UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO RETIRED FACULTY ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF APRIL 29, 2009 MEETING

The annual spring meeting of the University of Colorado Retired Faculty Association was held on Wednesday, April 29 in the University Memorial Center, Boulder Campus, room 235. The meeting was called to order by President Jim Wolf at 10:00 AM.

1. The minutes of the October 15, 2008 meeting were approved.

2. Jim Wolf read the names of 43 faculty retired members who died during 2008–2009. In addition to the names that appeared on the agenda, Jim included the following names.

   Svein Andresen UCB
   H.O. Brought UCB
   William Frankenberg UCD/HSC
   Kenneth L. Husbands UCB
   Claude McMillan HSC
   William A. Rense UCB
   Albert W. Smith UCB
   Raul Stern UCD/HSC
   Norman Weiner UCD/HSC

   The faculty members in attendance stood in silence in memory of their lost colleagues.

3. Gloria Main gave the treasurer’s report, observing that the association has nearly $14,000 in assets on hand. She acknowledged the $5000 subsidy from the President’s office.

4. Jim Wolf gave the President’s report. He also cited the $5000 subsidy from the President’s office, and promised to remind Vice-President Poliakoff that the subsidy was intended to be permanent. Jim also recognized the work of Neil Ashby on the redesign of the CURFA web site, which will soon be used to augment the Newsletter on items such as “keeping in touch.” A new listserv for the CURFA membership is also operational and will soon be used to circulate a questionnaire.

   Jim gave an update on the proposed Weber Herbarium, explaining that he has met with museum director Pat Kociolek several times and plans to meet with him again in the next ten days. At that time, Pat will present his plans for renovating the museum, which may require fund raising, and for naming the herbarium in honor of Professor Weber.

   Jim recognized the “milestone” represented by retired faculty member Jinks Cooper’s appointment to the Chancellor’s Search Committee. Jim noted that “because we are retired, we do not give up our history of service to the University of Colorado. We are still active and we still want to serve.”
Jim reported on his visit to the UCCS campus on the invitation of their CUFRA representative Richard Blades to meet with the combined retired faculty/staff organization. He was impressed by the recent development on the campus and by the amount of land available for expansion.

Finally, Jim noted Past-President Johann Stoyva’s absence due to bronchitis. He thanked Katherine Harris for her outstanding indispensable work, and he thanked Alan Kirkpatrick for his superb work on the newsletter.

5. Vice-President Nort Steuben gave a short report about his job as “social chairman.” He asked for suggestions for future tea times.

6. Stew Strickler gave the membership report. At the moment, CURFA has 632 members. Sixty percent have paid their dues, 20% are one year behind and 20% are more than one year behind in dues payments. Those in arrears will soon be dropped from the membership list.

7. Sandy Moriarty gave an update on the Carl Kisslinger CURFA Graduate Student Research Award. Due to the recession, the fund balance has declined from $48,606 one year ago to $43,259. The economic crisis has also has a negative impact on contributions. Nevertheless, three awards for $500 were given for the 2008-09 academic year. Sandy urged members to use the contribution form attached to her report.

8. Stuart Schneck, representative of retired faculty members and professional exempt employees on UBAB gave a detailed and informative report on benefits. He said that the current four faculty members of UBAB are the original members and have served terms of ten years. The President’s office, Faculty Council, and Staff Council recently decided that UBAB faculty members should serve no more than two consecutive four-year terms. Stuart will serve a one-year term beginning July 1 and will be eligible for two consecutive four-year terms.

The issue of self-funding for medical insurance is still being considered by the administration and a report is forthcoming.

Those who have Anthem Medicare Primary Plan (also called Medicare supplement) can get a 90-day supply of a prescribed medication at most retail pharmacies and Anthem will reimburse just as they do for a 30-day prescription. Using this method after July 1 is one way to avoid the $150 mail order prescription deductible that “has been so annoying to many of us.” There is a long list of medications that are available in a 30-day supply for $4 and a 90-day supply for $10. Although Anthem will not reimburse for this expense, the cost is extremely low. Competition has led to low prices. Check with your pharmacist for the best prices.

Open enrollment began Monday, April 27 and will last through May 22. Brochures and guides have been mailed. New premium rates for Anthem and Kaiser will be released on May 7 and will be posted on the PBS web site. Stuart mentioned that there are a few errors in the Anthem Medicare Primary Plan summary. As part of the open enrollment process, dependents must be recertified for an upcoming federal audit. CU is also looking into cases of ineligible dependents.

Finally, Stuart mentioned that there have been errors in account information given by TIAA-CREF. Specifically, commuted and federal estate tax values have been wrong and annuity unit values given on the phone have also been in error. Stuart talked to TIAA-CREF senior officials and extracted correct values and an apology. If problems appear or persist on individual accounts, it is advisable to contact PBS and work with a contract manager. Stuart Schneck’s full report will be on the CURFA website.
9. Oliver Ellsworth gave the Faculty Council report. The issue of online access to journal holdings for retired faculty members appears to be closer to resolution. Originally, retired faculty members were denied access because of the alleged excessive cost. Oliver has negotiated a plan whereby requests by individual retired faculty members will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Oliver is working for improved communication between the Regents and the retired faculty. He is investigating the possibility of holding periodic luncheons that would serve this purpose.

10. The report from the Boulder Faculty Assembly was given by David Kassoy, who described a motion presently under consideration by the BFA that would lead to tenure opportunities for instructors (who now number over 1000 on the Boulder campus). The motion has two parts: (i) to endorse the idea and (ii) to form a committee to study the idea. David asked for guidance about how to respond on behalf of CURFA. Considerable discussion ensued during which support was expressed for some kind of employment security for instructors who carry a disproportionate amount of the teaching load, but are limited by state law to one-year appointments. It was pointed out that, while security for instructors is needed, it may not take the form of a tenure system. The following motion was eventually presented by Norb Steuben:

   The CU Retired Faculty Association recommends that David Kassoy vote for the motion currently before the BFA endorsing the idea the University should develop a policy that provides an opportunity for employment security to instructors.

The motion passed unanimously.

11. Richard Blade reported from the UCCS campus that newly retired Dean of Nursing Carole Schoffstall is the new chair of the retired faculty-staff organization on that campus. Richard also announced that UCCS recently received one of 20 anonymous $5.5 million grants nation-wide, given for exceptional service to students.

12. There was no report from Health Sciences Center.

13. Clyde Zaidins announced that he will be leaving Denver in June and will need to be replaced as the CURFA representative from the Auraria campus.

14. As an item of new business, Jim Hester described the Emeritus College at Arizona State University that features lunches, lectures, a quarterly journal, and a fund for grants.

Also under new business, Richard Blade wanted to get a feeling for how CURFA members felt about expanding the opportunities for non-faculty members of the CU community to become members of CURFA. It was pointed out that the constitution presently offers this opportunity for some non-faculty members (for example, certain administrators). Jim Wolf will meet with Richard and Stew Strickler to draft a policy.

A motion of appreciation for the work done by Jinx Cooper as the BFA liaison was approved unanimously.

15. The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 AM.

The business meeting was followed by a luncheon at which two of the three Carl Kisslinger CURFA Graduate Student Research Award recipients, Yanjuan Yang of the UCD College of Business and Pedro Pena of Anschutz Medical Campus, gave short presentations on their
research. The luncheon speaker was Tim Bour, Executive Director of the Boulder Innovation Center.
Submitted by Bill Briggs