

Big Ten Retirees Association Annual Meeting Report
August 20-22, 2010
Indiana University-Bloomington

The 19th annual meeting of the Big Ten Retirees Association was held August 20-22, 2010, on the Bloomington campus of Indiana University. Representatives of nine of the eleven Big Ten universities were in attendance, with only the University of Minnesota and Northwestern University not represented. Representatives of IU's sister campus, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis also attended. The theme of the meeting was "Play On: Retirement and the Arts."

At registration participants received the usual registration packet containing their nametag, a program, list of participants, program handouts, note paper and pen, maps of the campus and the Indiana Memorial Union as well as a walking guide to the campus and a brochure on the Thomas Hart Benton murals at the IU Auditorium. In addition they received a bountiful "goody bag" containing chocolates, snacks, hand sanitizer, a flashlight, an IU note cube, a CD from the Jacobs School of Music, plus miscellaneous brochures and visitors guides.

The meeting opened with a reception and dinner in the Federal Room of the Indiana Memorial Union. Kenneth Gros Louis, University Chancellor and Trustee Professor, provided anecdotes about the furnishings and objects of art in the parlor and dining room of the Federal Room. Entertainment was provided by Bob and Pat Williams, IU alumni who in their retirement have developed a piano presentation of the music of Hoagy Carmichael, a Bloomington native. Vocals for this presentation were provided by Michael Schwarzkopf, Professor of Music and director of the Singing Hoosiers, as well as by Ted Jones, Professor Emeritus of Music and former IURA president.

On Saturday morning the group met in the Neal-Marshall Hall for a welcome by Karen Hanson, Provost and Executive Vice President. The keynote address, "The Art of Aging: What the Late Works of Great Artists Teach About Aging Well," was delivered by Lesa Lorenzen Huber, Gerontologist and Clinical Assistant Professor of Applied Health Sciences. Her mixed-media presentation presented late styles in music, literature, and art. Examples of the late styles of Verdi, Beethoven, Rembrandt, Titian and Shakespeare illustrated the change in style of these artists in later life. She also discussed styles of creativity, changes in the aging brain that contribute to creativity.

The second session of the morning was held in the Wells-Metz Theater where Professors Emeriti of Theatre and Drama, Marion and Keith Michael presented "Notes and Plays from Our Era," centered around the various types and styles of plays that were part of the American theater during "our era," the 1930's until the end of the 20th century. Selections were used from *Waiting for Lefty* by Clifford

Odets; *Sure Thing*, by David Ives, *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller, *The Prisoner of Second Avenue*, by Neil Simon, and *Love Letters* by A. R. Gurney. Their closing quote was from Dolly Levi in Thornton Wilder's *The Matchmaker*, "Money...is like manure, it's not worth a thing unless it's spread around encouraging young things to grow."

Lunch was a salad buffet held in the lobby of the Musical Arts Center. Jacobs School of Music Dean Gwyn Richards welcomed the group and talked about opera at IU, indicating that IU would be offering the premier performance of a new opera, *Vincent*, in spring 2011. He indicated that producing a new opera could cost as much as \$300,000 and individual costumes could cost as much as \$8,000. Dean Emeritus Charles Webb spoke about his activities in his retirement, continuing as the organist for the First United Methodist Church, a post he has held for more than 50 years, as well as continuing to perform frequently with Jacobs School of Music groups and elsewhere. The concluding activity was a tour of the MAC led by Ted Jones and Tridib Pal, House Manager. Participants walked across the stage to gain perspective on how enormous it is both on the floor as well as in height. They also saw the set and costume shops, the ballet studios, and walked across the third tier to get a sense of the height of the house.

The afternoon bus tour of the campus was led by Terry Clapacs, Retired IU Vice President for Administration, who served the University for 40 years and was instrumental in managing the design and construction of many buildings during that time period. Unfortunately neither the bus sound system or an auxiliary sound system worked well, so many participants were unable to hear his commentary as we toured the campus.

During the tour there was a stop at the IU Auditorium where Margaret Contompasis, IU Art Museum Conservator, did a Power Point presentation on the preservation of the Thomas Hart Benton murals, which line the Hall of Murals in the Auditorium. Participants were given a brief period to examine the murals.

The next stop of the tour was Emeriti House, where Professor Emeriti Joe Miller talked about the role of Emeriti House and one of its activities, an art show by retired faculty and staff. The participants had time to look at the current exhibit before boarding the bus for the final stop at Bryan House, the historic home of IU presidents for lemonade and cookies.

Dinner on Saturday evening was in the University Club. Entertainment was provided by Marietta Simpson, mezzo-soprano and a faculty member of the Jacobs School of Music. Ms. Simpson performed a wide range of material including an aria from *Carmen*, a gospel number, and several ballads from the American songbook. She was accompanied by Keith McCutchen, the I.U. director of the African-American Choral Ensemble.

The final sessions were held on Sunday morning and featured a sharing session about the arts activities available to retirees on the participants' campuses. All campuses had cultural activities available to their retirees; however, the general consensus was that IU certainly had the most to offer in this regard. One of the most interesting ideas presented was Grandparents' Camp where grandparents live with grandchildren aged 7-13, in residence halls and study a variety of subjects during the week. The University of Iowa's Senior College was also of particular interest because an endowment fund controlled by the Emeritus Faculty Council receives the fees from this effort and thus is able to offer scholarships or support other endeavors of interest to retirees. Purdue University has a program whereby University-owned art that is in storage is loaned for up to a year for display in local retirement communities.

During the business meeting Char Tortorice of the University of Wisconsin invited everyone to the University of Wisconsin August 12-14, for the 2011 annual meeting. The theme of this meeting is "Building Bridges: Keeping Connected in Retirement." She presented a preliminary schedule for the meeting.

Other issues raised during the business meeting were the need for an examination of the constitution of the Association, gathering data for a comparison of retirement plans and benefits, adding the University of Nebraska's retiree association to the group next year, and a mechanism for evaluating and presenting issues for a vote such as project groups, an executive committee, etc.. The meeting adjourned shortly after 11 a.m. with the distribution of box lunches and wishes for safe travel home. After the meeting adjourned some who were collecting their lunches suggested getting rid of the pass-along monkey since most members are pleased to host the group. However, it was agreed that should this happen, the monkey is not to be morphed into any Big Ten mascot or symbol.