

# Emeritus News

Summer 2019

## ► My Corner

By Barbara Mallette

*"Give fools their gold, and knaves their power; let fortune's bubbles rise and fall; who sows a field, or trains a flower, or plants a tree, is more than all."*

John Greenleaf Whittier



Spring has arrived. The crocuses and snowdrops welcomed us upon our return from the South; we are enjoying the daffodils that have had the courage to poke their yellow heads through the flower beds. The buds on our plum, crab, and magnolia trees excite us with the prospect of flowers. We enjoy exploring our property for other blooms and signs of emergent spring growth.



In March, Doug and I found ourselves entertained by the removal of a huge live oak tree on the property in our Florida community. The "cherry picker," chain saws, pulleys, and cables fascinated us as the gigantic sprawling mass was delimbed. The process of cutting down the tree took all day, with stump removal occurring the next day. We were surprised to learn that live oaks are protected trees in a number of

states including Florida. For every live oak removed, another is planted. Within 24 hours, a ten-foot live oak appeared on the grounds. Doesn't replanting make sense? What better way to ensure greenspace for future generations and to guarantee homes for birds and other wildlife!

We can remember in 1970 when the first Earth Day demonstrated the passion of the young, the middle aged,

and the elderly for the sustainability of our environment. People were appalled by the conditions that existed in our nation at that time: oil spills, factory pollution, power plant pollution, raw sewage, dumping of toxins, use of pesticides, construction of massive freeways, reduction of our wilderness areas, and destruction of wildlife. Diverse groups banded together to fight for a common cause – our environment. The fight for this cause continues. Sustainability has become Earth Day's (really Earth Month's) mantra.

Although Earth Day and more recently Earth week have passed, our appetite for taking care of our property, our community, and our planet has not waned. Each year we find ourselves planting, thinning, and weeding as well as tilling in last year's compost. Even with gloves on, I manage to get muck smudges on my face, hands, arms, and shirt. However, Doug is able to remain at least one dirt-free hand throughout the work session. I think that he must invoke a magic spell that repels dirt!



E. E. Cummings captured the true essence of spring, especially in Western New York State: "The world is mud-luscious and puddle wonderful." You can claim that boots do help deal with squishy lawns. But the memory of splashing in puddles and stomping in mushy mud still brings a smile to my face. Happy spring!

*"Folks are like plants; we all lean toward the light."*

Kris Carr

The Emeritus Newsletter is also available in electronic form. Please email Denise Szalkowski at [denise.szalkowski@fredonia.edu](mailto:denise.szalkowski@fredonia.edu) if you are interested in receiving the newsletter through email instead of a paper copy. Thank you!

**Emeritus Group June Luncheon  
The College Lodge, Brocton, NY  
Thursday, June 13, 2019**

Please reserve Thursday, June 13 for our next Emeritus Luncheon at the College Lodge in Brocton, NY.

We will meet and mingle over lemonade at 11:30 AM; lunch will be served at 12:00 noon.

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 reservations and checks payable to Emeritus Group for \$18.00 per person by June 3<sup>rd</sup> to:**

Barbara Mallette  
PO Box 328  
Cassadaga, NY 14718

We look forward to seeing you.  
—Barbara and Doug

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(by June 1<sup>st</sup> please)

**► Events@Fredonia**

- Please check out the website for upcoming public events being held.  
<http://events.fredonia.edu>

**Informational Website**

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

**► Save the Date**

Please mark your calendars for these upcoming events:

- Fall Emeritus Group Luncheon, Thursday, October 17, 2019, Clarion Hotel Marina & Conference Center, 30 Lake Shore Dr. E, Dunkirk
- Homecoming Events, October 18-20 2019  
Calendar of events coming soon,  
<https://www.fredonia.edu/alumni>
- Maker Faire, October 19, 2019, Williams Center and Science Center

**► Emeritus Newsbit**

- Readers of *A History of Bear Lake* have encouraged us to turn the Camp-in-the-Woods (The "Y" Camp) chapter into a book about the camp. We are receiving recollections and photographs from many former campers and would appreciate any from the Emeritus group or their children who might have camped there. We hope to finish the book this summer.

Best,  
Anne and Bob Deming

- Thanks to Bill Graebner (History, Emeritus) noticing the publication of my *Column Monuments* volumes in a recent *Emeritus News*, he asked me to write a note about the monuments' classical origins, and their use in America, for the blog that he and Dianne Bennett established: <http://www.romethesecondtime.com>. The blog is full of unique and informative essays about the city of Rome and its environs, with wonderful suggestions of things to do and see in the region. My post, "'Children of Rome': from Trajan's Column to Robert E. Lee," (entered February 25, 2019) features 15 photos in color, including many from the 19th and 20th century: Buffalo and Lockport included. I guarantee you'll find fascinating essays in their blog -- whether you're interested in column monuments or not!

Dan Reiff

## ► A message from President Horvath



As the academic year closes, and I move toward my own retirement from service at Fredonia, I offer these updates about the campus:

**Fredonia Retirement Plan:** This retirement incentive, which offered a one-time lump-sum payment to retirement-eligible employees with 10+ years of state service who would retire by the end of this fiscal year, was offered to all employees (M/C, UUP, and CSEA). Of the more than 175 Fredonia eligible employees, 35 applied for this program, and 29 of those chose to retire. After planned replacement costs, the ongoing savings to the campus will be around \$1.6M, which assists the campus with ongoing attention to reducing costs.

**Budget:** On May 13, I presented a preliminary snapshot of campus progress toward the goal of reducing the state operating budget at Fredonia by \$4.5M for 2019-2020. When the final numbers are in for the 2018-2019 actuals and the budget for 2019-2020, I will share the report through campus email and post this on the President's Office and Budget Office websites.

**Academic Affairs Reorganization Plan:** Through the year, Provost Terry Brown has engaged the campus in considering ways to change the structure in Academic Affairs to achieve cost savings, interdisciplinary approaches, and structures that invest more in faculty than in administrative and support positions. The University Senate and many faculty and staff, including CSEA leadership, have been involved in these discussions, forums, and open sessions. The Senate will vote on several proposals at the May 13 Senate meeting.

**Summer Projects:** A number of construction projects will begin or continue this summer, including the interior work in Houghton Hall, replacement of bleachers in Dods Hall, replacement of the roofs of Mason Hall and McGinnies Hall, windows of Rockefeller Arts Center, and air handling units and controls in Mason Hall.

**Interim President and Search:** We continue to wait to hear about the appointment of an Interim President at Fredonia, most likely to occur during the Board of Trustees meeting on June 19-20. The formal, national search for Fredonia's next President will be led by the College Council during the next academic year.

This has been a remarkable year, with successful performances and distinguished speakers, as well as continued efforts to recruit a talented entering class of new first-year and transfer students for Fall 2019. Despite the many challenges, Fredonia remains an excellent institution, with dedicated faculty and talented students. For the past 14 years, I have taught and served with joy, coming to know many students, faculty, and staff and seeing the campus community pull together to address challenges. I will miss so many parts of Fredonia life, especially the people with whom it has been my privilege to know. Best wishes and thanks to all of the emeritus faculty and staff in all that is ahead, as you remain important parts of the Fredonia community.

With best wishes,

*Virginia S. Horvath*

## ► Emeritus Spotlight

*"The world is the geologist's great puzzle-box; he stands before it like the child to whom the separate pieces of his puzzle remain a mystery till he detects their relation and sees where they fit, and then his fragments grow at once into a connected picture beneath his hand."*

Louis Agassiz



His porch railing showcases a small sample of the rocks geologist Jack Berkley has collected over the years. Each of the porch samples is labeled so even the casual visitor is drawn to look more closely.

Jack comes from a family of five boys; he is the middle child preceded by two older brothers and succeeded by younger twin brothers. Born in Lawrence, Kansas, Jack's first four years were spent in Sunflower Village, a federal housing project for veterans of the World Wars. Sunflower Village was directly across the street from the Hercules Armaments Plant. The water tower there remains one of Jack's earliest boyhood memories.

When one hears about Jack's hatred of his daycare experience, he/she could be surprised that he has spent much of his adult life with an early childhood expert (Dr. Mira Berkley). The daycare center was housed in a cinderblock building that was separated from the elementary school by a fence. Jack's description of his attempted escape from the center to climb the fence would be comical if not for his real fear of the childcare givers. These women were dressed in white nurses' uniforms. Certainly, we can see the correlation between their uniforms and shots administered by nurses to young children. Jack further recounts that the caregivers were "drill sergeants" and "not nice people." Pleas to his mother resulted in her quitting her job to stay home and care for her young son.

Jack's father worked for Olin, a major producer of agricultural chemicals. Every four years, Mr. Berkley earned a promotion, which meant a move to another city and for Jack, another school – Hutchinson, (KS) Wentzville (MO), Columbia (MO), and Richmond (IN). Jack spoke about his time in Columbia as being particularly memorable, as Columbia was the "headquarters of the Berkley family." The Berkley's were faced with a dilemma; his parents were moving to Minneapolis during Jack's senior year of high school. To avoid enrolling in another school, Jack lived with a Quaker family who lived across the street. He was able to graduate with his class.



<https://tinyurl.com/y74mfegj>

Because Jack's father maintained a large garden, Jack was introduced to Mother Earth and her bounty at an early age. If we were to travel back to the time when Jack was in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, we would find him "picking up things." Jack believes he was a geologist at an early age, exploring the woods and bedrock near his home. He labeled everything "snake back bones" (sea lilies: refer to photo of crinoid [sea lily] here). Once he found a museum quality specimen of pink hexagonal coral. Unfortunately, while at college, Jack's father plastered this rock into a retaining wall much to Jack's surprise. But that personal misfortune did nothing to deter Jack from pursuing geology at the collegiate level: Bachelor's degree from the University of Minnesota Duluth, a Master's Degree from the University of Missouri Columbia, and a Doctorate from the University of New Mexico. During his Master's Degree, Jack was involved in research for U.S. Steel mapping the Deer Lake complex to look for copper-nickel. He worked for a time at a gear engineering company with significant military contracts. In a letter to the company's President, Jack outlined how he could do more than basic tasks. As a result, Jack became involved in testing rockets and signal flares in Death Valley. But Jack's thirst for research couldn't be sated doing this. He deepened his geology interests when he studied under Klaus

## ► Emeritus Spotlight—*continued*

Keil, the Director of the University of New Mexico Institute of Meteoritics. Dr. Keil was known to geologists as “Mr. Meteorite.” Jack participated in a NASA project as a graduate assistant studying “moon rocks.” He passionately speaks about rocks from Apollo 16 and Apollo 17 - “hot rocks,” “hotter magma.” Pursuit of extraterrestrial geology became Jack’s focus. One of his greatest achievements is the product of this pursuit. Jack was one of two people (other is Jeff Taylor) who were the first on this planet to formally contend that certain rare meteorites (SNC<sup>5</sup>) were samples from the planet Mars. Their claim was confirmed by other geologists using isotope evidence. A post-doctoral in New Mexico and the NASA grants at the Johnson Space Center furthered Jack’s study of extraterrestrial meteorites, including the famous ALH84001, an orthopyroxenite of Martian origin. The invention of and advancements in technology have impacted the field of geology significantly according to Jack: “The electron microprobe allows ever increasing sophisticated analyses of extraterrestrial materials.”

In the early 1980s, Jack was ready to conclude his post-doc and enter academia. An opening at the State University of New York at Fredonia seemed the perfect place to begin a professorship. Jack can recall how welcoming Dick and Carmen Gilman were when he and Mira arrived. He also remembers other new Fredonia faculty in Geology at that time: Gary Lash and Gordon Baird. Throughout his career at Fredonia, Jack has served the campus in a number of ways: Professor, Chair, Assistant Dean, Associate Dean, and Acting Dean of Natural Sciences. He developed expertise in the Adirondacks, offering field trips for students to extend their knowledge of geology, particularly New York State geology. In addition, Jack has been involved in the United Kingdom Exchange Program with the College of Education; his field trip on the geology of the region was a regularly scheduled event for our English visitors.

Besides his expertise in geology, Jack is an accomplished guitarist and singer. In college he won second place in a Bob Dylan talent contest with his rendition of “Talkin World War III Blues.” Word on the street is that Jack still has that trophy and contends that he should have won first place! At one point in his youth, Jack traveled to Bob Dylan’s hometown to buy a guitar from the same place that Dylan purchased his. After less than cordial interactions with salespeople at that store, Jack drove to Duluth to purchase a Martin guitar in a music store there. He rationalized this action by the fact that Bob Dylan’s birth home is in Duluth!



Although originally a Midwesterner, Jack has established firm roots in Fredonia, living here since 1982 – and he loves Canadaway Creek. One can often find Jack walking his dogs along the creek and picking up garbage there. Or you will find him reading/listening to the news and completing crossword puzzles. Jack is committed to family, friends and the community as well as to his garden and rock collection. He describes himself as “old, but still walks upright.” Everyone else calls him a “friend.”

*“Geologists are never at a loss for paperweights.”*  
Bill Bryson

## ► In Memoriam of Campus Employees

**Mrs. Frances “Fran” Polito** passed away on April 8, 2019. Mrs. Polito began her campus career as a Medical Technician in 1988 and retired in 2014 as a Medical Technologist in the Health Center.

Memorial donations in Fran’s name can be made to the Lakeshore Humane Society at 431 E. Chestnut Street, Dunkirk, NY.

**Mr. Alfred Shalkowski** passed away on April 7, 2019. Mr. Shalkowski began his campus career in 1964 and retired in 1993 as University Maintenance Management Planner in Maintenance and Operations.

Online condolences may be made at [larsontimkofuneralhome.com](http://larsontimkofuneralhome.com).

**Ms. Rachel Slaght** passed away on Wednesday, February 27, 2019. Rachel was employed by the Faculty Student Association since 2010, most recently as an Assistant Service Worker in Centre Pointe.

The family has set up a GoFundMe page to help defray Rachel’s funeral expenses: <https://www.gofundme.com/rest-in-peace-rachel>.

**Dr. Stephen Douglas Warner** passed away on Saturday, March 30, 2019. Dr. Warner was employed by the State University of New York at Fredonia from 1979 until his retirement as Professor of English in 2000. During his career, he was awarded three Fulbright Scholarships to teach at universities in Romania, Berlin, and Lithuania.

Condolences, stories, and pictures can be sent to [goodschoolfarm@gmail.com](mailto:goodschoolfarm@gmail.com). Information about a summer celebration can also be requested through this email.

## ► Remembering Mac Nelson

Several people noted at the remembrance of Mac Nelson that he was very fond of this poem. Joyce Haines remarked, as she read this poem, that it was one that he carried with him as he could not recite it. Given his ability to recall large passages of literacy texts, Mac’s forgetting this one is an ironic affirmation of Poet Laureate Billy Collins’ point.

### **Forgetfulness By Billy Collins**

The name of the author is the first to go followed obediently by the title, the plot, the heartbreaking conclusion, the entire novel which suddenly becomes one you have never read, never even heard of,

as if, one by one, the memories you used to harbor decided to retire to the southern hemisphere of the brain, to a little fishing village where there are no phones.

Long ago you kissed the names of the nine muses goodbye and watched the quadratic equation pack its bag, and even now as you memorize the order of the planets,

something else is slipping away, a state flower perhaps, the address of an uncle, the capital of Paraguay.

Whatever it is you are struggling to remember, it is not poised on the tip of your tongue or even lurking in some obscure corner of your spleen.

It has floated away down a dark mythological river whose name begins with an L as far as you can recall

well on your own way to oblivion where you will join those who have even forgotten how to swim and how to ride a bicycle.

No wonder you rise in the middle of the night to look up the date of a famous battle in a book on war. No wonder the moon in the window seems to have drifted out of a love poem that you used to know by heart.

## Remembering Mac Nelson—*continued*

### ► Reflections on learning of the death of Mac Nelson, written by Dick Reddy and read at the Emeritus luncheon by Cathe Kilpatrick



Word spread yesterday of the death of Mac Nelson. Ginny was extraordinarily kind to let me know, learning of his death through Tom Loughlin's message to her. Ziya posted a message on Facebook and I've had correspondence as well with Fred Kowal, the statewide president of UUP.

I had the good fortune of knowing Mac since the early 1970s when he was contacting faculty and staff to become members of what became UUP. Mac was an utterly devoted unionist and he wanted UUP to be the very best union it could possibly be, both at the chapter level and statewide, and he worked unstintingly hard for decades toward that end.

But there was so much more to Mac. He was an outstanding teacher, a Distinguished Teaching Professor, someone who so effectively conveyed his knowledge, his love, indeed, his passion, especially for Shakespeare and for poetry to generations of our students. Mac was passionate as well about the theatre and music at Fredonia. He was an exceptional Fredonia "culture vulture," but he also was the driving force behind "The Catch Club" which met regularly at his home over decades.

Mac was a lifelong, exceptionally devoted fan of the Chicago Cubs but he also had a strong interest in baseball as a game and the developments and trends in it. He was overjoyed when the Cubs finally won the World Series under the leadership of Theo Epstein and Joe Madden. I remember, too, his proud account of sneaking onto the field at the Cubs Spring Training Facility in the Phoenix area and running the base paths there.

For a period of time Mac was a dedicated jogger until his knees objected too much and he had to stop.

For many years Mac lived on Route 20 immediately west of downtown Brocton and that and his Chicago roots and his love in particular of Yellowstone

National Park led him to write "Twenty West: The Great Road Across America," published by the SUNY Press ten years ago. It's a great read in and of itself, full of history and culture, but offering so many insights into Mac himself and into the friends with whom he shared his many journeys along Route 20.

Mac loved traveling during his vacation times. He cherished his time on Cape Cod in June, his time in the Florida Keys in January, and his summers spent driving throughout the West. One of his favorite things to do during boring meetings was to pull out small roadmaps of the West and plan routes to take in forthcoming summers.



Mac also was an avid bird watcher both at home and during his many travels. In one of my last (and possibly the last) message I sent Mac, I alerted him to an op-ed piece in the Times which was written by a naturalist who lives in Tennessee and who was describing her garden in the winter. At the very end, she mentioned that she had placed a heater in her birdbath so that the birds would be able to have access to water throughout the winter. Mac wrote back that he hadn't thought about doing that, but that he would do it just as soon as he could.

Mac Nelson was a force of nature, a man who lived life to the fullest and with great gusto. He made so many friends throughout his life and he remained loyal to them and they to him.

Mac, of course, will be profoundly missed, but he will truly remain larger than life to so many of us who were fortunate enough to share parts of his life with him.

And, yes, one more evidence of the kind of man Mac Nelson was, Tom Loughlin in his message to Ginny indicated that it was Mac's wish to donate his body to the UB Medical School.



Emeritus members at the spring luncheon held at Shorewood Country Club on March 8, 2019.

