



Time to register for the MSURA annual luncheon

Bill McHarris to perform for retirees

The annual Michigan luncheon meeting will be held on May 2 in the Kellogg Center Lincoln Room. The agenda includes election of officers, announcement of the MSURA Outstanding Volunteer of the Year and special entertainment by Bill McHarris, who will play ragtime favorites.

Professor Emeritus of Chemistry and Physics/Astronomy, Bill McHarris has always combined interests in science and music.

Originally from Knoxville, Tennessee, he has been organist and/or choir director at churches in Tennessee, California, and Michigan.

In 1959 he received a B.A. in Chemistry from Oberlin College, where he also studied musical composition, organ, and choral conducting. Subsequently, in 1965 he received his Ph.D. in Nuclear Chemistry from the University of California, Berkeley (yes, Berkeley in the turbulent '60's!).

Directly from grad school in Berkeley he came to MSU as Assistant Professor of Chemistry and Physics/Astronomy, where he was one of the original nuclear science faculty at the Cyclotron Laboratory. (He made full professor at age 32.)

He formally retired in 2008 but continues to perform research, and his essay, "It from Bit from It from Bit...Nature and Nonlinear Logic," recently won a \$1,000 prize in the Foundational Institute's contest and was chosen as the concluding chapter in the resulting book, *It from Bit or Bit from It?* (Springer, 2015). He has been engaged to write a similar article, "Nonlinear Logic versus Reductionism"



Bill McHarris, center, will delight attendees at the annual MSURA spring luncheon with some ragtime favorites.

When Monday, May 2, 2016

Time Registration begins at 11:30. Lunch is at 12.

Where Lincoln Room, Kellogg Center

Register See page 7 for reservation form

for a forthcoming issue of *Scientific American*.

He continues with his musical career as well, still playing organ and occasionally directing choirs in area churches. He has taught the "Science of Sound" course in the Physics Department, where he became enamored of electronic music, even playing a theremin, built especially for him by Bob Moog. He has composed more than 100 musical compositions, most of which have been performed and many published. He is also one of the Assistant Carillonists at Beaumont Tower, playing at noon on most Fridays. (His

composition, "Variances on Stille Nacht," is featured on the just released CD, "Ring in the Holidays," the first ever album of carillon music from Beaumont Tower — it is perhaps the first piece ever written for theremin and carillon, and here he plays both instruments.)

About ten years ago, Bill also became interested in ragtime music, and since then he has composed a dozen rags (mostly for piano but also for piano-organ duo, vocal, and even chorus). He has played at a number of ragtime festivals around the country (believe it or not, there are some forty festivals at latest count, with some "groupies" going from one to another all year round!), including the so-called World Championship Old-Time Piano Contest in Peoria, Illinois, where he has been invited to play his new rags for five successive years.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

ANGELA BROWN

We are in the midst of a typical Michigan winter—40 degrees to 25 degrees in the same week. Hope the MSURA Florida members are enjoying their 70 and 80 degree weather. Join the Florida club for their annual Luncheon meeting on March 1, 2016, at the Bradenton Country Club.

The annual Michigan luncheon meeting will be held on May 2, 2016, in the Kellogg Center Lincoln Room. Mark your calendar! We have a full agenda including election of officers, announcement of the MSURA Outstanding Volunteer of the Year and special entertainment by William McHarris playing ragtime favorites.

During a review of the MSURA's Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation, it was discovered the tax exempt status listed in the documents did not match the status as determined by the Internal Revenue Service. In order to accurately reflect the correct status of 501 (c) (5), the Board voted to amend the Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation to change the current wording from 501 (c) (7) to 501 (c) (5). Approval of the amendment will be voted on at the annual meeting on May 2.

It is election time again. A slate of candidates will be presented at the annual meeting. Want to get more involved with the Association? Want to serve on or chair a committee? Have a few hours to spare working in the office? MSURA is seeking candidates to serve in a variety of capacities. Come join a hardworking, energetic and fun Board. Contact me at browna@msu.edu so I can discuss all the opportunities available to serve your fellow retirees.

Finally, check out the website and eNotices for MSURA events, meetings and tours. Your Board and Committee members have been hard at work planning some exciting events. Please join us.

Update your contact information

eNotices are the primary source of communications for MSU retirees. Please send your updated email address to msura@msu.edu. Changes in mailing addresses can also be sent to msura@msu.edu. Also, check your email quota if you are using MSU E-Mail Client. Some members are running out of storage space on the MSU email server. Check your storage space status by logging into mail.msu.edu. You can find your mail quota at the top of the Inbox.



Change in Spartan Senior Newsletter: No more subscription fee

If you're an MSU retiree or the spouse or partner of an MSU retiree, you're automatically a member of the MSU Retirees Association (MSURA). One of the many benefits of MSURA membership is that you receive seven newsletters annually. The newsletters inform members of MSU benefits, report the latest health studies, service and volunteer opportunities, and offer many interest

groups. Regardless of where you hang your Spartan hat after you retire, MSURA's Spartan Senior Newsletter has been and will continue to be available to you, in either online GREEN or paper WHITE.

Effective July 1, 2016, something wonderful will happen: rather than charge a subscription fee for our newsletter, MSURA's Board of Directors has voted, instead, to encourage our members to make an annual financial, tax-deductible donation to Michigan State University and designate your gift to the MSU Retirees Association, Account #AB272. Any gift you make will also count toward your University donor society. Your donation will pay for programs services, materials, mailings and office expenses budgeted by your Board. If you're a member who has paid your subscription fees in advance, you'll continue to receive the same benefits you always have, including electronic or paper newsletters.



MSURA HONORED The MSU Retirees Association was recently honored in Our Impact, a publication of the MSU Development Office, for the creation and funding of a new MSU scholarship. A group of MSURA Board members and committee chairs is pictured here standing in a Block S formation. Following the S, and beginning at the top, they are Patrick Scheetz, Chuck Webb, Dave Brower, John Forsyth, Rick Vogt, Ron Smith, Jacqie Babcock, Gale Gower, Angela Brown, Louise Selanders, Trish Horn, Al LeBlanc, Mike Gardner, Etta Abrahams, Darlene Wenner, Nancy Craig, and Jerry Hull.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

MSURA MONTHLY MEETINGS are at the MSU Federal Credit Union Community Room, Farm Lane & Mt. Hope Road, 1:30 p.m.—Refreshments, 2 p.m.—Program

Monday, March 7, 2016

Suzanne Cross on American Indian Women's Heart Health Awareness Healing Through Culture and Art Shawl Collection

Monday, April 11, 2016

Gary Hoppenstand and Etta Abrahams on Films of the Cold War

Monday, May 2, 2016

ANNUAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON at Kellogg Center, Lincoln Room; 11:30 a.m.—Registration, 12:00—Lunch. Entertainment by Bill McHarris. Please see reservation form on page 7.

OTHER OPPORTUNITES FOR MEMBERS

Monday, Feb. 29, 2016

Tour of WKAR, 3 p.m. See more information on page 10.

Monday, April 29, 2016

Tour of the new Bott Building for Nursing Education and Research, 3 to 5 p.m. See more information on page 10.

Friday, June 24, 2016

Attend a Lansing Lugnuts game with your fellow retirees. Watch our website and eNotices for more information as the date gets closer.



Where's the buzz?

MSU researchers involved in research on the disappearance of bees

WHAT'S NEW AT MSU

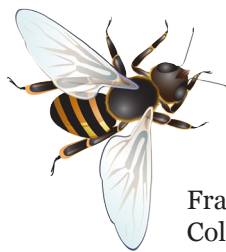


STAN HECKER

Public perceptions of bee populations range from the “march of the killer bees” to inexplicable losses of honey-bee colonies; the reality is more complicated. The first national study to map U.S. wild bees suggests they’re disappearing in many of the country’s most-important farmlands, including key Michigan areas.

“One thing that jumps out is that the areas where there is the greatest estimated decline of wild-bee abundance is also some of the areas where we have the greatest need for them,” reported MSU’s Rufus Isaacs, professor of entomology at MSU.

Lake Michigan’s eastern shore, our fruit-production breadbasket, has a relatively high need for wild bees and relatively low population too. So, that area also shows as a place where uncertainty is the greatest and experts are most concerned



The study, reported in mid-December, was led by the University of Vermont, with MSU, California (Davis), and Franklin and Marshall College (in Pennsylvania) contributing.

If losses of these crucial pollinators continue, the new nationwide assessment indicates that farmers will face increasing costs—and that the problem may even destabilize the nation’s crop production, said Dr. Isaacs, co-author and

leader of MSU’s Integrated Crop Pollination Project, a USDA-funded effort. The findings were published in the current issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The research team estimates that wild bee abundance between 2008 and 2013 declined in 23 percent of the contiguous U.S. The study also shows that 39 percent of U.S. croplands that depend on pollinators (from apple orchards to pumpkin patches) face a threatening mismatch between rising demand for wild-bee pollination and a falling supply of wild bees.

The study responded to a June, 2014, White House presidential memorandum warning that “over the past few decades, there has been a significant loss of pollinators, including honey bees, native bees, birds, bats and butterflies.” The memo noted the multi-billion dollar contribution of pollinators to the U.S. economy – and called for a national assessment of wild pollinators and their habitats.

Researchers didn’t have a national mapped picture about the status of wild bees and their impacts on pollination—even though each year more than \$3 billion of the U.S. agricultural economy depends on the pollination services of native pollinators like wild bees.

The new study identifies 139 counties in key agricultural regions of California, the Pacific Northwest, the upper Midwest and Great Plains, west Texas and the southern Mississippi

River valley that have the most worrisome mismatch between falling wild bee supply and rising crop pollination demand. These counties tend to be places that grow specialty crops –such as almonds, blueberries and apples—that are highly dependent on pollinators. Or they are counties that grow less dependent crops (such as soybeans, canola and cotton) in large quantities.

Of particular concern, the study shows that some of the crops most dependent on pollinators (including pumpkins, watermelons, pears, peaches, plums, apples and blueberries) have the strongest pollination mismatch, with a simultaneous drop in wild bee supply and increase in pollination demand.

“By highlighting regions with loss of habitat for wild bees, government agencies and private organizations can focus their efforts at the national, regional and state scales to support these important pollinators for more sustainable agricultural and natural landscapes,” Isaacs said.

The model’s confidence is greatest in agricultural areas with declining bees, matching both the consensus of experts’ opinions and available field data. However, the study also outlines several regions with greater uncertainty about bee populations. This knowledge can direct future research, especially in farming areas where need for pollination is high.





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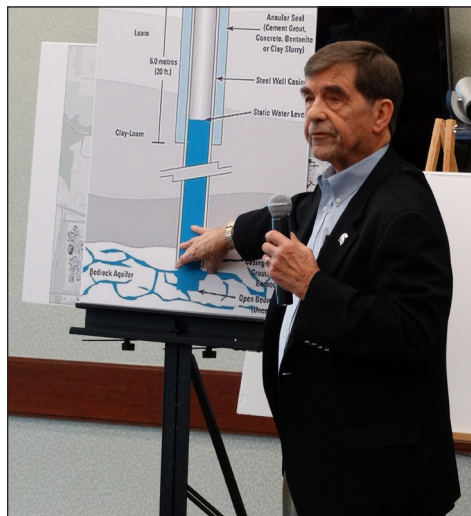
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LUGNUTS GAME! MSU retirees enjoyed a night out with the Lugnuts last June. Plan to attend this year's Lugnuts MSURA event on June 24. Watch the MSURA website and eNotices for more information.

MSURA SPEAKERS

Speakers at the December, January and February MSURA meetings were both enjoyable and informative. In December, Pauline Adams, right, and John Rivette shared information about oral history and demonstrated how they work with their subjects. Below right, Marilyn Rothert in January shared ways retirees can work with their medical care providers to make sure health issues are dealt with thoroughly and carefully. Ron Flinn, below, in February talked about campus facilities and included a timely discussion of MSU's water systems.



CLINICAL QUESTION

Should you take a baby aspirin every day to ward off a stroke or heart attack?

Welcome to this column in the Spartan Senior. Please submit clinical questions to Al LeBlanc, Editor of the Spartan Senior, aleblanc@msu.edu.

We will select from your questions top priority topics most relevant to seniors, provide a summary of current evidence from the medical literature, and make specific recommendations or take away points. Looking forward to hearing from you.

CLINICAL QUESTIONS EDITORS

Raza Haque, MD, MSU Associate Professor and specialist in geriatrics, and

William Wadland, MD, MS, MSU Professor emeritus and former chair of Family Medicine in the College of Human Medicine.

KEY QUESTION

What are the tradeoffs of taking baby aspirin (75-100 mg/d) every day to prevent a stroke or heart attack?

SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE

A heart attack (or myocardial infarction) and stroke (abrupt loss of blood supply to the brain) most commonly occurs when an artery that is narrowed due to plaque formation from atherosclerosis has a sudden clot or rupture of plaque causing abrupt narrowing of the vessel.

The abrupt loss of blood supply to the heart muscle or to the brain leads to dying tissue or necrosis.

Low dose aspirin works by preventing the abrupt clot formation (by slowing platelet agglutination or sludge).

Most men older than age 45 and women older than age 55 have some degree of arterial narrowing due to atherosclerosis but do not have symptoms.

There is greater benefit from use of aspirin for persons with a greater risk for atherosclerosis based on these factors: male gender, increasing age, diabetes, total cholesterol, high density lipoproteins, high blood pressure, and smoking.

A risk calculator can be used to estimate the risk for vascular event (heart attack or stroke) in the next 10 years (<http://cvdrisk.nhlbi.nih.gov/> and <http://my.cleveland-clinic.org/health/tools-quizzes/stroke-risk-calculator>).

The main adverse effect for use of aspirin to prevent heart or stroke is gastrointestinal bleeding. Factors that increase the risks for bleeding include: increasing age, gender, use of anti-inflammatory drugs (such as ibuprofen), gastrointestinal ulcers, uncontrolled hypertension, and use of anti-coagulants (such as Coumadin). The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), which is an independent, volunteer panel of national experts on prevention and evidence-based medicine (1) have evaluated the tradeoffs for use of as-



pirin to prevent a heart and stroke.

These recommendations only pertain to persons who have no evidence of atherosclerotic heart disease or cerebral vascular disease.

Persons with a diagnosis of either condition should discuss with their physician(s) whether aspirin is beneficial in their condition as there may be better agents and dosages.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ask your physician to calculate your risk for either a cardiovascular (heart attack) or cerebrovascular event (stroke) using the appropriate risk assessment tools.

The USPSTF recommends with 'high certainty' (Grade A) that the net benefit is 'substantial' based on numerous clinical trials that low dose aspirin (75-100 mg/d) every day should be taken by men (ages 45-79 years) to prevent a heart attack (myocardial infarction) and by women (ages 55-79) to prevent ischemic stroke.

For both men and women over the age of 80 years, there is "insufficient" evidence to recommend daily use of low dose aspirin.

For women younger than age 55 years (to prevent stroke) and men younger than age 45 years (to prevent heart attack), the harm is greater than the benefit. Aspirin use is not recommended.

It is advisable to discuss with your physician your personal tradeoffs (benefit vs. harm) for taking daily low dose aspirin.

REFERENCES

<http://www.uspreventiveserVICEStaskforce.org/BrowseRec/index/>

MSURA ANNUAL LUNCHEON RESERVATION FORM

May 2, 2016
KELLOGG CENTER LINCOLN ROOM
Registration Begins 11:30, Lunch Begins 12:00 noon

What is orecchiette pasta anyway? It is pasta shaped like little sea shells and will be served vegetarian style with broccolini, feta cheese, black olives, and roasted garlic tomato sauce.

Name _____

Meal Choice Panko Herb-Crusted Chicken Orecchiette Pasta

Spouse/Guest _____

Meal Choice Panko Herb-Crusted Chicken Orecchiette Pasta

Both choices come with rolls, salad, beverage and Chocolate Mousse Cake.

Cost per person: \$23.00 — includes cost of the luncheon, tip, tax & parking.

Address _____

City State ZIP

Email Address _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ for _____ reservation(s).

If dietary supplement is needed, please call Gale Gower at (517) 332-0194 before April 22.

Mail this form by April 22 with check payable to **MSU Retirees Association** to:

Dave Brower, MSURA Treasurer
Suite 22 Nisbet Building, MSU
1407 S. Harrison Ave.
East Lansing, MI 48823



Like to bowl?

MSURA has a Bowling Interest Group. MSU retirees interested in bowling are welcome to join in on the fun on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m. at Royal Scot Bowling Lanes, 4722 W. Grand River Ave, Lansing. Three games each day, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Teams selected by card draw. Contact Patrick Scheetz at Scheetz@msu.edu or (517) 351-7538.



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Do you have an IRA?

Congress reinstated a law that allows you to make a tax-free gift from your individual retirement account (IRA). Known as the IRA charitable rollover provision, this law no longer has an expiration date so you are free to make annual gifts to Michigan State University from your IRA this year and well into the future.

The recently reinstated law allows individuals 70 ½ and older to transfer up to \$100,000 from their individual retirement accounts directly to MSU without being subject to income taxes on the distribution. Your IRA Rollover Provision gift may be applied towards your required minimum distribution.

Contact the Office of Gift Planning for precise instructions on how to make your “IRA Rollover” gift to MSU in 2016.



SPARTANS WILL.



Congratulations to all of you who helped make the 2015 United Way Campaign successful. The amount raised by MSURA was over \$60,414 at last count. This is approximately \$ 6,000 more than last year. The accumulative total for the last five years was \$275,000. Thanks to all of you who gave over the years to support the United Way. —*Darlene Wenner, MSURA United Way Campaign Chair*

Front Row: Kendra Horvath, Nina McMillan, Craig Gunn, Patrick Scheetz, Rebecca Baughman
Middle Row: Scott McMillian, Joan Smith, Joan Gilliland, Sylvia Stephens, Gale Gowen, Mary Faloon, Darlene Wenner, Lana Dart, Rick Vogt
Back Row: Jerry Hull, Sara Stid, Janice Hoffman, Ginney Angell, Ron Smith, Bob Wenner, Warren Faloon, Dave Brower
People not pictured: John and Gretchen Forsyth, Jeff Brodie

MSU Faculty Emeritus Association sponsors three spring programs

The Fine Art and Meticulous Craft of Book and Manuscript Reproductions

Tuesday, March 8, 1:30–3, Main Library Green Room

There's only one Kennicott Bible, one copy of the Codex Ixtlilxóchitl, and the earliest printed maps of India have barely survived the heavy use they received. But fine reproductions of these cultural treasures (and many more) have been created for researchers to study, and for everyone else to simply enjoy. In this hands-on session, we'll examine several dozen limited-edition facsimiles from Special Collections — reproductions so accurate that they include the stains and scuffs of the originals.

Presented by Ruth Ann Jones, Special Collections Education and Outreach Librarian, MSU Libraries

You Were There: The MSU Student Strike of May 1970

Tuesday, April 5, 1:30–3, Main Library Green Room

Amid tension over the Vietnam War and the campus ROTC program, the May 4 shootings at Kent State enraged MSU students to the breaking point. Days of turmoil followed, filled with rallies, marches, teach-ins, public declarations, and challenges to the authority of the university administration.

Share your memories of the student strike — or what you heard about it from colleagues — and browse Special Collections' extensive holdings of the mimeographed strike demands, statements, and official responses that flooded campus during an emotionally charged period.

Presented by Ruth Ann Jones, Special Collections Education and Outreach Librarian, MSU Libraries

Personal Archiving: Managing and Preserving Your Papers and Family History

Tuesday, May 10, 1:30–3, Main Library Green Room

Special Collections Conservator Bexx Caswell-Olson and Digital Preservation Librarian Ryan Edge will discuss how to care for your personal papers, books, photographs, and audio-visual materials. Proper storage and handling of print, analog, and digital content will be discussed. By following a few simple guidelines, you can ensure that your collections will survive for generations to come.

Presented by Bexx Caswell-Olson, Special Collections Conservator, and Ryan Edge, Media & Digital Preservation Librarian, MSU Libraries

Retirees to tour Bott Nursing Building in April

Join with MSURA members and friends for a special, “healthy” event. We’ll be touring The Bott Building for Nursing Education and Research (BBNER).

Dedicated in November 2012, the BBNER has accomplished three major goals for MSU’s College of Nursing: 1) to address the critical nursing shortage nationally and in Michigan through program expansion, increased student enrollment, and

When

Monday, April 29

Time

3 to 5 p.m.

Where

1355 Bogue St. on campus (corner of Bogue St. and Service Road

preparation of future faculty; 2) to provide a nucleus for research and opportunities among students, faculty and staff, by housing together academic, research continuing education programs; and 3) to provide a community space for students, faculty and alumni to interact.

During the tour you’ll learn more about the College of Nursing’s health programs and

initiatives.

No need to RSVP! Just come as you are, even if it’s at the last minute.

Parking is available along the west side of the building on Bogue street with an MSU parking permit. If you do not have a MSU parking permit, as retiree you can get a FREE MSU retiree parking permit from DPS as long as you also have a MSU Retiree ID from the University. Please note that parking is also available in Lot 92 which is located across the street on the North side of Service Road next to the heating and cooling plant. That is the best option. The west side of the building will usually be full of faculty parking during working hours. The limited meters and handicap parking can be used as available on the West side next to the building.



THE BOTT BUILDING FOR NURSING EDUCATION AND RESEARCH is 50,000 square feet with three floors, two of which are dedicated to nursing research and doctoral studies.

TOUR WKAR FEB. 29

Celebrate leap year by joining our tour of the WKAR studio and meeting the Director of Broadcasting.

Meet at on Monday, Feb. 29 at 3 p.m. in the Communication Arts Building South Lobby; the entrance is across from the parking ramp.

Park in the Com Arts parking ramp, which has parking for faculty and staff and also meters.

The tour will be rescheduled to the same hour on March 14 in the event of really heavy snow. Listen to WKAR radio for an announcement

When Monday, February 29

Time 3 p.m.

Where South lobby of Communication Arts & Sciences Building

if it looks like the snow date will be triggered.

Note on parking: As an MSU retiree, you are entitled to free parking on campus. Make sure your permit is up-to-date. If not, contact the MSU Police, 1120 Red Cedar Rd East Lan-

sing, MI 48824 517-355-2221 info@police.msu.edu. You can also order on line. Go to <http://police.msu.edu/management-services-bureau/parking-office/retiree-permits/>

Note: If you need a new plastic photo ID. (useful for getting into gated lots and buying meal plans in residence halls), you can get it in the ID room on the first floor of the International Center. Take along other photo ID, such as your driver’s license or passport. You’ll get a new card immediately!

Around the world and through the years with historical fiction

THE HISTORY GUY



MILT POWELL

Several years ago I wrote a piece on historical fiction for the Spartan Senior. I've delayed writing another installment until I could include the final volume of Hilary Mantel's trilogy on Thomas Cromwell and Henry VIII. (More information about titles and authors can be found below.) She has now written a play, a book of short stories — *The Assassination of Margaret Thatcher* — and collaborated on productions based on the first two books, one of them seen on PBS with Mark Rylance (Rudolph Abel in *Bridge of Spies*) as Cromwell. But this is a poor excuse. I've re-read the first two books in preparation for the third so it's time for Ms. Mantel to get her priorities straight. In the meantime I'm proceeding without her. This survey, like the first, is not at all comprehensive. It includes more well-written books that have informed me about the past while helping me imagine it.

Much of the enjoyment of mystery novels is vicarious exploration of their settings: *Isle Royale*, *Navaho Country*, *Northern Minnesota*, *Santa Barbara*, *Boston*, e.g. *Jacqueline Winspear's Maisie Dobbs* novels take place in England during and just after the Great War of 1914. They have familiar elements of the mystery genre: a detective with a complicated background, her resourceful assistant, friends and enemies in high and low places, and a troubled relationship with Scotland Yard. They transcend the genre, however, for the way in which they explore those two agonizing decades in which England, still suffering from the last war, begins to dread the apparent inevitability of the next.

This survey, like the first, is not at all comprehensive. It includes more well-written books that have informed me about the past while helping me imagine it.

Young *Maisie* goes into "service" (think downstairs at *Downton Abbey*) when her mother dies and her father, a Covent Garden vendor can't support her. She's caught reading books in her employers' library, recognized for her talent, sent up to Oxford to be educated but leaves to become a nurse when war breaks out. Her cases after the war arise from its lingering traumas: a soldier thought dead might be alive somewhere in France; an officer's guilt over the death of troops he commanded drives him to acts of violence. And *Maisie's* brain-shattered wartime lover stares vacantly from his wheelchair and never again speaks to her.

Alan Furst's espionage stories take place in Central and Eastern Europe before and during World War II. Each has a different protagonist so they can be read in any order. His typical hero is an anti-Bond, some ordinary person drawn into covert action by accident, principle, or the sheer necessity of choosing one side or another. In a small Romanian village a young man sees his brother beaten to death by a strutting proto-fascist militia. Unable to take revenge without endangering his family, he is recruited by Russians, trained in

Moscow and sent off to promote Soviet interests in Spain and France. In another book a Dutch sea Captain enlists his ship and crew for a secret mission for British Intelligence

A chief pleasure of Furst's books is their richly evoked mood of Europe in 1930s and 40s, scenes we've viewed in black and white movies like *Casablanca*: Byzantine intrigues of Parisian émigré communities, crackling radios, rattling trains, streets darkened with fog and coal smoke, fake passports, armed border guards, and glittering rooms where heedless hedonists ignore the looming future with dancing and champagne. Yes, the reader thinks, it must have been very much like this.

The novels are somewhat unified by recurrent minor characters and themes. My favorite is that at some point in every book the narrative directs us to the "Brasserie Heininger", an extravagant Art Deco restaurant inspired by a real one called *Bofinger*. (7 Rue de la Bastille; it's on my bucket list.)

Robert Harris is best known for his Roman novels, one on *Pompeii*, and three about the Roman Orator *Cicero*. His first book, *Fatherland*, was a different kind of historical fiction, one in which the writer imagines a present different than our own because it has had an alternative history. What would our nation be like today if Lincoln survived to preside over the conciliatory Reconstruction his Second Inaugural seemed to promise? What if the plot to assassinate Hitler had been successful?

Fatherland opens in 1964, on

Please see POWELL on page 12

MSU IM Department lists fees for fitness programs

Rick McNeil, Director of Recreational Sports and Fitness Services, has sent us an updated list of fees for specific fitness programs.

Retirees pay the same fees as current faculty and staff, and must have an MSU photo ID to enter recreational facilities. You can track this at

<http://recsports.msu.edu/Fitness/Memberships.html>

Faculty & Staff (and spouses with a valid MSU spouse ID)

Daily	\$3	Fitness Center or Group Exercise Class
One Semester	\$95	Fitness Center Only
Package	\$135	Includes Fitness Center, all Group Exercise Classes & Outdoor Pool
Two Semesters	\$175	Fitness Center Only
Package	\$240	Includes Fitness Center, all Group Exercise Classes & Outdoor Pool
Three Semesters	\$205	Fitness Room Only
Package	\$275	Includes Fitness Center, all Group Exercise Classes & Outdoor Pool
One Semester	\$75	Group Exercise Only
Two Semesters	\$130	Group Exercise Only
Summer	\$50	Group Exercise Only (limited class schedules during summer)

POWELL, continued from p. 11

Hitler's seventy-fifth birthday. The U. S and its allies were defeated twenty years ago. Germany controls England and most of Europe and its leaders are planning for a state visit from United States President Joseph Kennedy. (Jack's older brother who, in this version, did not die in 1944.) The plot hinges upon the discovery of documents from the Wannsee Conference of 1942, thought to have been destroyed, which prove that the slaughter of European Jews was the stated policy of German leaders and not just, as official doctrine maintains, a tragic consequence of wartime disorder.

Some interesting variations on this theme have appeared recently. In

Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* Roosevelt loses to Charles Lindbergh in 1940. President Lindbergh signs a non-aggression Pact with Hitler and begins to accuse American Jews of trying to get the U. S. into the war. Roth's description of an increasingly anti-Semitic America is partly drawn from his boyhood experience growing up in Newark. Philip Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*, published in 1963 is now appearing as an Amazon mini-series. The original book described the growing resistance of Americans in a nation divided (like Germany in 1963) into zones of influence by its conquerors from East and West.

MORE ABOUT HILARY MANTEL Hilary Mantel's first two books on Henry Tudor and Thomas Cromwell are *Wolf Hall* and *Bring Up the Bodies*. So far as I know the sequel she owes me (I take this personally) does not have a working title. *Maisie Dobbs* is the first book in Jacqueline Winspear's series; the next, number twelve, will take her to Munich where, I presume, she will ask Neville Chamberlain what he thought of the Granthams. Robert Harris's Roman books are *Pompeii*, and the *Cicero Trilogy: Imperium, Conspirata, and Dictator*. He also wrote a superb novel closely based on the Dreyfus Affair — *An Officer and a Spy*.



Lorenzo White, Trish Horn and Gene Washington pose for a photo on Sept. 10, 2015, at “An Evening with Through the Banks of the Red Cedar: A Critical Conversation & Preview of the Upcoming Documentary Film,” which was an event co-sponsored by the MSURA and University Archives & Historical Collections.

MSU had a leading role in developing black football trailblazers

As part of a Black History Month tribute, The National Football Foundation (NFF) & College Hall of Fame have created a list which highlights just a few of the many significant individuals who helped integrate football since the first college game between Rutgers and Princeton on Nov. 6, 1869.

The complete list is interesting in that most universities have only one, two, or three entries. Football powerhouses such as LSU (Louisiana State University) and the University of Michigan have only two apiece. Michigan State, on the other hand, has nine alumni in this list of African American football greats. They are:

Gideon Edward Smith, tackle from 1913-15, first African-American student-athlete at Michigan State (then known as Michigan Agriculture College)

James McCrary, halfback from 1933-34, notoriously left behind for the Texas A&M game in 1934

Albert Baker, end in 1934, notoriously left behind for the Texas A&M game in 1934

Horace Smith, halfback and end from 1946-49, played during the reversal of the policy of “segregated integration” when Northern schools would not play African-American player against Southern schools as one of the first to play in the South

Willie Thrower, quarterback from 1949-52, first African-American quarterback to play in the Big Ten in 1950, first African-American to play quarterback in the NFL

Clinton Jones, halfback from 1964-66, a member of the first foursome of African-American players inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame from the same freshman class

Bubba Smith, defensive end, from 1964-66, a member of the first foursome of African-American players inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame from the same freshman class

Gene Washington, wide receiver from 1964-66, a member of the first foursome of African-American players inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame from the same freshman class

George Webster, linebacker from 1964-66, a member of the first foursome of African-American players inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame from the same freshman class

Obviously MSU was doing something right, and it started doing this a long time ago. Alumnus Gene Washington’s daughter is working on a [film documentary](#) of MSU’s efforts to recruit and develop African American athletes, and you can read more about this effort and learn how you can contribute financially to it on pages 6 and 9 of the August-September 2015 Spartan Senior newsletter, available at the MSURA website. Also see page 1 of the November-December 2015 Spartan Senior. —*Al LeBlanc*

MASTHEAD MANIA

Help us choose the future look for the front page of the newsletter

Masthead definition:

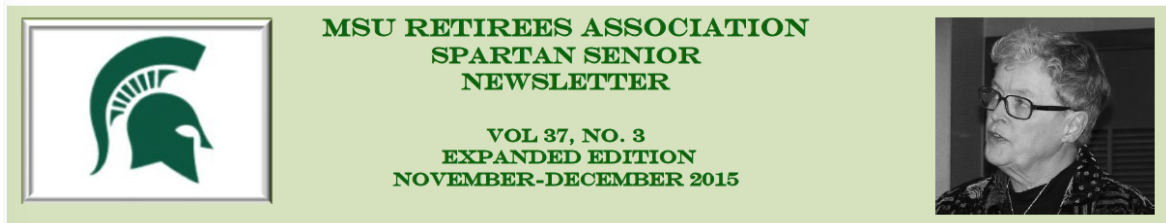
the title of a newspaper or magazine at the head of the front or editorial page

We're considering a change of masthead for the Spartan Senior newsletter, and we'd like your input. On this page and the next, you'll find nine different mastheads. The four on this page have been used in previous issues of the newsletter, but the ones on the next page have not. Each has a number next to it. Please take a minute or two to look at them and select the one you like the best. Send the corresponding number to us at msura@msu.edu by March 18. Please put MASTHEAD in the subject line. Our Board will look at your recommendations and choose a masthead.

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Newsletter Date



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Michigan State University Spartan Senior Newsletter

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RETIREEES
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Please note: All of the mastheads here have been made smaller to fit them on the two pages. All of them except for #5 will be stripped across the top of the front page of the newsletter. Number 5 would be stripped down the left side of the front page.

Remember to send your vote by March 18 to msura@msu.edu. Put MASTHEAD in the subject line of your email. Thanks!

**MSU Retirees Association
Suite 22 Nisbet Bldg. MSU
1407 S. Harrison Road
East Lansing, MI 48823-5239**



**HAPPY
ST. PATRICK'S
DAY**

Lessons on Investing – Did you know?

StraightLine is a financial education and management company that was created to be a fiduciary. A fiduciary ALWAYS acts in the best interest of its clients – a rarity in the financial services industry. Many firms do not accept or abide by this standard. Be sure to ask your advisor if they do!

Straight to the Point

Market Update - A great deal of confusion, uncertainty, and noise is dominating both the economic and market outlook currently, and the elevated volatility that we saw in the back half of last year has certainly carried over into 2016. We continue to get contradictory reports on the economy, with strength in consumption/services and ongoing weakness on the industrial side. Meanwhile, there are conflicting reports on the potential of a deal for oil producing countries to cut production and stabilize the oil market, which has become highly correlated to stocks. Central banks remain key players in short-term market fluctuations and overall investor sentiment.

Investment Implications - Our views on markets have not changed much in the last few months. We continue to expect volatility, and look for ways to diversify investments. We remain of the view that we are in a secular bull market, and that significant drops in markets will create more attractive long-term opportunities. Now is not the time to panic, or to take excessive risks. Some patience is going to be required as we work through these issues and eventually get a clearer picture of the macroeconomic environment. We suggest looking for investments that can mitigate volatility and/or provide uncorrelated returns, while also keeping an eye on the more beat up parts of the market that might be attractively valued.

Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns about your investments.

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