

The Association of Retired Faculty and Professional Staff

Emeritus News

Summer 2020

► My Corner

By Barbara Mallette

"The simple bare necessities. Forget about your worries and your strife ... The bare necessities of life will come to you."
- Baloo, "The Jungle Book"



Our lives have changed drastically, every aspect touched by COVID-19. Folks are confined to their homes or apartments. Non-essential businesses are closed as are schools and universities; many of those still employed are working from home. The stores that remain open have restricted the number of people who can shop at the same time and clerks are protected by facemasks, plastic or plexiglass barriers. Traffic, even on major highways, is almost non-existent. Public beaches, playgrounds, and basketball courts are closed. Professional sports schedules have been postponed. And gatherings of more than a few people have been outlawed. COVID-19 continues to claim victims of all age groups.

Step outside your home and the neighborhood looks as if we are in an episode of the *Twilight Zone*. Social distancing has become the norm. I prefer the term "physically distancing" as social interactions are much too important to our well-being to be curtailed. But the means by which we socially interact have evolved into more distant forms. *Zoom* has been widely used to conduct meetings; teachers utilize *Google Classroom* to communicate with their pupils, *Skype* is a family's favorite tool to visit digitally. Facebook offers glimpses of how folks are occupying themselves during Governor Cuomo's call to "Stay Home." Phone calls and texts help us stay in touch when face-to-face interaction is not possible.



Focusing on what we can't do or what we have lost is normal. But such focus can deplete our reserves for optimism and hope. How are folks in our area and in our country helping each other? Reading, hearing, or viewing episodes of how folks are coping with distancing continue to be heartwarming in these unsettled times: New York City residents who applaud the efforts of doctors, nurses, EMTs, and healthcare workers; folks in Buffalo's Elmwood district who dance in the evening; teachers who host parades to show their students how much they miss them; and friends car-parading to wish one of their own *Happy Birthday*. Many of us are using the time we spend at home reconnecting with family and friends.

"A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees."
- Amelia Earhart

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Please email Dawn Hunt at dawn.hunt@fredonia.edu or call 716-673-3456 if you are interested in receiving the Emeritus newsletter by email.

► My Corner—*continued*



Even cleaning and culling are becoming part of our routine as we adjust to the "new normal." Most people are reporting that staying in their comfy clothes or pajamas has been one of the highlights of staying home. We will get through this, even as we recognize that our state has experienced the greatest loss of lives. The singer Sting offers sage advice that is apropos for now: **"When the world is running down, you make the best of what's still around."**

Please stay safe!

"Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible."
- Dalai Lama

► Newsbit

The Rescue

In this age of the coronavirus, there are bound to be plenty of personal dramas; here's a unique one.

Our son, Nick, and his wife, Laura, moved to Amman, Jordan last fall: Nick is in logistics/freight handling, Laura works for an NGO. Now in February their sons Leo (age 5) and Alex (age 3) were in northern Italy visiting Laura's parents in Fossano--safely over 100 miles from the COVID-19 "hot spot" that was developing in Milan. Her parents were scheduled to take the boys back to Amman on February 27. But on February 26, Jordan suddenly barred entry to anyone who had been in *Italy* during the past 14 days! What to do?

Nick had a plan: Laura's parents immediately drove the boys to Nice, only 50 miles away, as France had few infections...so far. On February 28, Nick flew to Nice, picked up his two sons, and on March 1 flew to Cyprus--where there were *no* reported COVID cases. Thus on March 2, they started a 14-day period in a virus-free country! Janet and I had visited Nick, Laura, and the boys in Cyprus in the spring of 2019; it is a wonderful country with snow-capped mountains, fine beaches, quaint old villages, medieval castles and churches, classical ruins, modern cities--and lots of playgrounds. Nick was able to work pretty well via computer, and the boys had plenty of places to explore and play. They spent a week in and around Limassol, then to Paphos.



Leo and Alex at home in Amman, March 2020

But Cyprus was finally starting to get a few COVID cases! On March 15, Leo and Alex had completed 14 full days "out of Italy," and on the 16th, they took an early morning flight to Amman--the same day that Cyprus began its COVID lockdown. They arrived in Amman that morning, just two hours before the Amman Airport was put on lockdown: All subsequent passengers arriving would go to a "mandatory quarantine facility" on the Dead Sea, for at least two weeks. And that night, at midnight, all flights to Amman were suspended, indefinitely. Just "under the wire," Leo and Alex had been rescued...and "enjoyed" a week of lockdown, safe in their own home!

~Dan and Janet Reiff

Informational Website

Retired Public Employees Association –
<https://rpea.org/> - Sign up for informational emails and RPEA newsletters.

► A message from Interim President Dennis L. Hefner

These past eight weeks have been surreal. Until COVID-19, the campus was progressing nicely with the new Pennsylvania and Ohio student recruitment program, approval of our first 100% online program in Educational Leadership, and even both state legislative higher education committees had a 33% reduction in the TAP Gap in their preliminary draft bills, which would have provided Fredonia with \$2.1 million in additional state funds over a three year period. Fall-to-Spring retention improved over last year, applications were looking good, and the structural deficit was on track to decrease by \$2.5 million.

I was feeling pretty good until two days before Spring Break, when we had to notify students they were staying home after the break and completing their semester via distance education. During the next 9 days, the faculty and staff performed the nearly impossible, as our entire curriculum was converted to a distance education mode, which involved providing faculty with more than 80 hours of instruction to facilitate this conversion.

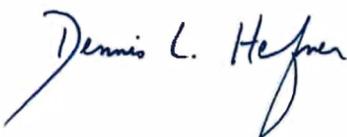
During Spring Break we sought and received authority from Middle States to go 100% virtual; moved all but 113 students out of the residence halls; nearly 80% of our staff began telecommuting from home; implemented campus-wide social distancing protocols; and amazingly began teaching students via distance education on March 23, the day after Spring Break. I cannot express how proud I am of the faculty and staff and the amazing job they did to keep this campus and the educational progress of our students moving forward.

Since March 23, we have undergone a “virtual” Middle States reaccreditation visit that resulted in our passing every standard, have nearly completed processing the \$6.3 million we are returning to students in the form of credits/refunds for the unused portion of their room & board and the majority of their unused broad-based fees, have so far cut or frozen nearly \$2.5 million from the budget, have converted our entire recruitment and retention efforts into what is proving to be an effective virtual approach, and remotely interviewed the presidential finalists. On May 11, the Joint Task Force for Fall Reopening submitted recommendations on options to consider, and several committees are being formed to review the top options. Our intent is to open this fall, realizing there will likely be a portion of the curriculum taught remotely.

Commencement 2020 has been postponed until August 8, hopefully, but likely will be delayed a year until Sunday, May 16, 2021, the one-year anniversary. In the meantime, we asked graduates to send an electronic photo for a video to be released on graduation day. More than 400 student photos, along with a few elements of a normal commencement, are included. You can access the video from a link located near the top of the Fredonia website.

I will be heading back to North Carolina soon. My one regret is the budget is not in better shape. However, I have many good memories from this past year: working and interacting with the wonderful people on this campus and in this community, attending the 50th Anniversary celebration and concert for Rockefeller Arts Center, having a chance to interact with so many exceptional students, and hosting the Emeritus holiday reception one more time.

Jan and I loved reconnecting with so many of you, who played such an instrumental role in building SUNY Fredonia, and hope you will stay in touch. Wishing you the very best!



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► Save the Date

Please mark your calendars for these upcoming events:

- **Emeritus Summer Luncheon**—Because of COVID-19, the June Emeritus luncheon has been rescheduled to **Wednesday, August 5 @ The College Lodge**. Of course, we will re-evaluate this date as it gets closer, and if we should need to reschedule again, we will let you know via email. You're always welcome to call the President's Office at 673-3456 to check on the status of the lunch date.
- **Commencement**—Your health and safety remain our top priority and Dr. Hefner and the Commencement Co-Chairs continue to actively monitor the COVID-19 situation. Fredonia's May Commencement was rescheduled to **Saturday, August 8**, but if that date needs to be adjusted, we will let all of our volunteers know well in advance.
- **Emeritus Fall Luncheon**—**October 15, 2020**, Clarion Hotel, 30 Lake Shore Drive, Dunkirk, NY.
- **Homecoming Weekend**—**October 16-18, 2020**. Please watch the Events@Fredonia calendar for updates. <https://events.fredonia.edu/>.
- **President's Award for Excellence Luncheon**—Revised Date, **Wednesday, October 28, 2020**, Williams Center, Multipurpose Room.

► Update Your Contact Information

- Have you moved, changed your email address or phone number? If so, please let us know so we can update the Emeritus database which is used for the quarterly newsletter and informational mailings. The cost to mail the quarterly newsletter continues to rise. If you could help to reduce mailing costs by receiving the newsletter by email, please let us know. You may email dawn.hunt@fredonia.edu or call 716-673-3456.

NOTE new date for our next luncheon!

Wednesday, August 5, 2020

**Emeritus Group Summer Luncheon
The College Lodge
8067 Route 380
Brocton, NY**

We will meet and mingle over lemonade at 11:30 a.m.— lunch will be served at 12:00 p.m.

Fresh Fruit Salad, Mixed Green Salad
Green and Yellow Beans with Baby Carrots
Penne Pasta Primavera with Alfredo Sauce
Greek Chicken
Pound Cake with Strawberries & Whipped Cream
Coffee/Decaf/Tea

Please send your reservation and check payable to Emeritus Group by July 24th. Cost is \$19.00 per person.

Send to:
Barbara Mallette
PO Box 328
Cassadaga, NY 14718

We look forward to seeing you all.
~Barbara and Doug

Name(s) _____

Number attending _____

Enclosed is a check for \$ _____

Please RSVP with payment by July 24th.

► Emeritus Spotlight—Clara Beier

By Barbara Mallette and Clara Beier



Enjoying the Yellowstone River

"Here in the corner attic of America, two hours' drive from a rain forest, a desert, a foreign country, an empty island, a hidden fjord, a raging river, a glacier, and a volcano is a place where the inhabitants sense they can do no better, nor do they want to."

- Timothy Egan

One might believe that life has come full circle for Dr. Clara Beier. She was born and raised in Seattle and now lives on Whidbey Island in Puget Sound. But Clara dared to venture from Washington State as a young woman. Clara Walker Beier comes from a close-knit family, with one older brother and one younger brother. She recalls attending city schools and Roosevelt High School in Seattle, and one move in her childhood, only 1½ miles away. Technology had an impact on Clara. Her memory of the family getting its first television in 1960 remains vivid. Although every other third grader's family already had a TV, Clara's family finally succumb to this new technology, as Mrs. Walker was adamant that she wanted to view the Kennedy-Nixon election returns.

When Clara was looking at life beyond high school, the traditional female careers were offered to her: teacher, secretary, nurse, and stewardess. Clara's mother was a home economics teacher so Clara had an idea of the work involved in teaching. Still, the role of teacher of young children attracted Clara. Most of the Walker family attended the University of Washington but the world outside of Seattle beckoned Clara. She and her mother visited Oregon State University where Clara accompanied a neighbor to his poetry class. Clara was sold! Oregon State was her college choice. Looking back at her move to Oregon, Clara says with great conviction that she is glad that she left home. The college experience was wonderful and became an impetus for "growing up and trying her wings." Even fifty years after her high school graduation, Clara asserts that leaving her childhood home was important.

Upon graduation, Clara was hired as a Chapter 1 reading teacher in Dallas, Oregon. This suburb of Salem offered plenty of opportunities for young teachers. Clara's principal introduced her to the high school band teacher, Dave Beier, who happened to teach fifth and sixth grade band students across the hall from Clara's classroom. Both Clara and Dave Beier must have heard music, as they fell in love and were married following Clara's second year of teaching. Life was good in Oregon, with Clara later teaching first grade in Amity, Oregon. Dave wanted to pursue a higher degree in music education, resulting in a move to Boulder, Colorado so he could enroll in its doctoral program. Fortunately, Clara was hired to teach kindergarten and first grade at a private school in Boulder. The Beiers never seemed to tire of gazing at the Flat Iron range from Boulder. Clara was amused when easterners who moved to Boulder viewed the city as paradise, with no desire to venture further westward. For a woman from Seattle who enjoyed the Pacific Northwest's rainforests, mountains, and deserts, meeting those who were perfectly happy with Boulder and Denver was a surprise, if not unthinkable.

The University of Montana Western (UMW) was in need of a music educator and secured Dave, resulting in a move to Dillon, Montana. Clara substitute taught and eventually took a position in education at the university. Because a doctorate was required to secure a full-time tenure track position and UMW didn't have a graduate program, Clara began a doctoral program at the University of Arizona in Tucson. During summers and a leave of absence, Clara completed the required coursework majoring in Teaching and Teacher Education with a minor in Language, Reading and Culture. Fortunately, Clara could conduct dissertation work with some of her Dillon Montana students and finished the degree in 1994. Life in Montana was great! The Beiers made a number of friends and enjoyed the majestic mountains. But this life would soon change...Dave died suddenly. After some time, Clara found herself seeking more academic stimulation, such as working in a graduate program in literacy.

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► Emeritus Spotlight—*continued*

Luck intervened, as Fredonia had a literacy opening. Even though Clara's first attempt to make an interview at Fredonia was thwarted by winter weather and flight cancellations, her second attempt to travel was successful. Others told Clara that Fredonia's position seemed to meet her aspirations. And Clara felt that the move across the country would be good for her professional and personal development. Clara and Fredonia were an almost perfect match for each other. The university served about 5,000 students, roughly the population of Dillon. Although Clara remembers feeling like she was moving to the big city, she adjusted to life in Fredonia quickly. She found Fredonia students inquisitive and more sophisticated than her Montanan undergraduates. Teaching at the Master's level pushed Clara's "outer edges of learning." She described Fredonia's students as fantastic.

Clara's involvement in the International Education Program with Swansea Wales remains a highlight of her time at Fredonia. Furthermore, Clara was instrumental in developing and operating the College of Education's Program in Australia. Meeting teachers and students from other countries was enlightening. She still maintains contact with an Australian professor. Clara was intrigued by our students' realization that Welsh and Australian classrooms and students were different from their American counterparts. Yet there were many similarities that reminded our students about child development milestones. Clara remarked that recruiting students for Fredonia's international student teaching programs was eye-opening. Many students were concerned about costs. Yet, they realized that being immersed in the culture of Swansea, Wales, or communities in Australia would broaden their knowledge base, develop international understanding and enhance their own teaching.

Clara retired in 2013 and moved back to the Northwest. Clara enjoys spending time with her family. Both brothers and their families live in the Seattle area. Every summer the entire family spends one week in the North Cascade mountain range at Ross Lake. Clara's grandfather first visited the lake in 1950 and family has traveled there every year since then. The hiking, fishing, and family history stories get better each year. Clara also finds time to travel to Peru, Ecuador and Mexico and recently to New Zealand.

Her desire to continue to develop and push herself is evident; Clara began riding lessons after her move to Whidbey Island. She now enjoys English dressage, "precision riding," immensely. After four years of riding lessons, Clara bought Reno, an Andalusian, a year ago; riding has become one of her favorite pastimes as it's a way to "push herself beyond her comfort zone."

When she first moved to Whidbey Island, Clara immersed herself in volunteer work, including becoming a Sound Water Steward, which is a county non-profit organization that promotes education and citizen science related to marine science and Puget Sound. In the 100 hours of classes she took, Clara learned about climate change, sea level rise, plankton, and orcas to name a few. She also is involved in a neighborhood emergency team that works with first responders in emergencies that affect Whidbey (which lies in a major earthquake zone). It's no surprise that Clara has met many people through her volunteer work and her church activities. Besides volunteering and riding Reno, Clara also enjoys traveling. Even though Clara has returned to her roots, she still travels to the Fredonia area to reconnect with dear friends.



Clara on her horse, Reno

*"The essential joy of being with horses is that it brings us in contact with the rare elements of grace, beauty, spirit and freedom."
- Sharon Ralls Lemon*

► In Memoriam of Campus Employees

Franciska Kuharovits Safran passed away on March 8, 2020. Franciska was employed as a Librarian in Reed Library at the State University of New York at Fredonia from 1973 until her retirement in 2000. During her tenure, she was actively involved with the curation and preservation of the Holland Land Company records.

Notes of remembrance may be left on the Rochester Cremation website at <https://rochestercremation.com/home-rochester-cremation>.

Dr. Lee Braude passed away on March 12, 2020. Professor Braude was employed at the State University of New York at Fredonia in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology from 1967 until his retirement in 2002. During his tenure, he also served as Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Internal Control Officer for Academic Affairs. He was a recipient of the Robert M. Kasling Memorial Lectureship.

The family suggestions contributions in his name be made to the Lieberman Center, c/o the CJE, 3003 W. Touhy Ave., Chicago, IL or www.cje.net/donate.

Mr. Denilson Costa passed away on Sunday, March 29, 2020. Mr. Costa began his career as a Cleaner at SUNY Fredonia on September 26, 2011. He most recently worked in Fenton Hall on the third shift.

Mr. Costa's wife, Jennifer, is the Acting Director of Human Resources.

Ms. Patricia A. Halas passed away on Friday, April 3, 2020. Ms. Halas began her career at SUNY Fredonia as a Typist in the Fenton Hall Library in 1965, and progressively advanced to Library Clerk 3, before retiring in 2003.

A memorial mass will be celebrated at Blessed Mary Angela Parish, Church of St. Hyacinth at a later date. The family suggests donations in her name to the Lakeshore Humane Society, 431 E. Chestnut Street, Dunkirk, NY 14048.

Ms. Earline Smith passed away on Saturday, April 25, 2020. Ms. Smith was employed as a cleaner at the State University of New York at Fredonia from 1976 until 2004.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations be made to the American Diabetes Association at <https://www.diabetes.org/>

► Check this out!

Fellow Fredonian Bill Graebner and his significant other, Dianne Bennett (who worked in the college's PR department in the early 1970s), have continued one of their passions while home. They view and review movies together, posting these reviews weekly (since 2016) to their website and to the website of the Buffalo Rising online magazine. For Bill and Dianne, this is a labor of love, as they have enjoyed major film festivals here and abroad. Visit their website to learn more about Bill and Dianne as well as read their reviews: <https://www.2filmcritics.com/>.



Spring Luncheon
Shorewood Country Club
March 6, 2020

