

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

SPARTAN SENIOR

A Newsletter for Michigan State University Retirees

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International Edition

Winter 2011

MSURA VOLUNTEERS

Old MSURA Newsboys Collect \$2,000 in one Frigid Morning

Today, as I look out, I am very thankful that I have a warm home and warm clothes. With the nation's troubled times I am reminded that many do not have a warm home or warm clothing. That is why I and many others are involved with the Old Newsboys Association. This organization works with the local school districts within a 25 mile radius of the city of Lansing to make sure children have the proper shoes and/or boots. They used to even provide socks for the children but had to discontinue that practice this year because of the tremendous need and the determination that shoes and boots had to be the priority. They raise their money through their once-a-year sale of the spoof edition of the Lansing State Journal. This year their goal was \$140,000. Several years ago, the MSURA voted to support this one-day fundraising activity.

So on December 8, at 7 in the morning, 16 retirees and 6 friends left the warmth of the Physical Plant and took their stations at the doorways to the busiest campus buildings, including Hannah Administration, Ag Hall, and the Clinical Center. Newspapers at ready, they caught unsuspecting workers hurrying from car to office, and found them very willing to hand over a dollar or two for boots and shoes for the Lansing area's needy kids.

And I am happy to say that this year over \$2,000 was raised by 16 MSURA volunteers and 6 friends of the MSURA. Money still being counted, but the organization's \$140,000 goal has been reached and surpassed. We thank everyone for their hard work. However, if you would care to, there is still time to contribute to the organization. Send your check to the Old Newsboys Association of Greater Lansing, P.O. Box 14058, Lansing, MI 48901-4058. **(Brenda Spackman)**

United Way

I would like to thank the volunteers, who helped with the mailing of the United Way pledge forms this fall. They are Joan Gilliland, Ron & Joan Smith, Rebecca Baughan, Sara Stid, Jim & Brenda Spackman, Martha Davidson, Jerry & Sue Hull, Nancy Craig, Cherie Blonde, Sue Byers, Patrick Scheetz, Pat Jeffries, and Bob Wenner.

We have collected as of the first of Dec. \$55,152.00.

Thanks Steffie for all of the work that you do.
(Darlene Wenner)



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**FLORIDA ESCAPEES
SAVE MAR 7 FOR
PRESIDENT SIMON!**

Your editor has been reliably informed that the winter luncheon for MSU retirees will take place on Monday, the 7th of March at The Country Club of Bradenton. President Lou Anna Simon will eat with you and speak as well. So jot the date down, consider it almost a holy day of obligation, and await further information. If you are in a hurry, here are the phone numbers for Florida President Dixie Platt: Home 941-929-0819 or cell 941-323-6390. (Ed.)

Presidential Message

by L. Patrick Scheetz

Who are we?

MSU Retirees Association



Patrick Scheetz

The Michigan State University Retirees Association (MSURA) is an organization for ALL retired MSU faculty, administrators, staff and their spouses. This includes all former members of the Administrative Professional Association, MEA/NEA; Administrative Professional Supervisors Association; Clerical-Technical Union; Fraternal Order of Police; International Union of Operating Engineers Local 324; Local 999, Council 25, AFSCME; AFSCME Local 1585, AFL-CIO; Faculty and Academic Staff; support staff; and executive management group. Did I forget any groups? So, to repeat, ALL retired MSU faculty, staff and their spouses are members of the MSURA.

The mission of the MSURA is to establish and maintain a community of fellowship among its members; to stimulate individual and mutual interests and concerns; to bring MSU retirees together for social, recreational and educational purposes; to communicate and clarify information with special impact upon retired persons and surviving spouses (especially financial plans; health, dental, and other member coverages; etc.); to provide liaison between MSU retirees and the Michigan State University administration; and to participate in service projects and programs that benefit MSU retirees, Michigan State University and the community.

ALL MSU retirees and their spouses are automatically members of the MSURA for life. There are no dues, BUT members are encouraged to subscribe to the newsletter for \$10 per year. Download the [Newsletter Subscription Form](#) from the MSURA website msura@msu.edu, print a copy, and mail it with your check payable to the **MSURA**. Or fill out the subscription form found in your newsletter and send to MSURA, 22 Nisbet Bldg, MSU, 1407 S Harrison Rd, East Lansing, MI 48823 Contributions made payable to **Michigan State University** for the MSURA are also welcomed.

We ask that you continue your connections to other MSU faculty, administrators, staff, and retirees by participating in the MSU Retirees Association. We especially ask you to attend programs presented monthly from September to May, to volunteer to help the MSURA and others in your local communities, and to read the MSURA newsletter and eNotices for current information and trends.

Political Murder in Michigan?

Former Chief Judge of the Michigan Appeals Court, William Whitbeck, has just published a novel loosely based on one of the most sensational unsolved murders in Michigan history. In 1945 State Senator Warren Hooper had agreed to testify before a Grand Jury investigating bribery and graft in the Michigan State Legislature. On January 11, 1945, just before he was scheduled to appear, he left Lansing to drive to his home in Albion. Later that evening he was found in his car on M 99, a few miles north of Springport, killed by three bullets to the head, fired at close range.

The Chief Prosecutor for the Grand Jury, Kim Sigler, was certain that Frank McKay of Grand Rapids, former State Treasurer, was responsible for the killing. Sigler believed that McKay, an often indicted but never convicted political boss, was at the center of most corruption in the Legislature and had most to fear from Hooper's testimony. Over the summer his investigation grew to include the Purple Gang, a distinctly Michigan group of organized criminals, and the corrupt Warden of Jackson Prison who allowed favored inmates to leave the prison and return, entertain their female guests in the Warden's quarters, and run their enterprises from inside the prison walls.

Whitbeck's novel features an ambitious Prosecutor, a powerful political Boss, and the murder of a State Senator. His central character, however, has no real life counterpart. Charlie Cahill, a young lawyer, returns from World War II wounded, his arm lost in the first assault on Normandy. Injured, depressed and cynical, he is comforted by an attractive young woman, a Veterans Hospital volunteer, who is, of course, the wife of a State Senator. Their affair begins in a hospital bed and it is they who kill the Senator. (This is not a spoiler, by the way, since we learn this on page 16; Whitbeck will provide plenty of surprises along the way and an unexpected double twist at the end.)

Cahill joins the Grand Jury staff to work with a Prosecutor who is ruthlessly pursuing two goals: convicting Political Boss Wade Fleming and becoming Governor of Michigan. Cahill's goal is to

keep an eye on the investigation and steer it away from himself and the late Senator's wife. And he is no less ruthless in doing so.

Part of Judge Whitbeck's research for the novel was to read Three Bullets Sealed His Lips by Bruce Rubenstein and Lawrence Ziewacz. Their historical reconstruction of the events surrounding Hooper's death is nearly as strange as Whitbeck's fiction.

The real political Boss, Frank McKay, was State Treasurer just long enough to gain control of the State Liquor Commission and use the kickback money to get favorable bills passed for himself and his friends. The book's verbatim accounts of witness interviews and courtroom trials reveal the Prosecutor, Kim Sigler, as a man ready to intimidate witnesses, manipulate judges and abuse opposing lawyers – anything to get closer to convicting McKay and advancing his own political ambitions.

That same year another investigation revealed that some of the inmates were virtually running Jackson Prison. The Warden and his deputy were accused of accepting bribes so that criminals could bring prostitutes into the prison, leave temporarily using government vehicles, and invite gang members still at large into the prison for conferences in the Warden's office. In this way the leaders of the Purple Gang were able to run their crime syndicate from inside Jackson Prison. Sigler was able to convict a few minor gang members of conspiring to murder the Senator but he never found the actual killers and failed to implicate McKay in the plot.

Rubenstein and Ziewacz, however, make the case for a plausible, and well documented, solution. Late in 1945, they argue, after McKay learned that Senator Hooper would testify against him, he sent an intermediary to Jackson Prison who offered \$15,000 to leaders of the Purple Gang if they would arrange to assassinate Hooper. The gangsters demanded more money and assurances that they would be paid. So McKay himself went into the prison, showed them the money, and promised them future help if they did the job for him.

(Murder cont.)

On January 11, the two killers, dressed in civilian clothes, with guns and automobiles provided by the Warden, drove the eighteen miles from Jackson to the site of the killing and returned to the Prison after shooting Hooper.

Rubenstein and Ziewacz believe that Sigler eventually identified the killers but neglected them to focus on convicting Frank McKay, a coup he hoped would launch his political career. He may have been inspired by Thomas E. Dewey, the Owasso native whose reputation as a crime-busting District Attorney had made him Governor of New York and Republican candidate for President in 1944.

His work on the Grand Jury had given Sigler enough acclaim and name recognition to win the gubernatorial election in 1946. He served just one term, defeated for re-election by G. Mennen Williams in 1948, the year of Harry Truman's surprise victory over Dewey. By that time McKay's influence had been so weakened by the investigation that someone dared to challenge his hand-picked candidate for the Congressional seat that included Grand Rapids, McKay's home base. The young man who did so, a former University of Michigan football player and WWII veteran, went on to a distinguished career in the U. S. House of Representatives, the Senate – and the Presidency.

William C. Whitbeck, To Account for Murder, The Permanent Press, 2010.

Bruce A. Rubenstein and Lawrence E. Ziewacz, Three Bullets Sealed His Lips, MSU Press, 1987. (Larry Ziewacz was a friend and colleague at MSU. He died in 2003, just a few years before he would have retired.) **(Milton Powell, Historian)**



CLARE MUSGROVE

ONE OF THE FORGOTTEN 500

Retired Extension 1980

Clare Musgrove was a ball turret gunner on a B-24 Liberator that was shot down after a bombing raid on the Ploesti oil refineries in Roumania on July 28 1944. The B-24, flying back to Italy, made it as far as Serbia before the loss of two engines forced the pilot to order on the intercom, "bailout." Thus began a dramatic tale of evading German troops, building an air strip for rescue, and waiting. They waited because the airmen accumulating in those Serbian mountains did not know that their rescue was mired in political/strategic decision-making.

President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill were at the highest level and it trickled down through American and British intelligence services, which were not always in accord about if or when to get them out. Complicating the rescue even more was the conflict between the Chetnik guerilla leader Draza Milailovich and the rival communist partisan Josip Broz Tito.

We all know Clare made it out, but the heart-stopping events leading up to it as chronicled in the book The Forgotten 500, by Gregory A. Freeman are amazing. Clare returned to Serbia after sixty years had passed as a guest of the Serbian government. He and other airmen and OSS veterans presented the Legion of Merit to the daughter of Milailovich. It had been authorized by President Truman in 1946 but State Department officials did not want to rock the diplomatic boat by presenting it when authorized. Well done, Clare!



Nominate Someone Now for Volunteer of the Year

The Awards Committee of your association is ready to receive nominations for the Spartan Senior Volunteer Award. This is the only annual award presented by MSURA. It is a significant achievement award in the retirement community of the university.

MSURA has created this award to recognize persons whose voluntary activities have had positive influence and important impact on the retiree community, the university and service to others. The award will be presented during our annual luncheon meeting on Monday, May 9.

Answer these questions in the order indicated, and submit your answers by e-mail or by postal mail as instructed below.

MSURA Spartan Senior Volunteer Award Nomination Format:

Name and address of this MSU Retiree or Retiree Spouse nominee.

Where has the nominee been active as a volunteer? (This award emphasizes not only service to MSURA and to MSU but also service in other organizations and “person to person” helping roles.)

List specific volunteer responsibilities and activities (include leadership roles, accomplishments, length of service times, etc.) Describe your perspective on how this person’s work has brought significant benefits meriting special recognition.

Name, address and phone number of you, the nominator.

Nomination deadline is: April 1, 2011. Send your nomination to Gale Arent, 1595 Heritage Glen Circle, Dewitt, MI 48820 - arent@msu.edu.

The award is given only once to any person. Occasionally, two well-qualified persons have received the award in a single year.

Past recipients are: Ruth Jameyson, Walker Hill, John Roetman, Clella Dickinson, Russell Hill, Pat Ralston, George Dike, Don Gregg, Erling Jorgensen, Harold Davidson, Rosemary Pavlik, Lorraine Demorest, Velmer Oakley, Fred Graham, Charlie Downs, Stephanie Barch, Judy Bukovac, Dick Reid, Gary Stone, Mary McCartney, Fred Kletke, Nancy Craig and Jerry Hull.

Evening College Info You May Not Know

Your editor attended a meeting of our Membership Committee (Nancy Craig, chair) and listened to Louise Ellen Cooley, who runs the Evening College. Here are a few items I picked up, most of them new to me:

The Evening College and the Kellogg Center are both 60 years old in 2011, both opened in 1951. 65-75 personal enrichment courses are offered every year.

I did not know a **Free** gentle exercise session is held every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Meridian Mall, with free blood pressure checks every Wednesday. Sparrow Health System, the U's Kinesiology Department and Meridian Mall co-sponsor this freebie.

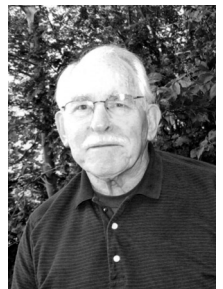
Now I know why I get two Evening College schedules every semester: I get one because I take a course from time to time; and the other 'cause all retirees receive one.

Nor did I know that I get a \$10 discount on most courses. Check page 50 in the Fall directory.

The Oxford Odyssey is twenty-eight years old. Evening College is under the aegis of the Alumni Association, and the AA regards this study trip with special fondness. You can even take on-line courses from this ancient citadel of learning. How to get in touch: 517-355-4562; or: www.Msualum.com/evcoll.

This is Charlie Down's Last Piece

Many, perhaps almost all, gracious readers of The Spartan Senior look forward to Charlie Downs's disclosure of the new, the odd, the hidden news from the University three times a year in our International editions. Charlie tells your editor that this will be his last piece, that investigating and producing the article has "become too much like work." I am not sure how long the retired Media Com writer has been at work, but I think I have read What's New throughout the eighteen years I have been retired. I first met him in Linton Hall where the science writers occupied the first floor and Religion was up two flights (naturally). I am pretty sure my predecessor as editor, Don Gregg, recruited Charlie since both were science writers. We wish Charlie well in his second retirement, and hope his Betty can find home work for him to do, to fill in the empty hours! **(Ed)**.



WHAT'S NEW AT THE U

By Charles Downs

A calamity for the sophisticated Boston art community appears to be a boon for MSU and the Midwest art world.

Just as MSU was in need of a director for the Broad Art Museum – the ultra-modern structure now rising out of the ground just west of the Collingwood entrance—the trustees of financially troubled Brandeis University decided to close its Rose Art Museum. They wanted to sell off the Rose’s 7,000 works of art reportedly worth \$350 million. **Michael Rush, then director of the Rose**, protested vigorously but politely and was supported by art aficionados in Boston and New York.

“The Brandeis vote was an act of breathtaking stealth and presumption: a raid on a museum that supports itself, raises its own funds and has consistently planned wisely for its own future without leaning on the university,” wrote New York Times writer Roberta Smith. “The trustees treated it nevertheless as a disposable asset.”

That was in January. In April, Brandeis announced a reprieve at least until the fall while a committee explores options. But Rush no longer had a job. Now MSU has announced that **Rush will be the founding director of the Broad Art Museum**. A well-connected lecturer and author, he will lead it to a grand opening in the spring of 2012.

As President Lou Anna Simon put it, “We have a prestigious donor (Eli and Edith Broad), world-class architect Zaha Hadid, stunning architecture and have now found the essential missing piece—an innovative art museum director.”

Rush was ordained a Jesuit priest but left the order and earned a doctorate from Harvard in religion and psychology. He became an actor with roles on a couple of major television shows and founded an experimental theater company in Connecticut.

Doing shows about artists whetted his interest in the subject and he began writing about art for the New Haven Register. That led to writing on art for larger publications as well as books on the subject. He was named director of the Palm Beach Institute of Contemporary Art and then to director of the Rose at Brandeis.

IT’S MAGIC – Earvin “Magic” Johnson, who is surely MSU’s most well-known alumnus, was back in town to receive an honorary degree at the December commencement.

Standing six feet, nine inches, Earvin “Magic” Johnson had to bend low to allow Provost Kim Wilcox and research vice president Ian Gray to put an academic hood on his neck.

Johnson left MSU after leading the basketball team to its first NCAA national championship in 1979. He went on to an outstanding career in pro basketball and then to a variety of business investments. He used to say that he would come back to finish his degrees. That would have been very difficult and it never happened. Nevertheless, he has become very successful in the business world financially and as a promoter of black enterprises.

Johnson was cited by MSU as “founder and CEO of Magic Johnson Enterprises, a multimillion-dollar group of businesses focused on environmentally friendly, locally oriented investments that revitalize underserved urban neighborhoods.”

PRESIDENT Lou Anna Simon turned down a pay raise from the Board of Trustees in December. That’s the third time in the past three years she has done so. “It’s a matter of trying to signal that we have much work yet to do to be sure the university weathers this financial storm,” Simon said.

What's New at the U cont....

Unionized staff have also agreed to forgo pay increases and the budget includes no general raises for faculty.

Trustees Don Nugent told Simon that the Board “applauds her commitment” but wants to keep her salary in the mid-range of Big Ten schools. In 2008-09, her salary of \$520,000 ranked sixth in the Big Ten and 44th nationally but has fallen behind because she has not accepted raises. He’s thinking about what might happen when a successor is picked. “We don’t need a situation where all of a sudden you have to pay 25 percent more to attract the person you want,” he said.

SPEAKING of the board, it now has two new members, following the Republican sweep in the November elections. Brian Breslin, the top vote-getter, and Mitch Lyons are MSU alumni, now living in the Grand Rapids.

Breslin is a retired senior vice-president of Meijer. He is a former MSU basketball player and son of Jack Breslin, longtime secretary to the trustees and the man for whom Breslin Center is named. Lyons, a financial advisor with the Meadowbrooke Group, played tight end on the MSU football team. His coach was George Perles, a Democrat now serving on the MSU Board.

There has not been any serious political acrimony on the Board of Trustees for many years but the strongly conservative views expressed by Lyons during his campaign brings up the possibility that it could erupt again. Example, “Instead of investing in students and the economy of Michigan, MSU’s leaders chose to force social engineering into the classroom . . .”

Gone from the Board are Donald Nugent, who failed to win a Republican nomination, and Colleen M. McNamara, who lost in the election. The Democrats now hold a 5-3 majority.

JOBS FOR GRADS — Once again the Collegiate Employment Research Institute (CERI), now in its 41st year at MSU, has published its annual report on current and anticipated job market for college graduates. And once again, media across the country have been quoting it in articles about jobs for college graduates.

The report this year is upbeat. For example, “Despite the gloomy national labor market situation, the college segment of the market is expected to rebound this year. While overall hiring across all degrees is expected to increase by 3%, hiring at the Bachelor’s level is expected to surge by 10 % . . .” The full report is available on the Web at CERI.msu.edu .

Incidentally, CERI has had only three directors over its 40 years. One of them is Patrick Scheetz, current president of the MSU Retirees Association. The other two are Jack Shingleton, who started it, and Phil Gardner, the current director.

JEFFREY ARMSTRONG, has been named president of California Polytechnic State University. The dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources starts his new job Feb.1.

His departure follows his submission of a plan to make major changes in the administration of CANR, which has been losing funding in recent years. His plan calls for deep cutbacks including consolidating the present 13 departments into eight. The Lansing State Journal quotes Armstrong as saying he believes the plan “will continue down the track.”

ZIPCARS – MSU is partnering with Zipcar to enable students, faculty and staff to rent a fuel efficient car for short periods (longer ones too) quickly and efficiently. The program initially puts six cars at various locations on campus. They can be reserved online or by phone for \$8 per hour or \$66 per day. That includes insurance and gas for up 180 miles. Users pay a \$35 membership fee that covers rentals for the first month. Zipcars are already being used on other campuses as a way of cutting back on energy consumption as well as a convenience.

You've worked hard on the road to retirement...

...but the need to manage your investments doesn't stop there.

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Required Minimum Retirement Distribution

Even if you don't necessarily need to tap your retirement accounts for income, you can't let your account balances grow tax deferred indefinitely. Federal tax rules require that you begin withdrawing funds from your employer retirement plans and IRAs by April 1 after either the year you turn 70 ½ or the year you retire from the sponsoring employer, whichever is later. To help comply with these rules, most of the retirement account vendors will notify individuals of their options, which may include an automatic calculation and payout of the annual distribution.

Your minimum withdrawal is determined by dividing the portion of your retirement savings subject to the rules (including all retirement vendor account balances you may have), by your life expectancy. Withdrawals are generally taxed as ordinary income.

If an account owner fails to withdraw the required minimum distribution, fails to withdraw the full amount of the distribution, or fails to withdraw the distribution by the applicable deadline, the amount not withdrawn is taxed at 50%.

Contact your retirement account vendor (for example TIAA-CREF, Fidelity, etc.) for their procedures on how to schedule a minimum distribution. The vendors often will contact the individual prior to the date they are required to take the distribution. However, if you are not sure if you are required to take a distribution, please contact your retirement account vendor for further information.

Brad Bowditch
Asstistant VP for Human Resources

Health Hints-Winter 2011 Edition

Q: How do you find Services for Seniors and their families?

Answer: The residents of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties are fortunate to have the Tri County Office on Aging. TCOA is the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for the community surrounding MSU. Communities in every state have a local AAA office. Federal and state monies fund these offices to provide a variety of services for the aging population. Each community has its own “service plan” depending on the needs of the local citizens.

Here in Lansing’s TCOA office we have access to a comprehensive network of community services. They can assist with topics such as housing, choices for independence, meals on wheels, Medicaid/Medicare, senior dining sites, tax assistance, adult day health services, crisis services for the elderly, care management, resource and referral services and more. Depending on your income, some services are free, others charge a nominal fee. Individuals and families facing the challenge of long term care are encouraged to call for assistance.

§ For more local information call the Ingham, Eaton and Clinton TCOA-(517) 887-1440

§ Live out of the area or in another state?

Call the Eldercare Locator to find an Area Agency on Aging: 1-(800) 677-1116 and they will help you find the office in that area.

Q.Is there anything to help me manage my Chronic Illness?

Answer: Yes, Attend PATH (Personal Action Towards Health) an evidence-based program from Stanford endorsed by the Surgeon General. This free series of six classes begins Friday Jan. 14, 2011 from 1:30-4:00 in the University Lutheran Church @ 1020 S. Harrison Rd., East Lansing, MI. Learn to manage your conditions, increase your energy, make treatment decisions with healthcare workers and more- To register call Jane Braatz 699-1864 or jsbraatz@comcast.net

For more info- www.MIpath.org

Have questions or need help to manage your health? We’d love to hear from you. Please send your ideas to **Marilyn Rothert** at rothert@msu.edu, or call **Lori Strom** at 517-884-0186.



Welcome Back Coach Jud

Jud Heathcote signed on for another two years at MSURA with a note: “Two more years—Hope I make it.” He also reminded our treasurer Bob Wenner of some sort of Monday night shenanigans the two were party to, but Bob insists his own memory is excellent and his conscience is clear, so he has no idea what the “Old Coach” (Jud’s term) is writing about. Well, we here in the busy office of the Spartan Senior hope he makes many more. **(Ed.)**

The Green Corner

By Kirk Heinze

I recently had the pleasure of interviewing two most accomplished women on my “Greening of the Great Lakes” radio show. Both are former governors. Both are exceedingly knowledgeable, articulate and passionate about the beliefs they hold dear. And, among those beliefs, they share a deep and abiding commitment to the development of renewable energy.

They are Christine Todd Whitman, former Republican governor of New Jersey and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator under George W. Bush, and Jennifer Granholm, former Democratic governor of Michigan and strident advocate for Renewable Energy Portfolio Standards and the growth of the alternative energy sector of Michigan’s economy.

For Granholm, the energy portfolio of the future would include wind, solar, lithium ion battery, biofuel, nuclear and some measure of fossil fuel generation. She is particularly bullish on solar energy and battery technology in Michigan because she has seen, first-hand, how the skilled workforce and the sophisticated automotive manufacturing infrastructure can be repurposed to support the growth and development of alternative energy generation.

For Whitman, who currently serves as the co-chair of the Clean and Safe Energy Coalition (CASEnergy), the energy generation portfolio of the future will also be somewhat eclectic—but not as diversified as what Granholm envisions. Whitman is a strident and convincing advocate

for dramatically expanding America’s nuclear energy capability. Like Granholm, she sees a future for some of the other renewable energy technologies and, like Granholm, she also acknowledges that oil and natural gas will continue to play a role. However, she believes that, first and foremost, U.S. energy policy must move in the direction of nuclear energy expansion.

For many of us, having grown up in the 1950s, the specter of nuclear holocaust has understandably loomed large. Our parents were encouraged to construct fallout shelters, and we had drills in school on what to do if we were attacked by the Soviets. Popular culture was replete with nuclear horror scenarios. Political rhetoric only served to fan the flames of fear. Then there was Three Mile Island and Chernobyl. And all of the anti-nuclear protests featured prominently in the media.

In my own case, it has taken a very long time to warm to the notion of pervasive nuclear energy generation. And that has been, frankly, most unfortunate. Consider, for example:

*Nuclear energy plants emit virtually no greenhouse gases; in fact, nuclear energy already provides 75% of the U.S.’s emission-free energy.

*You would have to live near a nuclear power plant for several lifetimes (even centuries) to get the same amount of radiation exposure that you get from one diagnostic medical x-ray.

(cont. from Page 11)

*While nuclear energy plants are admittedly expensive to build, the electricity produced costs less per kilowatt hour than all other major sources of electricity.

*Nuclear power plants already account for about 20% of U.S. energy production.

*Nuclear power plants use an enriched form of uranium for fuel. One fuel pellet, less than the size of a dime, is equivalent to 17,000 cubic feet of natural gas, 1,780 pounds of coal or 149 gallons of oil.

*The nuclear energy industry is one of the most highly regulated in America, and its safety record is impressive by any reasonable standard.

*And, most interestingly, a 2008 Zogby International poll indicates that 67% of Americans support the construction of new nuclear power plants. I was somewhat surprised when President Obama mentioned nuclear energy expansion in his most recent “State of the Union Address,” but I shouldn’t have been.

I share Granholm’s enthusiasm for other green energy technologies, especially solar and battery, but I have come to the conclusion that we need to invest more resources in the rapid expansion of nuclear energy production. There are over 20 new reactor projects under review in the U.S. In Michigan, DTE Energy is considering building a new reactor at its Fermi plant near Monroe. If it is constructed, it would boost to 28% the amount of Michigan’s energy derived from nuclear. Further, the construction of the reactor would employ about 3,000 people and, once built, it would house between 600-700 permanent workers.

It is rather hard to acknowledge that the French “got it right” with nuclear power, but they now safely and efficiently produce over 90% of their energy from reactors. Kudos to them.

Oh, and one final note: the other co-founder of CASEnergy is Dr. Patrick Moore—the former head of Greenpeace. It’s somewhat comforting to know that I am not the only one who has experienced a change of heart (and mind) regarding nuclear energy. In “case” you are interested in learning more, check out www.CleanSafeEnergy.org

Kirk Heinze

www.greeningofthegreatlakes.com www.mlive.com/environment

Membership

The Easy Way

I can't imagine separating from Michigan State. Youth, college degrees, more than 30 years in a career—how do you move away from it? How do you leave it behind? That's why I stay in the Retirees Association, and why I try to say "yes" when asked to volunteer for one small job or another.

I had known the Association was in place, but never paid much attention. Pat Scheetz recruited me a couple years ago. He knew my extended family—for years, back when we were working, and earlier, in his graduate-school days.

"What bills do you have in your wallet?" he asked, after we exchanged greetings at one event.

"Huh? ... Two twenties," I replied, after a look.

"Give me one of them," he said. And I handed it over—trusting and amused.

"Now you're a member of the Retirees Association."

"Geez, Pat, twenty bucks?" I asked.

"Don't worry," he said. "You're signed up for a few years. I'll let you know when I need more."

And that was that. It's how we often interacted in decades gone by, and it was a delight to relive the sharing and caring interactions we enjoyed "back in the day."

I was introduced to the MSU retirement plan almost the same way, forty years ago. Howard Wilson, then a manager at MSU, and now retired from University of Texas, Austin, took my dollar, then handed me two dollars.

"That's how it works. Best deal in town. Now, get over to Personnel and sign up for your retirement," he said. That was that. Same approach: give me your cash. Same subject: my retirement. Howard and Patrick, with the same style. The edges of a rich tapestry.

All I have to do is look around a meeting. "That fellow over there drove the Motor Pool van back to campus when the rest of us were tipsy ... That woman is married to one of my mentors back in the Army Reserves during Vietnam ... That guy jumped to delay his grievance hearing so I could be with my wife when our second daughter was born ...

The fellow across the room worked with my father ... She worked with my wife."



Stan Hecker

It's like the James Earl Jones quote from *Field of Dreams*: "Memories so thick [you] have to brush them away from [your] face." I may have the quote wrong, but the metaphor is perfect.

If you want to get to know the people you worked with, and those on the edges of your career, the Retirees Association is one good way. I have more time now, and we are far less rushed.

I've learned the background to some of the events in my career. I'm learning about the social lives, the churches, the politics, the volunteering, the travel, and families of bosses and colleagues, faculty, staffers. This includes several people I never expected to get to know while I was working. The Association gives a place, a time, and a context to the social enrichment.

Even if you stay engaged, *emeritus* or "on-call," or whatever, as I have done, you start to lose touch with the University. The stories change, the people get younger, and the challenges are different. You want to stay connected in many ways, old and new. Over there, a professor ... bus driver ... accountant ... manager A chance to get to know them, and to keep in touch with MSU in yet another way. **(Stan Hecker)**



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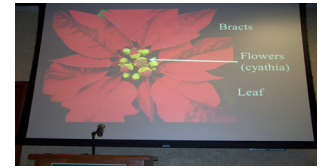
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Erik Runkle says Poinsettias no Longer Lead. Potted Orchids have Ousted 'em from First Place



...first place in sales, that is, ending the Christmas flower from Mexico's long reign as America's most popular potted plant. Shedding a tear for our favorite's dethronement, the audience of sixty listened and watched intently as Hort/Floriculture professor Runkle enthusiastically detailed the history and structure of the red and green plant familiar in every home, at the monthly meeting of the MSURA..

The weather on December 13 was miserable: 7 inches of snow had fallen the day before, and the temp stood at about 10 degrees with a nor'wester blowing the windchill down to minus zero. But we came anyhow; poured hot coffee and tea, munched on donuts, chatted with friends old and acquaintances new. At 2 o'clock President Scheetz introduced past president Arent, who gave a splendid introduction to our young and knowledgeable expert.

What did we learn? Neither you nor your cat will get sick from eating poinsettia leaves; at \$400 million, floriculture in Michigan is bigger than fruits and vegetables; that growers took a fifteen foot plant native to Mexico and Central America, developed hybrids, and controlled light and dark to develop a plant measuring 19 to 21 inches. Much of this development has taken place since the 1960s when airlines started shipping small cuttings from South America to the U.S, where greenhouse growers did the rest.



Erik Runkle

Our intrepid reporter Sharon Dunbar copied down instructions for keeping the plants healthy and preserving them from year to year, but you can contact the Horticulture Department for that information. (Or call Sharon!) Then, in a surprising climax, Gale Arent (who works nights as director of the association that represents greenhouse growers in Michigan), opened the boxes he had brought along, and every retiree took home a poinsettia, mostly red, but white, speckled, and even a few that were garishly painted. **(Sharon DeBar, reporter/Fred Graham, editor)**

**MSU RETIREES ASSOCIATION
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
22 NISBET BUILDING
EAST LANSING, MI 48823**

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

Final speaker schedule for 2010-2011

The lineup for the last part of this year will entertain and instruct you as well. As always: on Mondays at the new Credit Union palace on Coolidge Road, refreshments at 1:30, speaker at 2:

February 14: Lori Strom, Coordinator of the MSU Family Center, will speak on "Healthy Aging through Volunteerism," lifting up some projects in the community that you can volunteer for, but also about being a caregiver when there is a family crisis.

March 14: Brent Bowditch, Assistant VP for Human Resources and **Renee Rivard**, Director, Assistant VP for Human Resources. They will give the annual health benefits update.

April 11: Brad Walker, Radio Reading Services and **Susi Elkins**, Content and Community Engagement Manager, MSU Broadcasting Services. We will hear about the need for volunteers to read for the Radio Reader program and how WKAR radio and TV are involved in the community.

May 9: Annual Luncheon at Kellogg Center. Speaker TBA.

(Ron Smith, Vice President.)