="checkbox"/> NEW member 2008-09 <input type="checkbox"/> RENEWING membership 2008-09
Return to Rutgers AAUP-AFT, 11 Stone Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1113

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