



EARLY SPRING GREETINGS TO EVERYONE

Don Seay, AURA President 2014-15

I really enjoyed seeing all of you that attended our fall dinner meeting. The catfish meal was really good and I had a good time ... even though I am only half as tall as our guest speaker, assistant basketball coach Chuck

Person. Chuck gave a wonderful talk.

Please make plans to attend our spring business luncheon on Friday, May 8, 2015, at 11:30 AM at the Saughatchee Country Club. In addition to the good food, it will be an interesting gathering.

Our Wilford S. Bailey Award this year will be awarded to Janice Charlesworth, the Executive Secretary for the Alabama Education Retirees Association (AERA). Janice has been super active in her support for education betterment in our state, especially for retirees. She is truly a worthy recipient of the Bailey Award.

We nominated Dr. Gerald Johnson for the higher education position on the AERA board of directors at our fall dinner meeting. He was elected to that position.

Four new members for our board of directors will be voted on at our luncheon. Each year four persons rotate off and four new members are selected for recommendation to the membership. See photos and biographical information for the proposed slate in this newsletter.

And, importantly, you will be asked to vote for or against some clarification changes to our AURA Constitution. There is insufficient room here to list the proposed changes. PLEASE GO to the Announcement section of the AURA website on the AU website for the detailed information. The easiest way to find our website is to go to www.auburn.edu and type the word "retiree" in the search box.

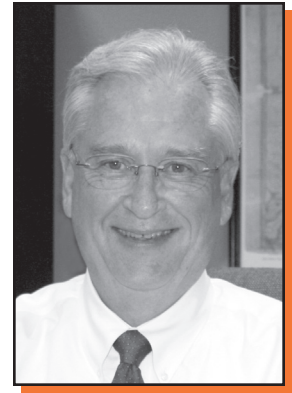
A link to information regarding athletic event tickets is also listed under Announcements on our website. You can go directly to the information at: www.auburn.edu/facultystafftix. It applies to retirees also.

I look forward to seeing you at the spring luncheon.

UPDATE ON LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY — 2015

Dr. Gerald Johnson

Legislative Affairs Committee



The 2015 first regular session of the new quadrennium of the Alabama Legislature convened Tuesday, March 3rd with over 100 bills introduced. The Legislature's major responsibility is to adopt the state's two major budgets—the General Fund (GF) budget and the Education Trust Fund (ETF) budget. The budgets are statements of the priorities and programs and services the state will provide in FY 2016. Both funds have projected deficits and the Legislature must determine how these budgets will be funded or what programs and services will be cut to provide a balanced budget as required by law.

To date, three legislative agendas have been proposed.

One, Republican Governor Bentley proposed a \$541 million tax increase, elimination of some tax exemptions, un-earmarking some taxes and other measures that would make the combined additional revenues for FY 2015 a total of \$728 million. The proposed major tax increases include an increase in the sales tax on automobiles and cigarettes. In addition, the Governor proposed legislation to change the way in which industrial recruitment incentives are provided.

Two, while the Democratic Party minority leadership supports some of the Governor's proposals, cigarette tax increase and closing of tax loopholes, the minority leadership also proposes a statewide lottery and expansion of Medicaid.

Three, the Republican Party legislative caucus has proposed an agenda that includes career tech scholarships, economic incentives, student-led prayer, protection for judges from being forced to participate in wedding ceremonies that violate their religious and moral beliefs, charter schools and use of the electric chair. While some Republican legislators have publically opposed the Governor's proposed tax increases, the Republican Party legislative leadership has not addressed the budget deficits except to state they would await the Governor's State of the State address. Speaker Mike Hubbard stated, "I agree we need to treat everybody

fairly and we need to have lower taxes. We need to look and see exactly what the Governor is proposing."

The first bill introduced was a bill to provide for protection from religious discrimination in public schools. Other proposed legislation includes prison reform, twelve months DST, guns in automobiles and out of churches, increase in the minimum wage and posting of the 10 Commandments in public schools and on state property.

To date, no one has specifically addressed the ETF deficit and the potential impact of the deficit on public schools, PEEHIP (projected deficit of \$350 million) or TRS, the public education retirement program.

Other revenue options that have been discussed but not proposed include: one percent increase in sales tax (\$307 million); internet sales tax (\$255 million); increase property tax (\$500 million); eliminate state income tax deduction for federal income taxes paid (\$532 million); eliminate mortgage interest deductions (\$252 million); and, eliminate charitable deductions (\$174 million).

Directly related to education retirees, discussions have included reduction of the state contribution to state retirement programs (\$550 million), resulting in future retirees not having guaranteed retirement benefits, cuts in medical and dental deductions (\$42 million) and premium and out-of-pocket increases.

Historically, the Legislature has preferred to adopt limited and half measures designed to get through the current problems with sufficiency, if not resolution. The question is whether or not this Legislature will follow the historical pattern of patching or follow the call of the Governor "to do it right for the first time in 60 years?" A BP settlement windfall of hundreds of millions of dollars would probably provide a sufficient budget fix of one-time revenue to meet FY 2016 budget needs.

The implications of which path is followed are important and substantial for AURA and AERA members. ♦

“Is there an app for that?”

Eugene J. Akers, AURA Board Member

As a new member of the AURA Board, I have come to appreciate the value of this organization to the retirees of Auburn University and Auburn University of Montgomery. As part of the many benefits, the AURA Newsletter is published on a regular basis to provide information to members regarding news and events of value. The Board often struggles with getting good articles for the newsletter and is always looking for contributors. It seems to me one area that affects all of our membership is technology. I began to think there might be information of value to the membership on a regular basis regarding new technology and the application of technology. As a retiree, I know I am constantly looking for tools that make my life easier and less complicated on a daily basis. I thought it might be interesting to share some of my and your experiences with technology as it applies to retirees specifically. Hence, here is my first effort at providing you with some food for thought. If you find the article of some value and wish for me to continue, please let the AURA Board know and I will see if we can continue to provide some information and entertainment going forward.

Over my career starting in 1966, I had the good fortune of being in the technology profession. Looking back over that time causes me to pause and think about what has really transpired over the past 50 years in the field and science

of technology. In my opinion, advances in technology is unparalleled with respect to most other fields of study. If you look at the advances in other fields over the same time period, you could argue that most of those advances were the direct result of the application of new technologies. Technology has become such a pervasive force in our lives that it is hard to believe it never existed to this degree in our daily lives. Someone once said that “new technology is anything that was invented in your life time.” That being said, then for me that would include the transistor radio and TV for starters. For my kids who were born in the early 1970s that would include desktop computers, the Internet and cell phones. For my grandson of five years old, that would include the iPad which he learned to master at the age of two.

As a co-operative education student at Auburn in the late 1960s, I worked for a company in Huntsville in the space program. Those were extremely exciting times for me as a student and for the advancement of technology. Looking back it is hard to realize there is vastly more computer capability in our smartphones than used in the space capsules and mainframe systems used to develop the space program. Can you say 1K? The first computer I learned to program had 1K of core memory and a hard disk cartridge with 512k of storage. Now the new smartphones come with 64GB of data, 64 bit processors, and high resolution

cameras for starters. The “need for speed” and data has become insatiable. More and more daily activities are now performed on a routine basis using smart devices. Who keeps paper copies of anything anymore? Who uses index cards anymore? Who uses a digital camera anymore? Who uses a video recorder anymore? Who uses a compass anymore? Who uses cassette tapes or CD’s anymore? Who uses paper maps anymore? Who pays their bills with checks anymore? Who pays with cash anymore? Who writes letters anymore? Who plays cards with a deck or games with a board? Who reads hardback books? Who uses the Sears and Roebuck catalog? I now do all of this stuff on my phone anytime and anywhere. Scary, right? The best part is that if I get lost, the phone can find me and tell me where I am and how to get home. So what is the next generation of applications for our hand held devices? I have one word for you and that is “medical.” New applications that will monitor your health vitals will soon provide constant feedback on your physical well-being and will provide a link to share that information at any time with anyone. You know as I get older the thought of having something that remembers everything for me, always knows where I am and how I am feeling does not sound real bad. Now if it could just drive me around! Oops, did you say Google is working on a driverless car? Utopia!

Nominees for Board of Directors



Gerald W. Johnson

Gerald W. Johnson, AU Emeritus Professor of Political Science, retired in 1995 following a career as a teacher, researcher and administrator, including a stint as AU's lobbyist in Montgomery. He followed AU retirement with an 18 year tenure as Director of the Capital Survey Research Center, the polling division of AEA. He has been an active member and participant in AURA since its beginning, most recently serving on the Legislative Affairs Committee and contributing regular articles to the AURA News. He served as the AERA-AEA liaison and AEA representative to the RSA PEEHIP and Teacher Retirement System Boards. He was elected to and will begin a two-year term in 2015 on the AERA Board of Directors as the first higher education director on the AERA Board. He is an avid reader, sports fan, discussion and book club member with three adult children, seven grandchildren and two, almost three, great grandchildren. ♦



Larry Ridgeway

Larry Ridgeway began his career at Auburn University in 1977 as Director of Financial Aid and retired as Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Emeritus in 1995. The following year, he started a second career at the University of Mississippi where he retired as Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs in 2012. During his tenure at Ole Miss, he completed his Ed. D. from AU in 2001.

Larry and his wife Mary Jo, a retired teacher and school administrator, have three sons and two granddaughters. Returning to Auburn for retirement, Larry joined the AURA Board for a one-year appointment last year. He helped coordinate the Fall Banquet with Larry Wit and will serve as the association's newsletter editor next year. ♦



Karen Sharpless

Karen Sharpless graduated from Virginia Tech with Bachelor of Arts degrees in Political Science and Communications. She attended Auburn University where she obtained a Master of Arts Degree in Communications in 1981. Upon graduation from Auburn she began a career with Auburn University in the Office of Admissions where she held progressively responsible positions. In 1997 Karen assumed the role of Director of Engineering Development at Auburn University where she was responsible for private giving for the Ginn College of Engineering. Karen retired from Auburn University in April of 2005. She resides in Auburn, Alabama with her husband, Ken. ♦

Barbara Witt

Barbara Witt was the Dean of Auburn and AUM Schools of Nursing from 1998-2009 retiring in February of 2010. During her tenure she began a joint graduate program; a very successful development effort that quadrupled the number of scholarships and created the first endowed chairs, while supporting curricula that consistently led to highly-sought after graduates. Creating a plan whereby students pay a fee for clinical courses resulted in resources to expand the size of the schools. Since retirement she has become a Master Gardener teaching small groups, writing an occasional gardening column, and volunteering in the community. She is pleased to run for a position on the Board of AURA as it is clear that retirees need a strong voice to protect their interests. ♦



JANICE J. CHARLESWORTH

Wilford S. Bailey Award Recipient

Janice Charlesworth is in her 14th year as the Executive Director of the Alabama Education Retirees Association (AERA). Prior to taking the helm of AERA, she served as Assistant to the Executive Secretary for four years. Under her leadership, Mrs. Charlesworth led the efforts of the association to change its name from the Alabama Retired Teachers Association to its current name. As a result, AERA has experienced a renewed and steady growth in membership. Also, several higher education retiree local units have been formed and have joined forces with AERA. The first higher education local unit to join in was Auburn University Retirees Association (AURA). In addition, the state association has received numerous national awards for membership growth, magazine publication, and website development under her watch. AERA has also branched out into the fast-growing network of social media and is on Facebook and You Tube.



Mrs. Charlesworth was born and raised in Rhode Island where she attended public school. Mrs. Charlesworth graduated from Katharine Gibbs School in Providence, worked full time as an executive secretary and attended college at night. Prior to moving to Alabama in 1990, she lived in New England. In the Fall of 1990 Mrs. Charlesworth enrolled in Auburn University Montgomery part time majoring in Public Relations with a minor in business. In March, 1994 she graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from Auburn University Montgomery.

She is the wife of Dennis Charlesworth, a graduate of the University of Alabama MBA program. They have two grown children, Erica and Bradley. Erica is a curriculum resource teacher in Louisiana. Bradley is the Social Media Public Relations Specialist with Tulane University Alumni Affairs in New Orleans, Louisiana. ♦

Thank You, Monarch Estates!

Monarch Estates, known for “**Gracious Retirement Living,**” located at 1550 E. University Drive in Auburn, has generously allowed the AURA Board of Directors to use its Eagles Nest Meeting Room for their monthly meetings for several years.

We would like to acknowledge this donation from Monarch and encourage anyone considering moving from their home to visit Monarch for a tour.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR
AUBURN UNIVERSITY RETIREE ASSOCIATION (AURA)
20th ANNUAL MEETING

FRIDAY, MAY 8, 2015

SAUGAHATCHEE COUNTRY CLUB

BEGIN GATHERING AT 11:30 A.M. WITH BUFFET STARTING AT NOON

COST IS \$10.00 PER PERSON, PAYABLE AT THE DOOR

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THE PROGRAM INCLUDES:

- Presentation of Wilford Bailey Award to Janice Charlesworth, Executive Director of the Alabama Education Retirees Association (AERA)
- Announcement of New Board Members
- Legislative Update by Janice Charlesworth

In order to provide Saugahatchee with an anticipated number for the Buffet, please call or email one of the individuals below by Tuesday, April 28 and let them know you will be coming and how many will be in attendance:

Larry Ridgeway • ridgl292@bellsouth.net • 334-821-0600

Gail McCullers • gailandrichard@charter.net • 334-887-5898

Is there an app for that... continued

I think one of the most fascinating things about new technology is the adoption rate from the introduction of a technology until the 100% utilization or ownership of that technology. It took more than a 100 years for the automobile to reach a level of 80% ownership in the population. It took almost 60 years for television to reach a level of 100% ownership. It took the microwave almost 20 years to reach a level of 100% ownership. By contrast, it only took the Internet about 3 years to reach over 30% of ownership and the cell phone 5 years to reach 40% of ownership. The increasing rate of

adoption of new technology continues to escalate. The newer generation is thirsting for new gadgets and technologies. You have to admit it is pretty exciting to think about the many possibilities. You also have to recognize some of the perils of technology advancement such as cyber-attacks and identity theft. But Jessie James did not slow down the inevitable advancement in railroads and banking nor will these type of threats slow the advancement in technology. You might say "You ain't seen nothing yet!"

In the future, I would be more than happy to try and answer any questions you might have about

specific technologies or even share anything that you have found to be interesting and productive that you feel would be worth sharing with the membership. Please feel free to contact me and ask your questions or share your experiences at dreugene.akers@gmail.com. As a final note, I thought I might share one of the stupidest quotes ever said by technologies' smartest people: "I think there is a world market for maybe five computers." IBM Chairman Thomas Watson, 1943. I have more than that in my house, Tom! Just goes to show what everyone knew, IBM was really a marketing company and not a computer company. ♦



Editor's Note:

GOOD DAY to you all. I look forward to seeing you all at the Annual Meeting on Friday, May 8 at 11:30 at Saugahatchee Country Club. My, the time really goes by in a hurry from year to year. This is my last issue as editor of AURA NEWS. I have enjoyed working on the AURA Board in various capacities: member, vice president, president, newsletter editor. AURA continues to work for you in trying to influence public policy. Don Seay, as president, has furthered that agenda this year, and I am sure Tom Vocino will do the same next year, as he takes the reins. I can't help but rephrase an old labor movement mantra: RETIREES UNITE. ♦

— LARRY C. MULLINS

REMINDER!

*Auburn University Retirees:
If you have not joined, JOIN TODAY!*

You may have already paid your 2015 dues to join AURA. If so, you will find “(p)” after your name on the address label on this newsletter. If not, you will find “(n).”

AU-AUM Retiree AURA Enrollment Form

Name _____ AU _____ AUM _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

_____ Single Retiree \$25.00 _____ Surviving Spouse \$10.00

_____ Retiree and Spouse \$25.00 _____ Sponsor \$25.00

_____ Retiree & Retiree Spouse.. \$25.00

\$ _____ Gift Contribution

If you have any questions, please contact Sonny Dawsey at auretirees@gmail.com; Gail McCullers at gailandrichard@charter.net; or Don Seay at seay551@bellsouth.net.

*Please make check payable to Auburn University Retiree Association or AURA
and mail to the address below:*



AURA
P.O. Box 1436
Auburn, AL 36831-1436

Nominees for the AURA Board of Directors Three-year Terms Starting May, 2015

- Gerald Johnson
- Larry Ridgeway
- Karen Sharpless
- Barbara Witt

*I support the nomination of the individuals named
above to serve on the AURA Board of Directors.*

Signature _____ Date _____

Clip and mail your response
by April 28 to
AURA
P.O. Box 1436
Auburn, AL 36831-1436



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