



President's View

Margaret Messer

Your Board of Directors of the Eastern Illinois University Annuity Association sends greetings as we continue our service to you in attempting to protect your pensions and health insurance. I am honored to serve as your president for 2017 alongside a wonderful team of experienced leaders. We are delighted to welcome four new members to our Board of Directors: Nancy Dole, Marsha Figgins, Gail Mason, and John Ryan.

The academic year 2015 - 2016 brought many changes to our campus with more than one hundred faculty and staff members retiring. We welcome our recent annuitants, not only as members of our Association, but also to serve in various ways to further our mission. We hope you attended our first event of 2017, our Chapter meeting where Ms. Katie Anselment, our EIU Legislative Liaison from Springfield, was our guest speaker and shared her views of our state finances in relation to our pensions.

We look forward to our spring luncheon, which will take place Friday, April 28, at the LifeSpan Center on Loxa Road. Come join your friends as we enjoy a great meal, fellowship, and

entertainment from members of the Coles County Barbershop Chorus. Doors will open at 11:00 a.m. with lunch at 11:30 a.m. followed by the presentation of our scholarship recipient. Marsha Figgins is our new Chair of the Events Committee, who will coordinate our luncheon. Our Membership Committee invites you to bring a retiree or employee who is not a member of EIUAA as your guest to the spring luncheon. If they become a new member, you and your guest will be entered into a drawing for a gift card for a meal at a local restaurant.

Plans are underway also for our July 13th Chapter meeting where our guest speaker, Kaye Dent, an attorney and specialist in elder law, will address long-term care insurance and estate planning. More information will be available as we approach that date, as well as information for our October 5th Chapter meeting.

We will continue to keep you informed via email of developments in Springfield and opportunities for you to voice your opinion. Together we can make a difference. Our Legislative Committee will report at each meeting to give us current information and instructions for actions that we can take to protect our pensions.

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Around Town

John Kilgore and Audrey Edwards

Anselment Addresses Chapter Meeting



Katie Anselment's day began with getting her four daughters off to school. She then jumped into her car and drove to Charleston, arriving at the Neal Welcome Center in the nick of time, around 10, to speak at the EIUAA chapter meeting on February 23. A spirited question and answer session followed her brief prepared remarks.

Anselment, EIU's liaison to the state legislature, is a 2002 graduate of Eastern with an M.A. in Political Science. She now lives in Springfield with her husband, who is a lobbyist for the Illinois Association of Park Districts, and their daughters.

Anselment noted that Governor Rauner's recent budget address, his third since taking office, showed little change from previous proposals. Rauner is now willing to consider an increase in the state income tax, but insists on a statewide property tax freeze in exchange. In EIU's case, the governor's proposal would fund the university at just 85% of the appropriation for FY 2015, the last year in which Illinois had a budget.

"That, sadly, sounds pretty decent," Anselment commented, since for the two years past EIU has had nothing but partial, stopgap state appropriations. Eastern has been forced to spend down side accounts and emergency funds during that time.

On the other side of the budget struggle, Senate President John Cullerton and Minority leader Christine Radogno, both Democrats, have been trying to develop a budgetary "grand bargain" in the Illinois Senate. Their ambitious plan would incorporate various bills under a provision that each takes effect only if all others do. Component bills would address many aspects of the state's fiscal crisis: pensions, minimum wage levels, Workers' Compensation

Continued on p. 4

EIUAA Officers

Margaret Messer, mkmesser@eiu.edu	President
Jeffrey Lynch jplynch@eiu.edu	President-Elect
Mary Anne Hanner, mahanner@eiu.edu	Past President
Jill Nilsen, jfnilsen52@hotmail.com	Secretary
Robert Whittenbarger, rwhittenbarger@gmail.com	Treasurer

Phone Contact: Margaret Messer, 217-345-9579

Web Page: <http://castle.eiu.edu/annuitants>

Board Members

Vicki Hampton, Jill Nilsen, Mary Anne Hanner, Henry Davis, John Flynn, Margaret Messer, Jeffrey Lynch, Robert Whittenbarger, Marsha Figgins, John Ryan, Gail Mason, Nancy Dole

Committees

Communications: Vicki Hampton (Chair), Audrey Edwards, John Kilgore, Roann Kopel, Robert Whittenbarger, John Ryan

Events: Marsha Figgins (Chair), Ernie Secrest, Jody Horn, Marita Metzke, Rosalee Noble

Legislative: Jill Nilsen (Chair), Henry Davis, Sue Kaufman, Gail Mason, Jeffrey Lynch, Jim Bush

Membership: Mary Anne Hanner (Chair), John Best, John Flynn, Joan Zieren, Dale Wolf, Kathryn Bulver, Norma Taylor

Scholarship: Nancy Dole (Chair), jndole@consolidated.net, Margaret Messer, Brad Green, Nancy Curran

CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
Th, Feb. 23, 2017, 9:00 a.m.	Chapter Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
Th, Mar. 2, 2017, 9:00 a.m.	Board of Directors Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
F, April 28, 2017, doors open 11:00 a.m.	ANNUAL LUNCHEON	LifeSpan Center
Th, June 1, 2017, 9:00 a.m.	Board of Directors Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
Th, July 13, 2017, 9:00 a.m.	Chapter Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
Th, Sept. 7, 2017, 9:00 a.m.	Board of Directors Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
Th, Oct. 5, 2017, 9:00 a.m.	Chapter Meeting	Neal Welcome Center
Th, Nov. 30, 2017, 9:00 a.m.	Board of Directors Meeting	Neal Welcome Center

Note: Chapter meetings at the Neal Welcome Center begin with an 8:30 a.m. social time and come to order at 9:00.



News From Our Members



In April, 1964, 14 music students and their professor, Dr. Earl Boyd, embarked on a tour of the Caribbean sponsored by the USO. We performed at military bases in the Panama Canal Zone, Puerto Rico, San Salvador, Eleuthera, Grand Turk Island and Guantanamo, Cuba, plus several installations in the Southeast.

We were a song and dance group, called the Easternaires, a bit ahead of the swing choir era. We sang show tunes; there were vocal and instrumental solos, and Dr. Boyd was a great emcee. I was assistant director, being in the midst of my Master's Degree, and the pianist.

—*Suellyn Lindsey Garner* *BS in Ed, 1963*
MA, August, 1964

Bruce Guernsey (English, 2003). Over the last few months, several of my poems have been published online at *Autumn Sky Poetry*, <https://autumnskydailypoetry.com>

I have also been asked to judge the Edgar Allan Poe Memorial Prize sponsored by the Virginia Poetry Society and am in the midst of reading the dozens of poems the Society just sent. I may be tempted to say "nevermore" next year. But I take a break every Wednesday afternoon to meet at Roc's with my dear friends and former colleagues Jim Quivey, Jeff Lynch, Bill Searle, John Kilgore, and Jim Johnson. Over a drink or few, we tell some wonderfully funny jokes (or so we think) and discuss the news of the week — in particular, what's happening at dear old EIU.

Helen Krehbiel (Music, 1998). I moved to Hood River, OR, in 2014. My son Rod, his wife Theresa, and my grandchildren, Rory and Jasper, have made my life here in Hood River a dream come true! I live in an independent living facility, play lots of piano, and enjoy leading a monthly Singalong, plus pool, bridge, writing group and more. Many of the residents here were orchardists. Actually, I had never met one of those till I came here. The scenery is breathtaking — beautiful Mt. Hood and Mt. Adams are stunning! Come see!

Norma Taylor (Student Life Office, 2008). I retired in March 2008 after 22 years in the Student Life Office as the Greek Secretary. I truly enjoyed working with the sorority and fraternity members, the advisors, and the staff. I still keep in touch with some students and the Greek Life Directors and admire that 3 of the 4 have gone on with doctorate degrees and that others are still successful in the same field at another university. I still live in the house built by my husband, EIU's first hired electrician, John F. Taylor.

I am thankful to be able to be busy. I am still a Stanley Home Products/Fuller representative, I have a booth in a Sullivan Antique Mall, I do the church bulletins at Loxa Presbyterian Church, and I am president of the East Central Illinois Woman's Christian Temperance Union.



I was the first person to occupy an office in what is now Klehm Hall.

Shortly after President Doudna came to Eastern, he suggested that the Industrial Arts department might consider offering a technical program in the industrial area. Drs. Klehm and Landis appointed me to chair the study committee charged with developing the new program.

When the Board of Governors approved the new program, I was appointed chair of the new Department of Industrial Technology. I was given a travel budget and released from teaching duties in order to visit schools to explain the program to school counselors.

We had no office space in the Industrial Arts building, so it was decided that I should occupy an office in the suite to be assigned to the department when the new building was finished.

For several years we were the only department with 100% placement for our graduates.

—*Wayne Coleman*



Remembering Family and Friends

[FOLLOWING ARE BRIEF NOTICES ONLY. TO READ A FULL OBITUARY OR LEAVE CONDOLENCES, VISIT WWW.JG-TC.COM AND CLICK ON "OBITUARIES."]

Perry Gene Davis (Buildings and Grounds), age 80, of Casey, IL passed away at home, surrounded by his family, at 12:29 p.m. on Wednesday, October 12.

Mary Caroline Simpson (Art), 56, died on Tuesday, October 25.

Dixie J. Dunning (Dining Services) passed away on Monday, November 14, at Carle Foundation Hospital in Urbana.

Susan Wright (Housekeeping), 81, of Charleston passed away on Thursday, December 8.

Catherine Eloise Black (Food Service) passed away on December 20.

Our thanks to Dr. Alan Baharlou for collecting the obituaries.

KEEPING CONNECTED

EIU Homepage

<http://www.eiu.edu>

EIUAA Homepage

<http://castle.eiu.edu/annuitants>

SUAA Homepage

<http://suaa.org>

Central Management Services

Homepage: www.illinois.gov/cms/Pages/default.aspx

Benefits: 800-442-1300

State Rep. Reggie Phillips

811 W. Lincoln Ave. Charleston, IL 61920
217-348-1110

State Sen. Dale Righter

88 Broadway Ave. Suite 1, Mattoon, IL 61938
217-235-6033

Office of the Governor

<http://www.illinois.gov/gov/contactus/Pages/default.aspx>
217-782-0244

US Sen. Dick Durbin

711 Hart Senate Building, Washington, DC 20510
202-224-2152

US Sen. Tammy Duckworth

info@tammyduckworth.com
202-224-2152

President's Message, from p. 1

Thank you to those of you who attended the recent presentation at EIU by Ralph Martire, Executive Director of the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability. We learned of the need for grassroots education in order to rebuild our economic base in Illinois and how cuts to higher education hurt the economy. Notice of this event was sent via email to enable us to attend and remain abreast of the current status of Illinois finances. Watch for future notices as they pertain to our members.

I am grateful for our officers for 2017 along with our many committee chairs and members. Jeffrey Lynch is our president-elect, Jill Nilsen our secretary, Mr. Bob Whittenbarger our treasurer and Mary Anne Hanner our past president. More information regarding committees is available on our website, and I'm sure we can find a place for you to serve. Thank you to those who responded to our plea for committee members in January. We have five new committee members joining us. Thank you for your willingness to serve. You make our leadership team a stronger one.

I look forward to a great year as we work together.



Around Town, from p. 1

reform, and especially the need for greater revenue. One provision being considered would broaden the state's sales tax base by taxing services as well as goods.

Debate over such proposals has sometimes broadened into larger questions such as the overall relationship of universities to community colleges in Illinois. Springfield has been pressuring universities and colleges to "do what they do best" rather than duplicating programs in order to offer a comprehensive curriculum at each site. Universities can have a hard time competing with community colleges for favor in Springfield, since every legislator has a college in his or her district, whereas only twelve districts contain universities.

As a result, Eastern and other colleges and universities continue to suffer from historic under-funding. Whenever there is a shortfall of revenue, said Ms. Anselment, "We and the social services are the ones who have to absorb it."

Democrats and Republicans remain far apart in Springfield these days, with many different budget initiatives competing for attention and support. The result, sometimes, is a fearful atmosphere in which "everyone has their paranoia and their tinfoil hats." But the energetic level of debate gives at least some grounds for optimism.

Getting to Know You: Margie Checkley

Audrey Edwards

When I first started at EIU, I had to put lots of materials on reserve, and that's how I met Margie Checkley. When I introduced myself, she said she knew someone else named Audrey, and we started a conversation that has continued ever since. When I went to her overflowing retirement party, I realized that pretty much everyone knew Margie. "The library was my family," she says. "I loved working there."

Margie never actually studied library science. After high school, she attended Utterbacks Business College and worked for Illinois Consolidated for many years. She began work at EIU in 1970 and earned her bachelor's degree in the humanities in 1989. "I liked library work, though," she remembers. "I've always been good at numbers, systematic. I like order. And I really liked the student workers as well as the many faculty who used the Reserve Services at Booth."

As much as she enjoyed working with faculty and students, Margie has always placed a high value on her own family. Four of her seven siblings lived in several states, including Texas, Indiana, and North Carolina, but by the time Margie was born, the family had settled in Mattoon. After her husband graduated from EIU, the young couple moved to Dallas but returned to this area after five years so their three daughters could be near the grandparents. Her husband died in 2013, soon after she retired, and her daughters have scattered now: the nearest lives in Hoopston, Illinois, the others in California and Washington State. "For me, the hardest part is being away from family," she reflects.

Fortunately, Margie has always been an outgoing person. Not only does she have friends from her EIU days, she also has joined a variety of groups. She volunteers with Habitat for Humanity, the Neal Welcome Center, and the Wesley United Methodist Church Helping Hands, where she served as a Stephen Minister for several years. She has joined Past Forward, a memoir-writing group. She has taken ballroom dancing lessons at the Regent Ballroom in Champaign and wants to get back to it. She also belongs to two widows' support groups, one for conversation and another for trips. "We're not like Whistler's Mother, sitting in a rocking chair," she exclaims. Far from it.

Margie was my first friend at Eastern and a friend to many others there. Now she's using her social skills to create a remarkably successful life in retirement. I've read that people who have a strong social network tend to live longer. It's clear they also live better.



Around Town, from p. 4

CTBA Targets Budget Mess

Higher education in Illinois has suffered disproportionately in the state's current budget emergency.

That, in part, was the message of Ralph Martire, Executive Director of the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, in a February 2 presentation at EIU's Buzzard Hall. EIUAA was well represented in the audience and helped staff the event, which was sponsored by UPI.

The [CTBA](#) is a nonprofit, bipartisan research group, based in Chicago, which describes itself as dedicated to "promoting social and economic justice" by "pursuing fact-based solutions."

Illinois has been operating without a state budget since fiscal year 2015. Funding for many state services has proceeded by court order, and appropriations to K-12 education have continued near the FY2015 funding level. Higher education, however, has received only partial, stop-gap appropriations.

During FY2016, higher education in Illinois received \$1.323 billion less than in FY2015. "That's an outrageous year-to-year cut," said Martire.

The historic cutbacks have occurred against a background of long-term disinvestment in higher education, according to Martire. In spite of the "demonstrable economic importance of higher education," Illinois General Fund support to the area has declined every year for the past decade. The net decrease since FY2000 has been 41%.

Effects of the cuts at Eastern have included massive layoffs, dwindling financial aid and student enrollment, and decreased academic offerings, with many courses and programs currently under review.

Following the presentation, Martire joined UPI President John Miller and Political Science Professor Rich Wandling for a panel discussion and a Q & A session with the audience.

Asked what was needed to correct the state's unsustainable fiscal trajectory, Martire was blunt: "We are one of the richest states in the richest country in the world. We need more tax revenue, period, sooner rather than later."

It's a difficult conversation, but EIUAA members might help to spread the word.



COMMITTEE REPORTS

Legislative

The Legislative Committee continues to monitor legislation at the state level that can impact our annuitant members, positively or negatively. When it is appropriate, we will ask you to make phone calls, send letters, and personally visit your Illinois legislators and the Governor. Illinois politics are unpredictable and so is our ability to foresee what may happen in Springfield. Please check your inbox for messages from us via the EIUAA listserv. We appreciate in advance your willingness to move to action at a moment's notice!

If you are interested in joining the EIUAA Legislative Committee, please contact us! We have a big task ahead of us!

—Jill Nilsen

Membership

The EIUAA Membership Committee sends a hearty thank-you to the EIUAA members who have changed their dues payments to monthly SURS deductions. This change is extremely helpful to EIUAA because membership dues do not lapse. If you have not switched to a SURS deduction for your dues payment, please consider doing that!

The Membership Committee continues to work to track and increase our membership. In November we sent letters and brochures to all current employees at EIU. We were pleased that we did gain some new members from that initiative.

In March, SURS will be on the EIU campus to speak to employees about retirement. EIUAA plans to have an information table near the location of the SURS sessions to provide potential retirees with information about EIUAA.

— Mary Anne Hanner

Scholarship

The application form and criteria for the EIU Annuitants Association Scholarship are available at the [EIUAA website](#).

To compete for the award, a student must be an undergraduate child or grandchild of a current or retired Eastern employee. The employee must have at least five years of service to the university, and the student receiving the award must be enrolled for at least six semester hours at EIU. The recipient's GPA must be at least 3.0.

Applicants must submit three documents:

1. A completed application [form](#)
2. A written statement of career goals and financial need
3. A letter of recommendation from an Eastern Illinois University advisor or faculty member.

In the event that there are several suitable applicants, preference will be given to recipients with financial need.

Applications for this fall were due March 1, 2017, at Brainard House on 4th Street.

— Nancy Dole



BULLETIN BOARD

Neal Welcome Center Looking for Volunteers

Please consider volunteering time as an Ambassador at the Neal Welcome Center. Spend a pleasant few hours each week greeting visitors and talking about EIU. Contact Nancy Zytka at nrzytka@eiu.edu or 217-581-7388.

Estate Planning and Long-Term Care Insurance

Kaye Dent, JD
Thursday, July 13, 9:00
Neal Welcome Center

At regular Chapter Meeting

HOLD SPRINGFIELD'S FEET TO THE FIRE Support SUAAction



The fund that protects YOUR Retirement Benefits
<http://suaa.org/action.php>

P.O. Box 1770, Springfield, Illinois 62705-1770

Please join us for the 46th Annual EIU Annuitants Association Luncheon

Friday, April 28, 2017

Lifespan Center

11021 E. Co. Rd. 800N, Charleston, IL 61920-8632

Entertainment: Coles County Barbershop Quartet

MENU

Chicken Florentine and Roast Beef

Mashed Potatoes and Gravy

Green Beans § Corn

Coleslaw § Noodles

Coffee, Tea, and Lemonade

Pies (sugar and sugar free), Rolls



RSVP by returning the completed bottom of this form by **April 17, 2017**

Doors open at 11:00 a.m. with luncheon beginning at 11:30 a.m.

Bring a non-member (EIU employee or retiree); if your guest joins us as a member, your names will be entered into a drawing for a free lunch at a local restaurant.



RSVP

Reserve _____ luncheon tickets at \$10.00 per person (includes gratuity)

Annuitant (name) _____

Annuitant (name) _____

Guest (name) _____

Enclosed is a check payable to EIU Annuitants Association for \$ _____

Mail TO

EIU Annuitants Association Luncheon
Brainard House
600 Lincoln Avenue
Charleston, IL 61920

EIU ANNUITANTS ASSOCIATION
BRAINARD HOUSE
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, IL 61920

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