Emeriti in the Community
2008-2009

Here’s a record of public spiritedness hard to match: Tony Crosby remains President of the Percy Cemetery Commission, serves as President of the Allegany County Genealogical Society, is Vice-President of the local Habitat for Humanity, edits the Journal of the Alleghenies, directs outreach for the Frostburg Methodist Church, and continues to raise funds for the Western Maryland Heifer Task Force. You can find historic Percy Cemetery in Frostburg, one block west of the Post Office off First Street, and by next summer you should see Habitat’s first house locally. The local Heifer project has raised over $20,000 for Heifer International as it pursues an end to hunger in 125 countries. Maybe these are sufficient credentials to qualify Tony for teaching the IDIS seminar, “Leadership in Non-Profit Organizations.”

Al Rose almost returned for the English retreat in September, getting about halfway from Baltimore to Savage River Lodge. We forgive him for missing. After all, Al always does his part—now, for instance, he teaches twice weekly in the rehabilitation division at Sheppard Pratt (a GED course, a basic reading class, one dealing Social Security issues for the mentally ill, and he leads a men’s group). And as an ordained clergyman in his parish, Al slices, splices, and dices—No, that’s not it—he... hatches, matches, and dispatches. He probably also patches.

Duties include serving as chaplain to developmentally disabled adults, organizing visits to the bereaved, and being useful on a committee for a sister parish in Haiti.

OMGosh, look at how Judie Thelen stays busy. She is on the Boards of Directors for the George Washington Carver Community Center, the Salvation Army, & the Cumberland YMCA; she serves on the Allegany County Chamber of Commerce Education Committee, the Allegany County United Way Community Response Committee, the Allegany County Democratic Central Committee, the Bowling Green Civic Committee, the Maryland Judicial Nominating Committee, Cumberland Rotary, and she was Organizer of the Barack Obama Campaign Headquarters, Cumberland, MD. Most exciting of late, Judie tells us, was her work in Legacy Leadership, a program training 55+ Marylanders to work as legislative assistants for members of the Assembly. After an extensive course at UMD, Judie was assigned as Legislative Aid for the chair of the Western Md. Delegation, Rep. Bob McKee, now alas and through no fault of his aid, innate McGee. Judie splits her time between Cumberland an her home in Annapolis.

Newbie emerita Amy Harman, as a member of the state leadership committee, has trained state officers and committee chairs for Delta Kappa Gamma International and this summer participated in its conference in Burlington, Vermont. Delta Kappa Gamma advances excellence in education for women and children. Amy is also honing her bridge skills with the ACBL clubs in Cumberland and Keyser, and she has begun singing baritone with the Lady Birds in Barber-shop.

Tom Small finishes a six year term as one of the three auditors for Greenville Township in Somerset County (that’s Pennsylvania, kids). Unopposed in the primary in May, Tom hopes for an easy re-election. He can take some credit for getting DSL (high-speed internet service) for the Pocahontas area, and he notes that his knowledge of geology, soils and environmental issues has allowed him to help township supervisors. Tom has also led field trips of the local geology for new FSU Geography faculty, and in August he took a bus load of Allegany County teachers on an all day geology trip.
“Emeriti in the Community” Continued

Catherine Gira continues her service on various boards: the Maryland Humanities Council (where she, former Chair, is identified as Government Liaison), Leadership Maryland, Leadership Maryland Workshops, and the Maryland Women’s Heritage Center. Catherine notes these help to keep my brain cells active. Crosswords are good, too (and Sudoku and reading and bridge and chess).

Marion Leonard has recently been appointed to FSU Foundation Board of Directors. She also serves as president of the Allegany Arts Council and as a member of the board of directors of the Community Trust Foundation (serving Allegany, Garrett and Mineral counties). Marion owns and operates Inner Leadership Associates.

Dick Weimer is on Frostburg City Council and is the city’s Commissioner of Finance. Dick also serves on the boards for the Frostburg Museum and the Arts and Entertainment District.

Former Frostburg Mayor and Maryland Senator John Bambacus continues to be engaged in local issues, including as what Cumberland Times/News reporter Mike Sawyer has called a vocal watchdog of wind energy projects. John recently presented a workshop to The Greater Cumberland Committee on Professional Conduct, Ethics, and Open Meetings Law. He is active in planning issues and serves on the board of the Savage River Watershed Association.

A year ago E*MERIT*I announced the formation of the Allegany County Retired Teachers Association (ACRTA), with then-President Jon Bauman. Jon died last May, but other emeriti continue in ACRTA: John Jones is now President (301-689-3763 or jones21532@verizon.net) and Dave Fell remains as treasurer (301-689-3916 or dfell@frostburg.edu). Dave was last heard from as he wrote us, emailing you from middle of Pacific. Bev and I are on our way to Hawaii with Bob and Ann McFarland and local friends Dave and Pat Brode to celebrate 146 years of marriage - 50 for McFs and 48 for Fells and Brodes. John lives part-time (guess which months) in Leesburg FL. When he’s back in Frostburg, Dr. Jones serves as an Elder of the First Presbyterian Church, where he also teaches a Sunday school class for adults.

Angie Bucchino tells us that in his role as a kind of volunteer chaplain he volunteers to pray with people who so request before surgery at WMHS. What should we make of his detail that 99% ask? If not a comment on faith (either in the health system or, well, you know) maybe it testifies to the efficacy of prayer when Ange is involved. He also runs a bible class for residents at the WMHS nursing home in Frostburg and notes, half of them sleep through it but I have learned a lot from their accumulated years of wisdom. Ange is also group facilitator of an adult study group concentrating on the Gospels, and he instructs converts to Catholicism. Active in the Wednesday noon interfaith book group, Angelo sometimes leads us (including Dennis Gartner, Zita McShane, John Wiseman, and me, Schlegel) through complex summaries of the world’s religions.

Philip Allen continues to enjoy life at Arundel on the Bay, a gated peninsular community adjoining Annapolis, as he describes. He hopes to preserve some of the community’s peculiar and diverse history in a series of video interviews desired for its website, and the community association has appointed Philip its official parliamentarian. He’s also editor of the bimonthly issues of the community newsletter. With other Fulbright alums, Philip formed an Annapolis Fulbright Alumni committee, an august group that has produced lectures, concerts, and discussion “salons” over the past three years. He writes they fire hoping to mount an ambitious public conference on the Chesapeake under Climate Change next Spring in the Annapolis State House. Politically speaking, Philip has rather completely transcended his long-term independent status and even defines himself now as a Democrat, having worked for Obama and done a stint as a poll judge. Philip wants emeriti to know that Warren Robbins, who founded the Museum of African Art at the Smithsonian and received Frostburg’s very first honorary doctorate in humane letters, died recently. Dr. Robbins generously gave art and his own time for African art shows at FSU and spoke at FSU’s 1988 Celebration of Africa.

Welcome to our ranks—newest emeriti are John Lowe and David Morton. John has, however, flunked retirement by accepting a position with Husson University in Maine, where he is now Director of University Services. John and Mikal Crawford (Associate Prof of Counseling Psych at Husson) live a short block from the Penobscot River, just south of Bangor. David and Bev still reside on Frost Ave. in Frostburg. Dave hopes to improve his poker game, among other ambitions.

Frostburg’s Faculty Senate has done a good thing. At the September 2 meeting it approved unanimously a provision to vote on emeritus status for any candidate the semester BEFORE retirement. Thus entitlements can continue without interruption as Emeritus status becomes effective immediately upon retirement.

In Memoriam

We are saddened by the deaths of two fellow emeriti this past year. Jon Bauman, Professor Emeritus of Music, died May 31, 2009. Jon taught at FSU 1970-2003, served as Chair, and directed the Jazz Ensemble. He was a well known composer and was active in the community. Janet Thomas, Professor Emerita of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at FSU, died October 18, 2009. Professor Thomas taught at Frostburg 1959-1994.

We extend our condolences to family and friends.
Other Notes from and About Friends

Zita McShane writes, ñI still miss teaching, of courseñ but not the incessant e-mails, the dozens of papers to grade, endless committee meetings, petulant and demanding and testing students that my overworked colleagues report. I get to FSU once a week for the Wednesday book club, twice a week for water aerobics; I do a lazy power walk and gentle settings on my treadmill every day; I travel to visit family in Ohio, Texas, Michigan and Pennsylvania and go on road trips with five vintage friends from high schoolñthe www group (wild, wacky widowsñ and one non-widow whose husband thinks she is practicing!). My most difficult, bittersweet activity has been an attempt to translate the dozens of journals my mother wrote in Hungarian; she led an incredible life and witnessed tragic events during World War II. Her prose is beautiful and powerful and I have a hard time trying to capture her voice in English. Am I doing anything to make this a better world? I doubt it. I alternate between feeling guilt for my selfishness and slothñ and rationalizing that I did my bit to hone the minds of young people. ñIñthink about worthwhile work tomorrow.ñ

Richard Trask has completed his collection ñA Telling Experience,ñ which is available at the online bookstore, www.publishamerica.net (search Richard M. Trask or ñA Telling Experienceñ). Pat Santoro studied blacksmithing with Kenny Braimter and is now on her own. In spring she taught an online course or FSU, and she sailed the night crossing from Miami to Bimini with her grad school roommate. They were stopped by US Coast Guard at 3:00 a.m., but released (whew!). In July she and Peggy Dalton spent two weeks on the Oregon coast, and in August she joined a Sierra Club outing for a week of ocean kayaking and yoga on Warren Island, Maineñno hot water but lots of fresh lobster over campfires, kayaking in Penobscot Bay, and yoga in the dewy meadow mornings.

John Wisemanñs book Joy in Mudville: Essays on Baseball and American Life is due out any day now. Francis Tam calls following his ñfun activitiesñ Reviewing a conceptual physics text, VISUALIZING PHYSICS, John Wiley& Sons, Inc.; leading ñPhysics Unraveledñ a workshop for the Math-Science Institute, in-service teachers in Upper and Lower Shore Counties; presenting workshops for Summer Robotics Institute for talented high school ñFuture Engineersñ and for 5ñth graders in Solar and Wind Institute at FSU, teaching the American Meteorological Society on-line graduate course, DataStream: OCEAN for in-service teachers; serving as Project Director of Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ)/ through Training Teachers in Physics and Physical Science (TOPPS), funded by MHEC for the third year.

Dave Press writes ñ1) Evidently Iñon not on the cutting room floor. My cousin told me that he saw me in my very short scene with Zellweger in My One and Only. I played a pawnbroker (again). 2) I was asked by the New Embassy Theatre to appear in a staged reading of Jim Ralstonñs newly re-written play, Many Mansions. The reading went so well that they are planning a full production in May. For those who donñt remember Jim, he was a member of our English faculty [Jim teaches now at Blue Ridge Community and Technical College]. Good play. 3) My wife Carolyne and I still stay relatively healthy. She continues to practice law and I still assist in the law office.ñ

And hereñan open letter from Michael Machado: ñAs I approach the evening of life, I find myself wanting more and more to live my life to the fullest and to enjoy every moment of living. This search for the abundant life finds its concrete expression in the pursuit of three simple goals: learning to eat rightly, to live wisely, and to love unconditionally. Essen (to eat), as I have come to discover it (Leon Kaas, The Hungry Soul), is a uniquely human art form. It is opposed to fressen (to devour, to gourmandize), which is what animals instinctively do. The ritual of table-fellowship is the place where civilized eating normally takes place. It promises to satisfy, not only the desires of the palate, but even more the hungers of the soul. This is achieved mainly through stimulating table conversation. Mealtime can also rise to the level of sanctified eating and, when it does, it can give us a glimpse of the divine and make us want to be like God. It is no mere accident that in the book of Leviticus, chapter 11, at the end of the list of commands of what we should eat, or not eat, Yahweh says, ñBe ye therefore holy as I am holy.î Who would have thought that the purpose of eating was to make us holy? Sophia, or Sapienta, is often depicted as a woman who represents the feminine side of God. This is probably because, from a manñs point of view, a woman is seen as someone who is exquisitely beautiful and desirable. She descends from her lofty heights to utter her call to wisdom. It is heard in the depths of every human heart. However, Lady Wisdom also has her counterpart in the person of Dame Folly, who, in a show-and-tell fashion, prominently displays her deceptive charms. Her appeal lies in tempt- ing human into committing sexual indiscretions or to engage in deceptive schemes that eventually bring about their downfall. In the end, the choice between Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly lies clearly with every one of us. The decisive act one way or the other is in our own power. Solomon was not only the wisest king who ever lived. He was also a great lover. He has left us a marvelous piece of poetry on love in his Song of Songs. In it two young lovers contrive to meet each other despite the societal restraints that aim at preventing them doing so. Each time they meet they never lack words to admire, appreciate, esteem, affirm, exalt, and even to exalt each otherñs good qualities. In the end they discover that Love is strong as Death and many waters cannot quench its flames. It always triumphs over all adversity. That is why Jesus exalted the power of love to divine love when he asked his disciples to love even their enemies. After spending all those years trying to meet the rigorous demands of academic life, I find it relaxing to spend my retirement in reflecting and writing about the priorities that matter to me most. NB. My commentary on The Book of Proverbs has been published (2007). When the priests were no longer available to teach Torah and the prophetsñ voices were no longer heard, the wisdom of the sages became a third force to lead the people back to Yahweh. I have also completed writing a commentary on Song of Songs, Solomonñs undying memorial to true love, and would like to write a tribute to unconditional love.î
Tom Small, aka "Lampnut Tom," approaches his 40th anniversary of collecting and restoring kerosene lighting devices. Tom specializes in non-pressurized incandescent kerosene lighting in America and hopes to complete a book on the subject shortly. These contraptions, burning safely and cheaply at about 60 watts, sound like just what I could use in my cabin on Dan's Mt., where I take my frosh comp papers to grade in fall while I afflict FSU firsters with my Leaning Community (taught, uh, with myself) on "Just War." I also Chair the Board for the Frostburg Creative Writing Center, now located in the Lyric Building on Main St., and last spring I played Antonio, the usurping villainous and unrepentant brother (no typecasting here) to Prospero, in Limelight Theater's production of "The Tempest" in St. Augustine. I still sometimes appear as Walt Whitman, in February at Jacksonville University and in November at Allegany College of Maryland. Just in time for fall term, I completed a draft of an online writing handbook that I will give to FSU for anyone to use, students and faculty alike. Free, it might meet USM's demand to lower textbook costs. Remember one and all–write to me with anything other emeriti might want to know about. Do it now, before you forget. Keith.

Ron Kealy notes that he does a lot of travel, south to Florida each year for about a month, to Ireland when he can, in recent years to Alaska and Hawaii, often to Raleigh to visit daughter and her family, and to Virginia, Minnesota, South Carolina, and Tennessee–something about golf and reunions. Ron tells us that Carl Slemmer wants just such a reunion for those who used to go on the infamous "fishing outings." Well, Ron corrects, Carl just wants a planning session. Too bad The Coral Reef is long closed. . . .

Following the lead of departments of Mathematics and Geography, both of which recognize their emeritus professors with plaques, Acting Chair Frank Parks decided that the English department should similarly honor its emeriti with a public plaque listing names and years of service. He also included English emeriti, including the legendary Molly Walter-Burnham, in the annual fall retreat at Savage River Lodge.

Dick Pesta called recently with a couple of good ideas: why don't we, he suggested, set up a scholarship, funded by emeriti? And perhaps we can also gather anecdotes, memories, stories at earlier times at FSU. The University might publish such a thing, which could be sold to help fund the scholarship.