

**A  
DECADE  
OF SUCCESS**

*An Illustrated History of the*

**ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY  
RETIREES ASSOCIATION**

**DEAN SMITH**



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*An Illustrated History of the*  
**ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY  
RETIRES ASSOCIATION  
1991-2000**

*By*  
Dean Smith

*Edited by*  
June P. Payne



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# PREFACE

**O**n these pages is a celebration of the Arizona State University Retirees Association. It is to honor its members and those who have served. It is to inspire retirees who follow. It is to inform all who read what is found here.

An amazing part of the Arizona State University Retirees Association (ASURA) story is that the association was conceived by ASU administrators not yet retired. Another part of the story is that the association took so long to be formed. Arizona State University is large - - the fourth largest university in the United States. The third part of the story is that ASU is so large after such a brief life: It was granted university status in 1958 by vote of the people, designated a Research I university in 1994, and participated in the Rose Bowl on two occasions during a relatively brief membership in the Pacific Ten Conference.

There are members of the retirees association who have been a part of all that, and some even before. Each ASURA member, no matter in what year employed, retired from a dramatically different university and community than existed when he or she joined the active ranks of ASU.

There is the wisdom of the founders of ASURA in the broad inclusiveness of membership. Those eligible include all who retire from ASU no matter what position held on campus; spouses of deceased ASU retirees; and all who are retired of ASU employment. Many who are currently employed at the university and are at least 55 years of age have accepted associate membership.

Prior to the founding of ASURA, with rare exceptions, a retired employee had no further contact with the university. There was, and is, the Faculty Emeriti Club for retired faculty, but its activities have been mainly social, limited to four luncheons each academic year. There are various departments and colleges that invite retirees to hold periodic gatherings, but those invited are mainly retired faculty. The ASURA has

included all retirees, both staff and faculty, to be involved in its activities and to be included in its services.

The ASURA is composed of "old friends" who were employed at the university, and "new friends" made while serving the association. Those who serve the ASURA demonstrate a loyalty to, and positive memories about, ASU while serving as active employees. They come to the ASURA with an impressive breadth and depth of experiences, talents, and a collective memory.

The amazing story of the ASURA is that it exists. This is a successful organization, serving its members, the university, and the community.

This book is a special celebration because of many who were involved in the founding have continued to serve for ten years. The event is a celebration because there are those who now serve who were not retired at the founding of the association.

The ASURA Bylaws provide formality and structure. However, there is flexibility and insight within the board of directors so that, when it is found that the bylaws occasionally are not followed, there is not a demand for members to conform, but the bylaws are changed to conform to the practice.

There is the discipline of an annual budget, but the board has been flexible enough to modify expenditures when an appropriate situation arose. The response to an identified need has been more important than a profit from a non-profit organization. With all that, the budget continues to be adequate.

The ASURA is more than could have been anticipated at its founding. Successful, continuing activities include:

*Prime Times*, the quarterly edition of the ASURA newsletter. Contents include activities of the members, listings of services, words of wisdom and guidance, photographs of activities, and questions answered. This service has been provided by those who had professional experience in providing publications on campus.





Formerly the Valley National Bank building, the Visitors Information Center at the corner of Apache Boulevard and Rural Road houses the ASURA office.

Office telephone service is provided mornings and afternoons, Monday through Friday. This is the major contact with the association for all members. Questions are answered, information is provided, and members find in the service a voice of friendship and support. Volunteers contribute by typing, telephoning, stuffing envelopes, mailing, filing, and maintaining records.

The Education Committee creates the annual ASURA Retirees Day, with classes of interest to members, a luncheon with guest speaker, and sometimes campus tours. This event also provides a time to continue and renew friendships. The success of the program is evidenced by the increasing enrollment each year.

Special activities are popular and of considerable variety. Local events have included musical offerings, tours of arboretums and Christmas light viewings. Each year an overseas tour is arranged.

Members are advised about the critical issue of medical insurance.

Individuals have committed to informing members of current and changing programs. The success of this program is measured, in part, by fewer calls for assistance each year. The program is helping members avoid errors.

The association adopts a family each year, selected by a Tempe school nurse, to provide food, clothing, toys and other gifts. The membership has provided financial support. Those chairing the program have been creative in providing for the families served.

The association awards a scholarship, which pays for a one-year in-state tuition for a student returning to the university after several years' absence from formal education. Worthy, gifted, and hard-working individuals have been selected.

A list of volunteers offering to serve units on campus is maintained. The libraries and campus arboretum are among those that have used retiree volunteers. Volunteers also offer to serve in community activities.

The Legislative Liaison Committee is composed of members committed to meeting with Arizona legislators and attending legislative sessions to influence legislation favorable to ASU retirees. The association is a registered lobbyist. The efforts are conducted in cooperation mainly with representatives of the retiree associations of Northern Arizona University, the University of Arizona, and the Arizona Education Association. These activities are augmented by the support of the legislative district coffees coordinated by the ASU Alumni Association and alumni associations of the other two state universities.

The results are dramatically evidenced in that, over the previous two years, a vote of the people protected the security of the State Retirement System, and a vote of the Legislature increased the retirement payment by 5 percent for a cost of living adjustment.

There is a continuing effort to identify services and discounts on and off campus that are available to ASURA members. As an example, the association successfully represented staff members in obtaining free campus parking and the distribution of *ASU Insight*, the ASU faculty and staff newsletter. Previously, these benefits had been provided only for retired faculty.

All the above efforts and activities are provided by ASURA volunteers. It has been said that those who serve the ASURA are "an active, caring group who get out there and work."

The success of these programs and how much they are appreciated is best demonstrated by the continuing increase in membership. At the beginning of its tenth year, ASURA has 900 members, nearly two-thirds of all ASU retirees.

Membership dues provide adequate financing for all expenditures determined appropriate by the board. Indeed, contributions and donations to various activities have increased each year as the membership has increased.

Of major importance to the operation and financial strength of the association is the support of the Arizona State University administration. The Vice Presidents of University Relations and later Institutional Advancement have provided financial, logistical and moral support. Such support would not have been possible without the endorsement of ASU President Lattie Coor, who was in office during the formation and growth of the association. Two offices are available exclusively for the ASURA, sharing the former Valley National Bank building on the northwest corner of Apache Boulevard and Rural Road with units of the Alumni Association and Institutional Advancement.

A review of retirement literature for universities indicates that there are retiree associations that have a longer history and some provide services different from those offered by the ASURA. However, none appears to provide more activities or is more responsive to the needs of the membership. In some associations it appears that one segment or another of the retiree group has exclusive right to membership, or holds primary positions, but the ASURA consciously provided equal roles to staff and faculty. Some university retiree associations appear to have been created in response to a threat or a specific need of its members. The ASURA was created out of strength, without threat or pressure, and has responded effectively to subsequent needs.

The wisdom of the founders is reflected in the bylaws, which state that each board member, elected for a three-year term, may not run for re-election without at least a one-year break in service. This assures new ideas are injected each year. To retain balance, there is the requirement

that board membership be approximately equally divided between retired staff and faculty. There are 15 members on the board, each serving a three-year term, on overlapping years. Therefore, each year five new members join the board. Those who choose to continue serving the association after their board service is completed -- and many do -- are welcome on committees and volunteer activities. Those who wish to resume service on the board, and some have, can run for re-election. The limitation is similarly applied to the position of board president, in that the office could not be held by one individual more than a year during the three-year board term. While circumstances have not always permitted implementation, it is the intent that the position of president alternate annually between staff and faculty.

As board and committee members have come and remained, or come and gone, a major stabilizing influence has been the role performed by the ultimate ASURA volunteer, Corrine Irvan. Corrine accepted the role as office manager from nearly the beginning of the association at the end of 1991 and has made almost daily contributions through planning, organization, staffing, directing, and controlling for the association. She is always at the service of the membership and the board, and aids the members and board in providing services to the association.

In a recent national, independent study, it was determined that the retirement system under which all ASU staff, administrators, and most faculty are retired, is ranked second in the nation among all government employee retirement programs in terms of effectiveness of administration, security of investments, and return on investment. Increasingly, rather than the state system, active faculty are selecting the nation-wide TIAA-CREF retirement systems available to public school teachers and university faculty. It is one of the most effective retirement systems in the United States. Therefore, whatever the choice, ASU retirees are provided security through outstandingly profitable and well-administered retirement programs.

Continuing opportunities and challenges exist for the ASURA, including an on-going effort to attract *all* ASU retirees to become association members. There is a desire that all segments of retirees participate in association leadership and activities. In the first decade, leadership has been mainly identified with retired white collar staff, administrators, and faculty. There is the need for continued improvement in medical coverage, including greater support by HMOs and a higher percentage of the premiums paid by the state. There is the need to increase the monthly retirement payments to many retirees who -- having received low incomes while employed, have been retired several years and lack adequate cost of living adjustments -- are now at the poverty level.

There have been suggestions about the creation of a library on subjects related to retiree health and services available to the membership. The association could take a more active role in the retirement orientation of those currently employed.

It has been said that an organization defines itself by what it does, not by the language of its bylaws and stated objectives. The ASURA has developed and grown by the circumstances surrounding it, but, more importantly, by its active members.

ASURA might never have developed, and certainly would not have developed when it did, if it had not been for the inspiration of active employees and the approval of Lattie Coor. Certainly, the timing was appropriate. When the opportunity was provided, there were those, mainly active and retired staff, who accepted leadership in creating what has become the Arizona State University Retirees Association. It is fortunate that both staff and faculty have come forward to provide continuing support for the work begun.

This book was prepared by Dean Smith, a long-time recorder of events at Arizona State University and one who played an important role in the creation of the ASURA. When Dean was approached by the ASURA board of directors with the request that he take the lead in preparing this history, he agreed without hesitation and assembled a group of enthusiastic volunteers to aid him. Dean has donated his time and valuable

talents in writing all that is contained here. To him go the thanks of all who are ASU retirees and all who support Arizona State University.

Hal White

ASURA President, 1998-99

## Chapter One

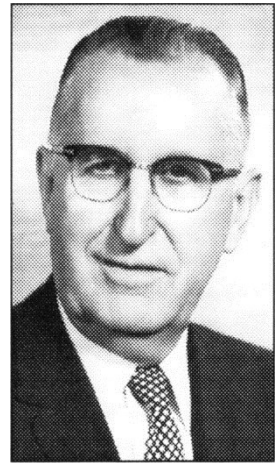
### BEFORE THE BEGINNING

**D**r. John Odus Grimes, dean of Arizona State Teachers College and President Grady Gammage's top administrative officer, became concerned about his own approaching retirement in the early 1950s. The state legislature had made little provision for the financial needs of retirees, and those who had not saved a substantial sum over the years were likely to face a grim future.

Dean Grimes had good reason to worry, because his retirement pay -- despite his more than a quarter century of employment and one of the



John Grimes



Grady Gammage

highest salaries at the college -- proved to be little more than \$100 per month. So disturbed was he that he ran for a seat in the state legislature and devoted much of his time in a decade of retirement to lobbying legislators and other state officers for more generous treatment of those who had served the state faithfully for so many years.

He thus became possibly the earliest of ASU's retiree advocates, and he deserves the gratitude of those faculty and staff retirees who came after him.

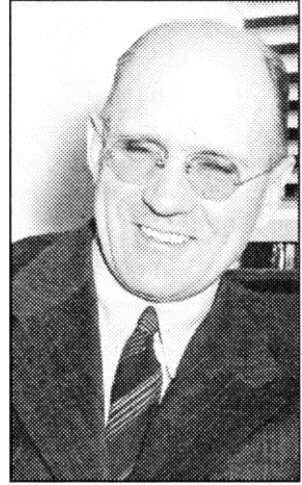
The first association of ASU retirees was the Faculty Emeriti Club, which now has been meeting for periodic luncheons for more than two decades. The Emeriti Club has served an important function in preserving retired faculty members' ties with the university and each other after leaving the campus.

But there was no organization for retired staff members.

Dr. Brent Brown, then Vice President for University Relations, recalls that in the late 1980s, Linda Van Scoy in the Provost's Office was making arrangements for Emeriti luncheons and keeping some records. "I thought it was ironic that a staff member was taking care of the faculty retirees organization," Brown says, "but when she retired there would be no university organization for her to join. I felt that needed to be changed."

Brown was not the first to call for a broader organization for ASU retirees, however. As early as the late 1940s, George C. Yates, Director of Special Services at Arizona State College at Tempe, had peered into the future and envisioned the creation of support groups that would help the institution achieve the maturity and financial stability that it deserved. Today's ASU Foundation, a multi-million dollar organization that has been instrumental in attracting private and corporate giving for nearly half a century, was born of a 1946 memo that Yates wrote to President Gammage. A more aggressive alumni association and a college retirees' organization were other segments of Yates' grand planning.

Several of ASU's senior staff members, mindful of the creation of the Faculty Emeriti Club, from time to time expressed interest in a staff



George C. Yates

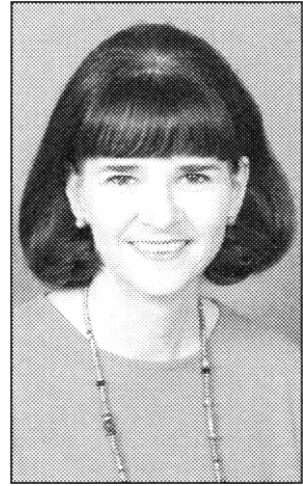


retirees' association. In the early 1980s, Richard [Dick] Murra,<sup>1</sup> Director of Personnel, authorized a survey to determine whether there was a need for such an association. As the major part of the survey, Murra sent letters to both retired faculty and staff, asking if there was sufficient interest to warrant the formation of a combined retirees organization.

"We surveyed nearly 800 retirees," Murra remembers, "and received about 200 responses. We found that faculty, in general, were satisfied with their Emeriti Club and had little interest in another group. There was more enthusiasm expressed by staff members, especially if the organization could get them free parking on the campus, but really not enough to suggest that we pursue the idea. So it was put on the back burner."

But another senior staff member, Purchasing Director George Morrell, was not willing to let the idea drop. After his retirement in 1986, he had become increasingly aware that staff members had little clout in the determination of their retirement benefits. Moreover, they were drifting away from ASU after retiring, and a rich pool of talent and potential university support was being frittered away.

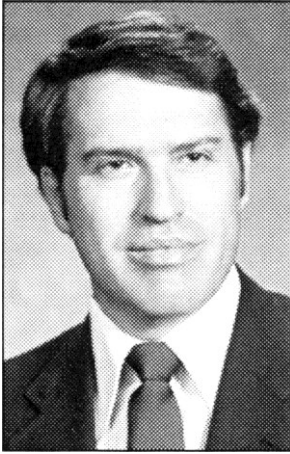
"I went to Susan Malaga in the Personnel Office and suggested that we needed to form an organization that would benefit both the university and the retirees," says Morrell. "She expressed interest in the idea and promised to prepare a list of retirees, both faculty and staff, whom we could contact. In the case of staff retirees, that was not easy, because the university did not maintain records of staff people after their retirement, as the Provost's Office did for faculty."



Linda Van Scoy

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<sup>1</sup> Full names are included the first time a person is mentioned in this book. Later references are the shortened or preferred names of the members indicated by brackets.



Brent Brown

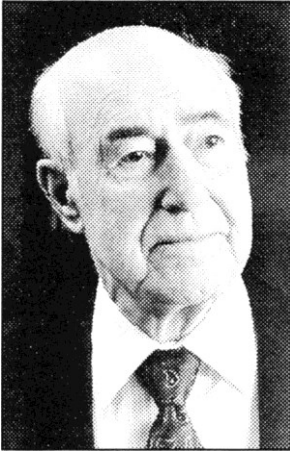
Morrell then went to Frank Sackton, who was serving as Vice President for Business Affairs, and broached his concern to him. As he often did, Sackton replied, "Let's have lunch!" The two discussed the possible benefits of such an organization and, according to Morrell, their meeting led to Sackton's proposing the idea to the Vice Presidents' Council.

Morrell, determined to keep his idea alive, went to Brown and urged him to become an advocate. Eventually, Brown agreed to explore the idea more thoroughly and to use the resources of his office to start organizing the retirees.

"At first," recalls Brown, "I thought only of having a staff retirees organization, because the faculty were already organized. But I could see that the Emeriti group was principally a social club. I thought we needed a more structured association that would be more active on behalf of the university and the needs of retirees."

In September, 1989, Robert H. [Bob] Ellis retired as general manager of ASU's public television station, KAET. An ASU alumnus, Ellis had come to the station from KOY radio in Phoenix in the early days of KAET's existence and was the moving force in developing the station into a major communicator for public education and entertainment during more than a quarter century as its director. Immediately after his retirement, he accepted a part-time assignment to work with Brown in the University Relations office.

Not many months after this transition, Brown decided that Ellis was just the person he was looking for to take charge of organizing university retirees into a viable force. Not only was Ellis a former staff member, but he also had served on the faculty and thus could represent both groups of



Frank Sackton

retirees. Brown provided Ellis an office in Irish Hall and gave him full rein to move ahead.

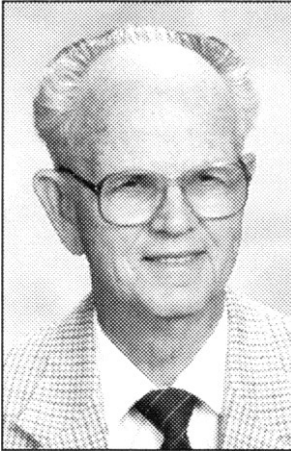
Ellis found that both the University of Arizona and Northern Arizona University had already organized their retirees, but that the UofA association was the more active of the two. So he met with Francis "Sledge" Hammer, president of the UofA group, to learn what their young organization was doing. Hammer expressed delight in the prospect of an ASU retirees group, and offered his full cooperation.

With all three of the state universities combining the force of their retirees, Hammer could envision a powerful support group in the state legislature and elsewhere.

Hammer agreed with ASU proponents that a combined faculty-staff organization would be most effective, and both Ellis and Brown proceeded with that goal in mind. Brown agreed to fund the costs of organization from his budget, and to provide office space in the Valley Bank Building at Apache Drive and Rural Road as soon as the university completed its purchase of the facility from the bank.

With that promise of university backing, Ellis moved ahead rapidly to make the organization a reality. There was much to be done: research into the activities of other university retiree organizations; gaining support of the Vice President for Business Affairs, Personnel Office, the Provost, the Faculty Emeriti Club, and others; developing a small core group of retirees to help with planning; and working out the myriad details of office facilities and staffing.

Ellis' first recruits in his search for answers were retirees Morrell and Dean Smith, who had served the university first as Director of Publications and later as Director of Community Relations. James W



Dean Smith

[Jim] Creasman, former Executive Secretary of the Alumni Association, soon was added to the team.

In addition to these three, Ellis met with a number of university officials. His notes on those meetings are now a part of the association's archives. Among the highlights:

**"September 24, 1990**, with Brown, Morrell and Smith. We agreed that the concept of a staff and faculty retirement organization should be pursued. The organization should make people feel that they belong. There should be no dues. A campus office is needed, with secretarial assistance and a small operational budget. There

should be one organization for both staff and faculty, and it should serve both retirees and the university"

"Successful retiree organizations at Michigan State University and the University of Washington should be used as models. We must try to find a list of retired staff and their addresses. I will meet with Anne Pittman, President of the Faculty Emeriti."

**"September 25, 1990**, with Dr. Lonnie Ostrom, President of the ASU Foundation. Ostrom agreed that a retirees association could be very valuable to the university development program. Its offices should be in the Visitor Center (the VNB bank building), where there is parking, computer services, and other facilities."

**"September 25, 1990**, with Dr. Elmer Gooding, acting provost, and Linda Van Scoy. Linda said the Emeriti Club was formed when Dr. Karl Dannenfeldt was Academic Vice President, at the suggestion of Dr. Weldon Shofstall, Dean of Students. It now has 350 members. ASU supports the Emeriti with secretarial service, some free meals, mailing costs and parking, at a cost of about \$12,000 to \$15,000 per year."

**"October 3, 1990**, with Victor Zafra, Vice President for Business Affairs. Victor favors the proposed organization. Among its benefits to

the university: Identifying volunteers for service in ASU departments, helping with public relations, encouraging gifts from retirees to the university lending support in legislative relations."

**"October 3, 1990**, with Anne Pittman, Emeriti president. She says the Emeriti Club is primarily a social group that keeps retired faculty closer to ASU. Some members volunteer in university departments. She believes some kind of staff retiree organization is also needed, and that the faculty will cooperate."

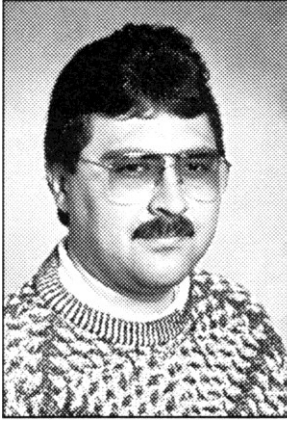
**"October 4, 1990**, with Susan Malaga, Personnel. Says interns Sheila Stokes and Margarita Pagan studied the feasibility of a staff retirees association, but the idea was tabled. She recommends one combined retiree organization and would strongly support it."

**"October 8, 1990**, with Morrell and Smith. We agreed that: One organization would be stronger and less expensive than two, that staff should have the same privileges and benefits as faculty, that there would be no dues charged and that the vice presidents would provide a small budget, that we need to have a retirees center, that we need to draw up bylaws and a request for funding. Robert [Bob] Frazier of Personnel tells me he has the names and addresses of about a thousand staff retirees. He is not sure whether the state retirement office can provide more names."

**"October 15, 1990**, with Morrell and Smith. Gale Richards, vice president of the Emeriti Club, has offered to help us, particularly with drawing up bylaws. We may use the University of Washington association's constitution as a model. If our association plans to lobby the legislature, we may need status separate from the university

**"October 16, 1990**, with Dennis Prisk, dean of the College of Extended Education. I asked Prisk if we could have reduced fees for those retirees who want to take classes. I also asked if retired faculty could teach courses for retirees as part of his college. He said "Maybe, if they have academic credibility— no basket weaving, quilting, or painting by numbers, though."

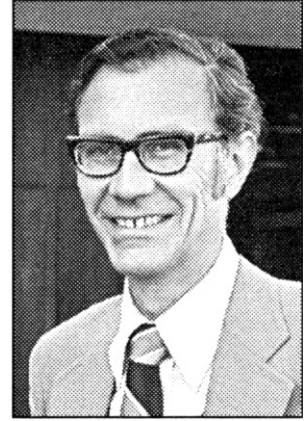
**"November 1, 1990**, lunch at Monti's with Pittman, Richards, Smith and Morrell. Drafting our constitution was discussed. Richards will work



Fred Amaro



Alleen Nilsen



Alan Matheson

with me on drafting it. We agreed to set up an organizational committee, a charter board, to prepare for our first formal meeting, probably in the spring of 1991. Members will be Morrell, Smith, Pittman, Richards, Creasman, myself, the Faculty Senate chair, and representatives from University Relations and Provost's offices."

"**November 21, 1990**, with Brown. I reported on our progress to date. He suggests adding a representative from the Classified Staff organization to the planning committee. The VNB building will be turned over to ASU in February or March. I presented our tentative budget request to him, which totaled \$37,000. It includes \$15,000 for secretary/ receptionist, \$4,000 for office supplies, \$3,000 for parking validation, and smaller amounts for newsletter, travel, mailing of *Insight* to members, and some other items. Brown said that big a budget would be a problem. University Relations could give us \$5,000, and we could ask for \$5,000 each from the Vice President for Business and the Provost."

Thus the groundwork was laid for the formation of what was first called the ASU Retirement Association. Soon thereafter, in an effort to more closely identify it with the people involved, the name was changed to its present ASU Retirees Association.

As 1991 dawned, the first association newsletter, titled *ASU Afterglow*, was being prepared by Dean Smith; Richards and others were

hard at work on the bylaws; a volunteer office staff was being recruited; and plans were going forward to send a letter to all known ASU retirees announcing the impending formation of the association and asking for dues of \$10 from each prospective member. It was decided to ask for dues because of the large budget originally presented.

The ASU Retirees Association was about to be born.

*(The following statement, published in the first edition of the ASURA newsletter, Summer 1991, expresses the feelings of the association's organizing committee about its purposes.)*

## **WHY AN ASU RETIREES ASSOCIATION?**

Arizona State University has long needed an effective association of retirees. The University of Arizona and Northern Arizona University have had such associations for several years, and they have served both the retirees and the universities well.

Dr. Brent Brown, ASU vice president for university relations, commissioned Bob Ellis, former director of KAET television, to form an organizing committee for our association. This committee has been meeting for several months to design an organizational structure and formulate by-laws. Including all retirees, both faculty and staff, this association can be a powerful force. It will work for retiree benefits of many kinds and will serve our university as well.

Both our sister universities welcome the advent of the ASU retirees. They have been working in the state legislature for better retiree benefits, and they know our numbers will greatly enhance their efforts.

Ellis, newly-elected interim president of the ASU association, stresses the fact that the ASU Faculty Emeriti organization will continue its activities without change. All members of the Emeriti are also urged to be active in the new association.

Although this association will have periodic social activities, its main thrusts are improving the lot of all retirees and building a better Arizona

State University. Our by-laws call for only one general meeting annually, although other special meetings may be called when needed.

We will have an office in the former Valley Bank building at Rural and Apache in Tempe, with some secretarial help, but staffed primarily by our own volunteers.

Forming this association is only a small first step. It will not succeed unless it has the enthusiastic support of many hundreds of our retirees. Already we have more than 200 dues-paying members, and we hope to triple that number in the first year of operation.



## Chapter Two

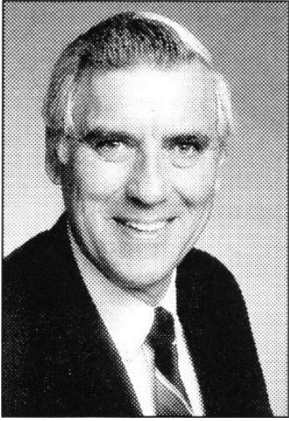
### STARTING WITH 211

"We mailed a letter to all the retirees we had addresses for on March 1, 1991, announcing plans for forming a new association," recalls George Morrell, "and asked them to send in \$10 for dues. Of course we had no idea how many would back up their interest with their money, so we were happy that 211 people had sent in their checks. It was a good omen, I thought.

"In the letter, we explained that the legislature was in a budget crunch, and they were eyeing the state retirement fund as a source for more income. That would be disastrous for retirees if such a precedent were set, so we urged everyone to unite in an effort to protect our benefits."

Even before that letter went out, news of the association's impending formation had been published in the *Phoenix Gazette* and *ASU Insight*. The first fragmentary retirees newsletter was mailed in late January, consisting mainly of a reprint of reporter Kari Bland's *Gazette* interview with Bob Ellis. "We will work to lobby legislators, along with members of the UofA and NAU retiree associations, to protect our fund and our benefits, and to ask for an annual cost of living increase for retirement benefits," Ellis told her. "We see our association as a two-way street—helping retirees and assisting ASU in any way we can. We can offer a pool of expert volunteers to the university."

On January 15, 1991, the enlarged organizing committee met for the first time at the Memorial Union. Attending were Ellis, Brown, Creasman, Smith, Morrell, and Richards; Alan Matheson, President, Faculty Senate; Aileen Nilsen, Assistant Vice President, Academic Affairs; Anne



Bob Ellis

Pittman, Professor Emeritus; Fred Amaro and Raul Armendariz, both of the Classified Staff Association. Plans were initiated for the first general meeting on April 16.

How many would turn out for that historic first meeting of all association members? There were pessimistic predictions from some, but when Ellis called the meeting to order in the Ventana Room of the Memorial Union, there were 90 in attendance.

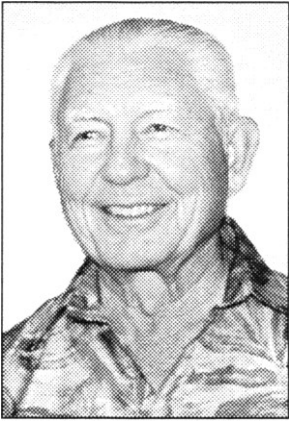
Brent Brown was introduced and was thanked for his invaluable assistance. Three University of Arizona guests — David Smith, Howard Greenseth, and Robert Letson — invited ASU to join in a combined effort by retirees of all three Arizona universities. Gale Richards presented the new bylaws, which were adopted with little discussion. Creasman made a plea for members to volunteer where needed in university offices and departments.

When the question of membership on the board came up for discussion, Anne Pittman moved that the interim organizing committee be declared the board of directors until a new board could be elected in April, 1992. Her motion was unanimously carried.

Officers for the first year were carried over from the organizing committee: president, Bob Ellis; vice president, George Morrell; treasurer, Jim Creasman; and secretary, Gale Richards.

When the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m., the ASU Retirement Association had been officially established.

Marilyn Wahl, former secretary to the ASU president, was recruited by Bob Ellis to head the ASURA office as office manager. She, in turn, recruited some of her many friends and fellow workers (mostly from the Administration Building) to help staff the office. She was very persuasive.



George Morrell

She first recruited Jane Hudnall, Tina Creswell, Pauline Leveque, Joan Rogacki, Lee Weber, Robin Whitiker, Gale Richards, Laurie Chase, and Corrine Irvan. Later, Bob Beeman, Martha Waltemath and Ed Scannell joined the group.

The office opened in the Visitor Information Center on August 26, 1991. After a while, Wahl found that other responsibilities, including her selection as secretary of the board, kept her from devoting the many hours per week the retirees office required. So Wahl persuaded Irvan to accept the job of office manager for the new association.

Irvan had retired from the Budget Office on June 30. She had always planned to do some volunteer work, such as working at the no-kill animal shelter or volunteering at the Family Services needlework shop, because both espoused good causes. Instead, she started working for the ASURA.

Each of the office volunteers works a regular three-hour shift each week. Many of them help with other committees. Quite a few have volunteered since 1991.

By late summer, 1991, the association was ensconced in its new quarters in the Valley Bank Building, renamed the ASU Visitor Information Center, which is its home today

"There was a lot to do," says Irvan. "There were forms to design, procedures to set up, supplies to be bought, and much more. I worked with George Morrell, helping him with his duties as membership chair, so I spent a lot of time building the list of prospective association members. Each month, we recruited in an attempt to get more members. Several of us, especially Martha Waltemath, searched through old ASU telephone books, real estate records, voter records, etc., to get good addresses. We also asked for help from the membership through the ASURA newsletter."

Morrell gives Irvan most of the credit for sending out letters and

getting retirees to join. But he has remained as membership chair throughout the entire life of the association, and his reports on the growing roster have been a feature of almost every board meeting.

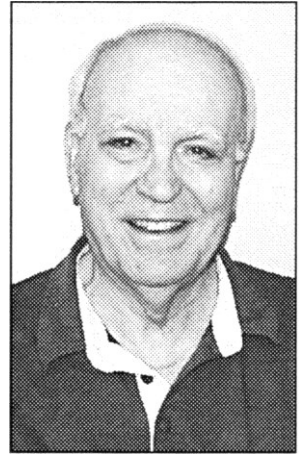
During the summer of 1991, the organization's newsletter, *Afterglow*, was prepared by Smith and was sent to all known retirees' addresses.

One of the unanswered questions in the first months of the association was that of membership eligibility. Certainly, retirees from ASU faculty and staff positions were eligible. But how about those who had served in Army and Air Force ROTC? And those who were employed by the U.S. Forest Service in its campus contingent? And how about spouses of deceased retirees?

The interim board decided that all retirees who had served on the campus should be eligible for membership, as well as deceased retirees' spouses. Moreover, associate membership should be extended to those still employed but nearing retirement. In short, the door should remain open to those who had an interest and could benefit from membership.

As the ASURA membership steadily climbed, some retirees expressed concern that the Faculty Emeriti might feel threatened by the new association. Such did not prove to be the case. But there was another, more real, concern: Would the admission of retired faculty to the ASURA lead to dominance by the former professors? After all, they were for the most part men and women with doctoral degrees — many with national reputations. Could a former secretary or groundskeeper or administrative assistant hold his/her own in company with such people? Some felt that retired faculty would be dominating the association, thus leaving retired staff with a diminished voice.

It soon became apparent, however, that those fears were groundless.



Gale Richards



Jim Creasman

Retired faculty members such as Gale Richards, Anne Pittman, and Heinz Hink worked admirably alongside staff members George Morrell, Jim Creasman and Dean Smith. And Bob Ellis, who had his roots in both camps, was the ideal leader to ensure continued cooption between them.

At its August 15, 1991 meeting, the interim board of directors tackled the myriad problems of launching a new organization. It was at that meeting that Ellis proposed that the ASU retirees join hands with the University of Arizona and Northern Arizona University retiree groups to form the Arizona Joint Council of University Retirees Associations. He pointed out that such a united front, representing several thousand retired university personnel, could do wonders in influencing legislation — not only legislation affecting retiree benefits, but measures of importance to institutions of higher education throughout the state.

His proposal was accepted with enthusiasm, and the board named Ellis and Morrell as ASU representatives to the joint council, along with Heinz Hink, a prominent former professor of political science and a man with unusual knowledge of the legislature and its members. ASURA has been sending representatives to the joint council ever since, and the ASU group for some time has been the most active and energetic in the council.

June P. Payne, who had served as an editor in the ASU Bureau of Publications, took over the quarterly newsletter. There were two issues of *Afterglow*, in the fall and winter, 1991. In January 1992, the publication was renamed *Prime Times*. It featured the upcoming seminar led by Willard Pedrick, founding dean of the ASU College of Law, on wills, trusts, and other documents of special importance to the aging. There was a piece on ways the new association was saving money for its members; an announcement of a study tour to England, sponsored by ASURA and

led by Denis Kigin; and news of retiree benefits bills in the legislature.

Soon thereafter, the nominating committee announced its choices for candidates in the first board of directors election, scheduled for April, 1992. The committee listed alphabetically the 18 candidates for the nine positions. The ASURA membership voted by mail on its choices, with a remarkable total of 70 percent casting ballots.

At the general meeting of ASURA on April 14, 1992, the winners were announced. Denis Kigin, Willard Pedrick, and Anne Pittman were chosen for three-year terms; Dean Smith, Marilyn Wahl, and Madelyn Wright for two-year terms; and Willard Abraham, Ed Hickcox and Bruce Mason for one-year terms. Brown, Armendariz, Amaro, Matheson, and Nilsen were ex-officio members of the board:

The interim officers were: Bob Ellis, president; George Morrell, vice president, Gale Richards, secretary, and Jim Creasman, treasurer. Kigin became the first elected president of ASURA (even though he often said he was "railroaded"), Dean Smith was elected vice president; Marilyn Wahl was secretary; and Madelyn Wright was treasurer.

Kigin, who had served as a member of the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences faculty before becoming Dean of Summer Sessions and Extension, was one of the prime movers of the association in its early years. He presided at the May 14, 1992 board meeting, at which chairpersons were named for ASURA committees.

Standing committee chairs were: Morrell, membership; Wright, finance; Mason, community relations and legislative liaison; and Richards, education.

Sub-committee chairs were Murra, Retirement System and health insurance representative; Smith, university liaison; and Gordon Inskip, University Club liaison.

Later that year, an amendment to the bylaws was authorized, making health insurance a standing committee. Murra, the chair, has been the faithful fountainhead of information and assistance on health insurance matters from that time to this.

Thus the ASURA, which now had nearly 400 members, was officially

launched. Its officers and board members had been duly elected by the total membership, its goals and operating procedures had been agreed upon, and it was time to make the association a viable force for both the retirees and the university they had served.

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### CHEERS FROM THE U OF A!

Retiree organizations of the three state universities are working together and applauding each other's efforts—a welcome development for all concerned. An example: In a 1999 message to the University of Arizona Retirees membership, President Francis (Sledge) Hammer of that association had this to say about ASURA legislative liaison:

"It is my opinion that we will have a much more influential and effective legislative liaison by combining the efforts of the three universities. You may remember that (in 1991) neither ASU nor NAU were well organized and our group had to carry the load.

"Things have changed! I had the pleasure of attending the ASU Legislative Liaison Committee meeting in Tempe the latter part of November. I was thoroughly impressed. They have gained a sophistication in their operation that didn't exist in 1991-92."

### THE ROCKING CHAIR

Visitors to the ASURA office note that there is a handsome and comfortable wooden rocking chair that invites a person to sit and relax.

Donated in February 1993 by Denis Kigin, the rocking chair is a symbol of the retired status of the volunteers manning the office. It was pictured in the newsletter, and is an integral part of the office furniture.





## Chapter Three

### KIGIN TAKES OVER

"Thanks to the hard work of Bob Ellis and his interim officers during the months before, it was not hard for me to pick up the ball and run with it in the spring of 1992," declares Denis Kigin in recalling his role as the first elected president of ASURA.

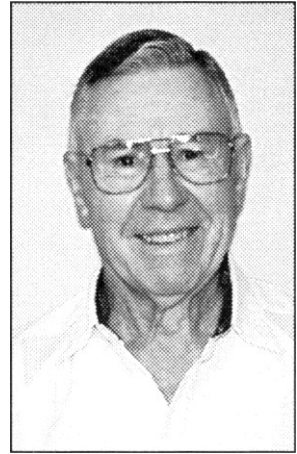
"We were blessed with a very good board — all people who were keenly interested in the aims and direction of the group. It was a very good balance of faculty and staff from the very beginning."

Under Kigin's direction, the standing committees were implemented and the work of the ASURA was started almost as soon as the organizational meeting was adjourned. The first committee chairs were:

- Finance, Madelyn Wright
- Membership, George Morrell
- Education, Gale Richards
- Community Relations, Bruce Mason
  - Legislative Liaison, Bruce Mason, Gale Richards, and Alan Matheson
  - Legislative Task Force, Bob Ellis
  - Government Relations, Heinz Hink
  - Retirement System Liaison, Dick Murra, George Morrell, and Bob Ellis
  - University Liaison, Dean Smith and Bob Beeman
  - University Club Liaison, Gordon Inskip
- ASU members of the Arizona Council of Retired University Employees, Anne Pittman, Willard Pedrick, Bruce Mason, and Bob Ellis
- ASURA Newsletter, June Payne

Kigin soon began planning another service group, the Activities Committee, which almost from the beginning has offered tours, social events, and many other opportunities for retirees to participate as a group. (The committee became official during Anne Pittman's presidency.)

"I was very much involved in setting up the Activities Committee and its programs," says Kigin. "We sponsored the wine and cheese party, the estate planning program, the Verde Valley Railroad trip, the Canyon Lake steamboat cruise, and of course the overseas programs. These overseas adventures were started in 1992, and they have been an important part of the ASURA experience ever since."



Denis Kigin

The first planned overseas offering was the Senior Classic in London, which was to be three weeks long. It proved to be too long, and had to be postponed for lack of enrollment. But the following year, Kigin and his wife Helen led 20 people on a two-week tour, half in London and half in the countryside of England. In 1994, the tour of Ireland attracted 42 participants.

Kigin also arranged and led the Senior European Odyssey in 1995 and the Flamenco Fling to Spain and Portugal in 1996 before he turned the tour planning over to others.

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Gale Richards believes the success of the ASURA programs has been largely the result of giving responsibility to people with a reputation for being very busy.

"Hal White was a good example of that," he says. "He had been chair of the Faculty Senate and had held several important positions with the ASURA. He works with legislative liaison, and was president in 1998-99."

Richards also heaps high praise on the all-volunteer office staff particularly on Corrine Irvan, Marilyn Wahl, and Martha Waltemath.

Other association members, including several board members, volunteer to serve three-hour shifts in the office each week.

The ASURA Bylaws, the guiding document of association activity, were originally prepared by Ellis and Richards, who have helped to craft the several amendments that have been adopted over the years. One of the first amendments was that which made the Health Insurance Committee a standing committee. Dick Murra has served as its chair from the beginning.

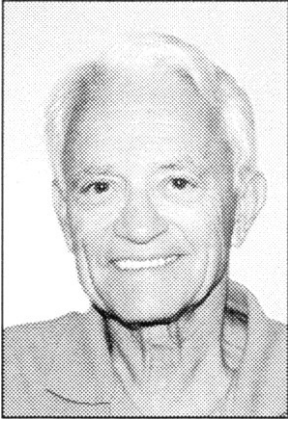
Throughout the first formal year of its existence, the association labored to gain increased benefits for its members. Heinz Hink led a drive to pass legislation granting state retirees an annual cost of living increase. Gordon Inskeep was able to gain a 50 percent membership discount for university retirees at the University Club. George Morrell struggled to get parking privileges for ASURA staff members — unsuccessfully at first but eventually with success (in January 1995).

And Bob Ellis went head to head with Athletic Director Charles Harris to rescind an announced price increase for retirees' athletic tickets. At last, he won. The prospective increase, which had angered scores of retirees, was postponed and eventually dropped.

"You CAN fight city hall — and win!" became a watchword at ASURA headquarters.

One of the foundation stones on which the ASURA was created was the principle that its members would work for causes vital to Arizona State University. During the spring legislative session of 1992, when state revenues were tight and demands for appropriations growing, Governor Fife Symington and his budget advisors announced proposed cuts of \$5.8 million for the ASU Main Campus and \$882,000 for ASU West. The cuts would cause some 60 employees to be laid off.

President Lattie Coor responded to the news with predictable anguish, and asked that the ASURA contact legislators at once to head off the disastrous reductions. Retirees telephoned, sent letters and e-mail, and spoke to the lawmakers in person in a concerted effort to avert the cuts.



Gordon Inskeep

They experienced a measure of success, although budget cuts were made and the university was put on a stringent spending diet.

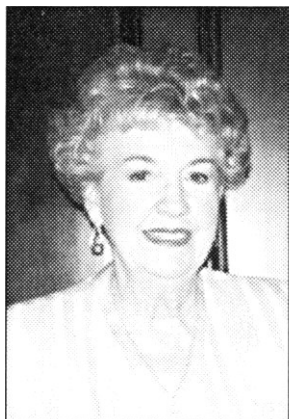
President Coor expressed his appreciation for the retirees' efforts in a letter now preserved in the association archives. Coor congratulated ASURA members for "your impressive achievements in your first year of organization," and gave special thanks to Kigin, Ellis, and members of the board.

Since that time many other crises have been weathered or their impact reduced because retirees cared enough to express themselves to their representatives in the Arizona House and Senate.

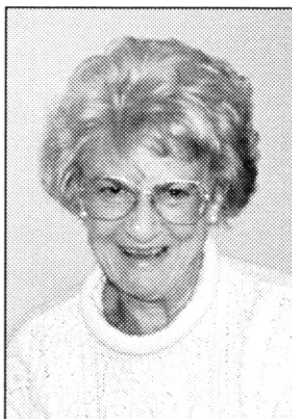
The 1992 legislative session produced two important victories for state retirees. One was a 5 percent cost of living adjustment (COLA) for the year (but not to be paid annually), and the other was a small increase in the base monthly benefit. ASU retirees teamed with those from the UofA and NAU to lobby for these bills, with a happy result.

ASURA efforts were successful in gaining several new benefits for its members. One was the start-up of free notary public services, to be provided in the association office. Notaries in the ASURA volunteered their services. However, this effort failed. A move to gain access for retirees to some university facilities, including exercise equipment in the new Student Recreation Center and the use of ASU computing services was successful.

Perhaps the most important success was in the health insurance field. Retirees had long been placed in a pool separate from working faculty and staff, resulting in higher premium payments. But, as Dick Murra reported to the board at its February, 1993 meeting, efforts to place retirees and active employees in the same pool were winning approval in the legislature.



Marilvn Wahl



Martha Waltemath



Iane Hudnall

At the same meeting, however, Bruce Mason warned retirees, "Don't hold your breath if you are expecting another COLA in 1993." He was right.

In another board action that day, retirees were urged to contact their legislators to retain tuition waivers for dependents of university employees. This benefit, which was then under heavy fire from some legislators, had long been a means of offsetting low salaries and allowing the universities to retain good employees who might otherwise leave.

Obviously, ASURA lobbying efforts at the Capitol were paying off in many ways.

The first full year of ASURAs existence proved that retirees were not only vitally interested in their organization, but were willing to put in many hours of volunteering for it. The Volunteers Committee, while not as successful as had been hoped, was placing a number of retirees in volunteer positions at the university.

Budget cuts hit all areas of the campus. The association answered the call of the Memorial Union to provide 800 cookies for its annual holiday party.

Retirees joined George Morrell and Corrine Irvan in tracking down retirees who had not yet learned of the existence of ASURA. Bob Frazier

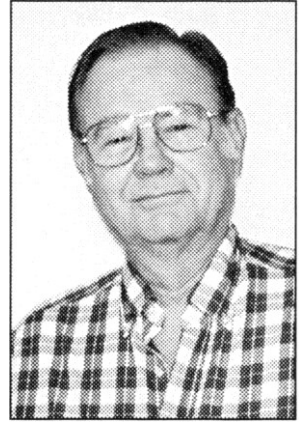
of Human Resources was a big help to the sleuths, who pored over old ASU telephone directories, Phoenix phone books, and even directories of various kinds in public libraries, real estate records, voter registrations, etc. The newsletter requested help in finding retirees several times. Their hard work paid off in sizable increases in association membership.

One of the most enduring traditions launched under Denis Kigin's regime was the ASURA Adopt-a-Family program. Morrell led the effort. It started with the selection of a needy family for Christmas assistance in December 1992, providing clothing, food, and toys that were deeply appreciated by the recipients. Martha Waltemath and Bob Beeman were also on the committee. Soon others were joining in, donating articles that could be used by the family all year. In later years, under other chairpersons, Adopt-a-Family has obtained gift certificates, free tickets for recreational facilities and sporting events, and much more. Not only at Christmas but at other times throughout the year the retirees look out for the chosen family's needs.

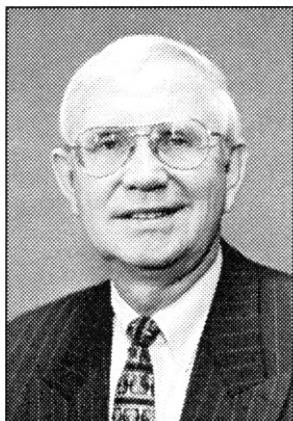
The unanticipated early level of activity of the association emphasized the need for more board members to carry out the ambitious plans. At its April 1993 meeting, the board voted to expand its membership from 9 to 15.

ASURA leaders wanted to make the annual membership meeting something special each year, so it was decided to invite a well-known personality to be the featured speaker at the April 13 event. Their choice was John Kolbe, political columnist for the Phoenix Gazette. Known both for his keen insights into Arizona government and for his wit as a public speaker, Kolbe was an ideal selection.

The 1993 membership meeting was well attended. Those present heard Morrell's report that the ASURA now had 514 dues-paying



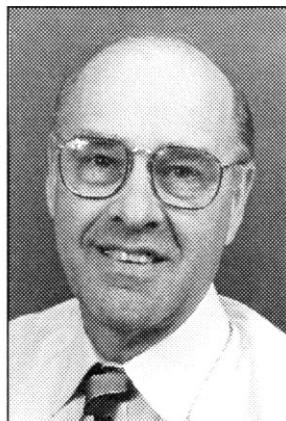
Richard Murra



Lonnie Ostrom



Susan Malaga



Elmer Gooding

members. Mason was introduced as the newly-elected president of the Faculty Emeriti Club. Kigin reported that the tour to England had enough registrants to assure that it would take place.

And, as expected, Kolbe's talk was a bell-ringer.

Another highlight was the announcement of new officers for the 1993-94 year. Elected to succeed Kigin was Anne Pittman, professor emeritus of physical education and a recent Faculty Emeriti Club president. At this April 13 meeting, the Board of Directors approved changing the number of board members from 9 to 15. Kigin felt there was a better chance of having a quorum at board meetings.

Kigin was a popular and well-respected president and had served the association effectively during his 1992-93 term. When he conducted the final meeting of his term, he received a standing ovation.

Pittman had a strong foundation on which to govern. In 12 months Kigin and his board had launched the ASURA more successfully than anyone had anticipated. Service to retirees, assistance to the university, social events, charitable activity — it had all been accomplished in a surprisingly short time.



Corrine Irvan

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## CHIEF VOLUNTEER CORRINE

One of the first things a new member to the ASURA Board of Directors becomes aware of is the importance to the organization of its top volunteer — Corrine Irvan.

Numerous association members approached ASURA President Hal White in 1998 with the suggestion that Corrine should be paid a salary for her continuous, constant and loyal service.

Hal reminded the members that ASURA is an organization of volunteers and each member must determine the time he/she is willing to donate. Hal shared with Corrine the recommendations of her fellow retirees on her behalf and his response to them.

Corrine said that retirees had previously approached her about making her position a paid one. She said she had sought an organization to which she could donate her time and Arizona State University Retirees Association was that organization. She did not desire or expect to be paid.

Subsequently, Hal called each of the board members ('98-'99) to determine interest in providing an appreciation gift for Corrine. (It was impossible to introduce the subject at a board meeting because Corrine always attends.) Each member responded enthusiastically.

When Hal suggested the gift be paid from ASURA funds, each member rejected the idea and said the gift should come from board members.

At the annual membership meeting in April, 1999, Corrine was presented a plaque to commemorate her service to the retirees association, dinner for two at a local resort, a gift certificate at a clothing store, and because board members had been more generous than expected, additional cash.



## Chapter Four

### THE PITTMAN PRESIDENCY

"I was the only woman on the ASURA organizing committee, and was the only woman on the ASURA organizing committee, and sometimes I felt that was the only reason I was there. All good American groups have to have representation from the female side in these times, you know."

Anne Pittman speaking.

If she believed she was given a leadership role in the early days of the ASU Retirees Association solely because of her gender, she soon realized that such was not the case. She had earned the respect of the association's founders, and was elected as its second president (1993-94) because of her superlative record of performance at the university.

Pittman had earned a national reputation as a teacher and coach of women's athletic teams, particularly in tennis, and still serves on state governing boards for women's and junior golf associations. An avid golfer herself ("I want to get in as many rounds as I can before old age catches up with me," she declares), she plays two or three times a week.

At the time of her election to the ASURA presidency, she had recently completed a successful term as president of the ASU Faculty Emeriti Club.

"After I retired, I went through a series of being president of this and president of that," she remarks. "Now I'm tired of being president of anything."

Officers elected to serve with her were Dean Smith, vice president; Bob Beeman, secretary; and Madelyn Wright, treasurer.



Anne Pittman

Everyone who was involved in ASURA affairs during 1993-94 remembers the energy and devotion that Pittman brought to the presidency of the association. Membership topped the 500 mark (514) for the first time in 1993. New committees were formed and existing ones became more active. Board meetings moved along briskly under her administration, and there was plenty of humor to make the business more enjoyable.

One of her lasting contributions was that of the Activities Committee. Convinced that one of the association's principal duties was to promote good social relations among its members, she appointed an ad hoc group to form the Activities Committee, charged with organizing trips and social events. (An unofficial committee had begun the year before under Kigin.) Marilyn Wahl, Diana Regner, Martha Waltemath, and Bob Beeman answered her call to serve on that group. The Activities Committee has been one of the most active and energetic of all the ASURA work groups since that time.

Another important contribution Pittman made to the organization was securing a petty cash fund for the office. Office workers had had to pay for supplies and then be reimbursed. Pittman persuaded Lonnie Ostrom of the ASU Foundation that ASURA should be the first petty cash fund ever allowed to the organization. She said, "After all, it is OUR money."

Perhaps the most memorable achievement of her term was the launching of "Retirees Day," which has become an annual event of increasing importance. The board minutes report that Donald Gieschen made the proposal to launch the event. Combining education and social aspects, "Retirees Day" each year has presented a February platter of tasty tidbits — seminars on a variety of subjects of interest to retirees, socializing, a luncheon, and a principal speaker of statewide note.

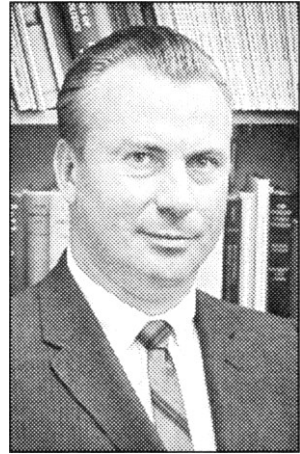
As might be expected when a board member makes a proposal, he or she is immediately appointed chair of a committee to bring the idea to reality. Gieschen was appointed, and he performed yeoman service in launching the event.

"I firmly believed, and still do, that one of the main goals of ASURA is to help us know each other better — to meet in social situations and have fun," Pittman says. "We rode on the Verde Valley Railroad, visited ASU West, enjoyed a picnic, went to Boyce Thompson arboretum — had some great times together."

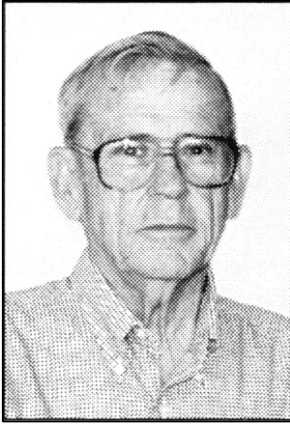
She takes some pride in the fact that board meetings were short, brisk, and generally enjoyable. And the pattern for the annual membership meeting, which features a well-known speaker along with the committee reports and tasty refreshments, was set during her term.

The committee chairmen of ASURA continued to perform with energy and devotion. George Morrell and Dick Murra headed the membership and health insurance committees, respectively. Bruce Mason, retired professor of political science and a knowledgeable observer of Arizona state government operations, made the legislative liaison committee an effective force. Mason also served as Faculty Emeriti president during this term.

As noted, Gieschen's education committee arranged for informative seminars and laid the groundwork for the annual "Retirees Day." Bob Ellis headed the state retirement system committee and Smith conducted liaison with the university administration. Martha Waltemath organized the volunteer effort. Gordon Inskip was named to conduct liaison with the University Club, and Regner was appointed chair of the Adopt-a-Family committee, which provided assistance for a selected underprivileged family throughout the year.



Heinz Hink



Bruce Mason

Due to outside events, all was not sweetness and light during the Pittman administration. Mason came to the board with a disquieting report: that Senator Carole Springer of Prescott was trying to tighten state control over the activities of university faculty.

At the May 27, 1993 meeting he reported that Senator Springer "is trying to set up a system of faculty work measurements." He saw her efforts as an attempt to place political control over matters that rightly belong under university and Regents purview.

"This is not a good omen," he declared.

At the same meeting, Joyce Foster, representing the ASU Foundation, told the board that the Development and Alumni offices wanted to establish a closer relationship with ASURA. Foster wanted the ASURA mailing list for donation solicitation, but the ASURA Bylaws specifically do not allow sharing the membership list with anyone. The minutes report that "The board members expressed uneasiness about such a relationship. We need to avoid being used."

Ellis reported that the three-university retiree council was not working well. There is some dissension, he said, and the three retiree boards need to establish guidelines and mutual agreement in their legislative efforts.

The ASURA board in its September meeting expressed alarm over what were termed "two public relations bombs" that had harmed Arizona State University. One was the accepting of a convicted murderer (who had served his sentence) to the student body of the College of Law. The other was the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics action in dropping gymnastics as a recognized team sport. Board members agreed to use whatever contacts they had with responsible University administrators to try to control the damage.



Willard Pedrick

Finances of the ASU Retirees Association were surprisingly healthy from the beginning. Treasurer Wright reported at the September 9, 1993 board meeting that the association now had \$11,153 in the bank.

Inskeep, as liaison with the University Club, had a sadder report to make: The club had a deficit of \$300,000 after its first 18 months of existence and it was in serious danger of closing unless membership and participation could be markedly increased. In an effort to attract more ASURA members, Inskeep said, the University Club directors had agreed to cut retirees' initiation fee in half – to \$63. The membership drive was successful. Two hundred new members were added to the club by the end of 1993, raising the total to 811.

Liaison with University officials was considered important. Smith urged the board at the same meeting to contact President Lattie Coor or Development Director Lonnie Ostrom to express ASURA's desire to have buildings named for former President G. Homer Durham; Guy Dean McGrath, founding dean of the College of Education; Lee Thompson, founding dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences; and Nina Murphy, who headed women's physical education for many years. (A month later, Smith reported that he was informed that the naming of buildings was necessarily tied to fund-raising activities, and it would be very difficult to name a building without a substantial gift to the University.)

During the autumn of 1993 the date was set for the first Retirees Day event: February 19, 1994. Denis Kigin arranged to have free flu shots for its members, and the response was enthusiastic. He also arranged a 1994 tour of Ireland, which proved to be a very popular trip.

Mason was a busy man in the state Capitol, keeping a watchful eye on legislation that could affect state retirees. Fearing that retirees would suffer from lagging contributions to the retirement fund, he and other



Willard Abraham



Jo Ann Hennington

Capitol watchers urged that letters be written to legislators to keep the fund sound.

"We believe the state should contribute 6 percent of each salary to the fund, and employees 4 percent," Mason declared.

Beeman filled a need for ASURA

members by making available a generic living trust document, enabling the maker to express his/her wishes in the face of impending death.

As the end of ASURA's third full year approached, membership had risen to 662, the treasury had \$12,500, the tour to Ireland was sold out, and ASURA efforts in the legislature paid off with an increased state contribution to the retirement fund.

Eddie Basha, a member of the Arizona Board of Regents and a candidate for governor, spoke at the annual membership meeting on April 1, 1994, urging the state's universities to "become beacons, bringing light to every corner."

President Pittman's tour of office had been a successful one, and her successor, Bob Beeman, took over an organization on the rise and facing the future with optimism.

## Chapter Five

### BEEMAN AT THE HELM

**A** Midwestern university president once observed that his primary aims in keeping everybody happy were to provide "football tickets for the alumni, sex for the students, and parking for the faculty."

For many ASU retirees, the first two seemed not so important as the third. Coming to the university campus for academic meetings, cultural events, and volunteer duties had become very difficult, especially for staff members who for years had enjoyed the privilege of parking in ASU garages and lots. (Faculty emeriti already had parking privileges.) ASURA leaders had tried for some time to obtain parking permits for staff retirees, but administrators were reluctant to say yes when faced with the prospect of providing 600 or more spaces in the already crowded parking facilities.

President Bob Beeman had been one of those working on the problem. So had George Morrell, one of the most devoted ASURA advocates from the beginning of the organization. Morrell was able to convince the parking administration that there would be no tidal wave of parking requests if staff retiree parking were to be approved. Furthermore, he said, retirees would not be daily users of parking decals, but would need them only occasionally. How could they volunteer on campus if they couldn't park?

At last Morrell won the battle. With justifiable satisfaction, he announced to the ASURA board that staff retiree parking had been approved for the 1995 school year and that four lots had been designated for use by ASURA members. About 30 were in the first group of requests, and the number of decals gradually rose to 100.



Bob Beeman

The parking problem was solved, all staff retirees who needed decals had received them, and parking administrators were satisfied. That achievement ranks among the most popular of Beeman's year as president of ASURA.

Beeman, who had served as executive coordinator in the College of Public Programs, office of Vice President for Business Affairs, and President's Office, was uniquely fitted for the ASURA presidency. He had a broad knowledge of the institution and the opportunity to know a great number of both faculty and staff. Moreover, he had served as an officer and committee chair of ASURA, and had been active in its work from the beginning. Today he takes a regular turn at volunteering in the ASURA office, works on legislative relations, and says "yes" to any request for help in the association.

"I have always been impressed by the friendly, egalitarian spirit I found in the ASU Retirees Association," he says. "When Bob Ellis and Denis Kigin came to me when I retired and asked me to become active in the organization, I was happy to do so. And I have enjoyed every day of it."

The 1994-95 officers represented an excellent cross section of both faculty and staff. Guido Weigend, former dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, was vice president. Martha Waltemath, secretary, had been a staff member in the Personnel Office, and Mathew (Mat) J. Betz, treasurer, a professor emeritus of civil engineering, had served as associate vice president in the Academic Affairs Office.

June P. Payne edited the ASURA newsletter, titled *Prime Times*, with the skill she exhibited in nearly three decades as editor of ASU academic publications. One of the innovations of *Prime Times* was the publishing of brief obituaries of retirees. The first such listing included John Morris, professor emeritus of law; Reynold Ruppé, professor emeritus of



anthropology; Mildred Sarah Epstein Greene, professor emeritus of English; and Charles Crouch, professor emeritus of education.

In that same edition of the newsletter, an important triumph of ASURA was noted: the reduction of greens fees for ASU retirees at the university's Karsten Golf Course. If a retiree chose to play in the afternoon on the busiest days, or all day on others, he/she could now do so for as little as \$10 for 18 holes in the summer or \$12 in winter. Our golfers rejoiced!

Another important benefit for ASURA members was arranged for October: Free flu shots. The Retirees Center was filled to overflowing as retirees took advantage of the opportunity. ASURA volunteers were on hand to check people in, have them fill out the necessary paper work, and get them to the needle-wielding nurses.

A popular social event was the wine and cheese social October 10 at the Tempe Holiday Inn. Marilyn Wahl and Martha Waltemath spearheaded this event sponsored by the Activities Committee.

President Beeman appointed Alfred Thomas Jr. to head an ad hoc committee charged with reviewing and rewriting the association's statement of goals and objectives. Betz and Jo Ann Hennington served with him. Payne was soon added to the committee. At the same time, Beeman asked Gordon Inskeep to head an ad hoc committee to make a financial audit of ASURA.

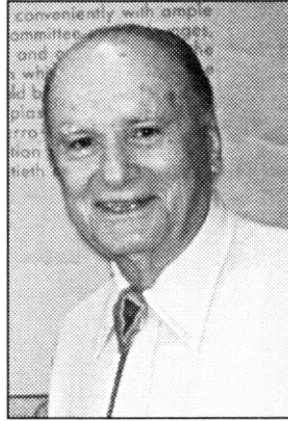
Continuing its efforts on behalf of retirees, the association sponsored an estate planning colloquium at the Fiesta Inn on December 3. The event, chaired by Willard Pedrick, brought half a dozen prominent estate planners in as participants. It was attended by 53 ASURA members.

Don Gieschen, chair, and the Education Committee planned the second annual Retirees Day on February 18. Again successful, the list of such events continues.

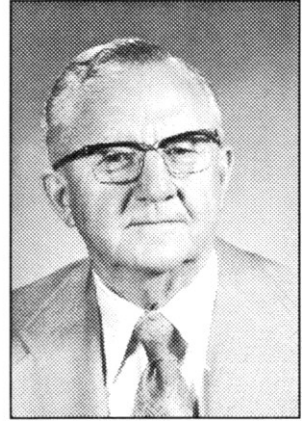
President Beeman, Bruce Mason and the legislative task force were busy at the Capitol during the year. At the November 10 board meeting, Beeman reported that the Arizona Retirement System had changed its formula for benefits, resulting in a small COLA for retirees in both 1994



Susanne Shafer



Glenn Overman



Joel Benedict

and 1995. The news was received with appreciation by the membership. Mason agreed to continue working on behalf of ASURA in the legislature, but asked to step down as chair of the legislative task force and was succeeded in that position by Joe Milner.

Volunteers have staffed the ASURA office from the beginning. Martha Waltemath headed the volunteers committee for several years to provide assistance to many campus areas. ASURA members performed yeoman service in the libraries, in the art museum, Gammage Auditorium, Elderhostel, and in campus beautification, making significant contributions.

It was during the Beeman administration, in May, that the first annual Volunteers Appreciation Luncheon was held at the University Club on campus.

Communication with the membership has always been a goal of ASURA officers and directors. The association newsletter has been the principal means of disseminating information, although special mailings have been used when necessary.

In June, 1995, Carolyn Brown accepted the editorial position and has continued producing *Prime Times* with consummate skill through 2000.

The first 1995 meeting of the ASURA board of directors, held January 12, was one of the most productive of the Beeman presidency. Frank Hidalgo, assistant vice president in the office of Institutional

Advancement (formerly known as University Relations), was introduced as the university's liaison to the ASU Retirees Association. Hidalgo invited all retirees to attend an open house at the new ASU East campus east of Chandler, at the former Williams Air Force Base. First classes at the new campus, he said, will start in January.

Mat Betz announced at the January meeting that the late William Burke, ASU Vice President for Research, had bequeathed ASURA \$1000 in his will — the first such bequest the association had received. Vice President Henry Reeves reported to the board that the University would welcome retired faculty as teachers in ASU Extended Education. And it was announced that the ASURA annual meeting would feature an address by popular Keven Willey, political columnist for the *Arizona Republic*.

Almost a year before Super Bowl XXX, to be held in Sun Devil Stadium, concerns were rising about how ASU could function through Super Bowl Week, with its crowds, special events, media hype, and traffic problems. At the February 9, 1995 meeting of the board, plans were announced for coping with that overwhelming event, and retirees were urged to volunteer to provide help for the University. Already the administration had agreed to dismiss all classes on Thursday and Friday preceding the football game, and to curtail other activities as needed to muddle through.

Retiree health insurance has always been a primary topic for ASURA members. The man who has done the most to assemble and disseminate information about ASU health insurance options is Dick Murra. He reported in February, 1995, that he was working with the ASURA legislative task force and others to urge passage of bills which would increase the state contribution to employee and retiree health insurance, and to provide annual open enrollment in several insurance plans.

Whenever new information on ASU health insurance is sent to retirees, Murra's telephone rings incessantly with questions about that information. He has managed to answer all questions to the best of his ability while being always courteous and keeping his sanity after repeating the same answers time after time.

Joe Milner, chair of the legislative task force, urged all members to call their representatives and senators in the legislature and ask their support for Senate Bill 1189, which raised the state's contribution to health insurance by \$30. Such action by ASURA members has been surprisingly successful over the years in influencing legislators' votes.

Among the obituaries listed in the spring *Prime Times* was that of Eudora Durham, widow of the late ASU President G. Homer Durham, who died March 5, 1995.

At the annual meeting, Diana Regner was elected president of ASURA for the 1995-96 year. Thus the election of the second staff retiree in succession put to rest any concerns that faculty would dominate the organization.

Officers elected with Regner were Don Gieschen, vice president; Nicholas (Nick) Salerno, secretary; and Mat Betz, treasurer.

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## SPARE THAT TREE!

In his working days at ASU, former ASURA President Bob Beeman found himself involved in an amazing number of matters that spanned almost the entire operation of the university. As executive coordinator in the College of Public Programs, the Office of the Vice President for Business Affairs, and in the President's Office, he was a problem solver in the areas of the academic, personnel, business, and many others.

"You could say that often I was given the unpleasant jobs that my boss didn't want to do," he admits.

But one of those jobs was self-imposed. Like thousands of other people on the campus, he had long admired the Chinese pistachio tree that stood on Cady Mall across from Hayden Library. In the late autumn, its leaves turned a brilliant red and was a delight to behold. But when excavation started on the huge pit that was to become the western

extension of Hayden Library, the pistachio was marked for extinction because it stood in the way of the operation.

Beeman argued long and hard for its preservation, but was told repeatedly that it must come down.

"You can save it!" he declared. "Just put a fence around it and save it!"

At last the powers that be reconsidered and the scarlet tree was spared, to beautify the mall for many autumns to come.

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### RUSS NELSON'S THOUGHTS ON ASURA

"I think the retirees association here may face a different situation from that of the other two universities, where the communities are smaller and where the university is a central feature of the city in a way that our university is not.

"Most people at ASU don't live 20 minutes from the university. They live all over this area and they undoubtedly have access to other interest groups. So it may be more difficult to knit retirees together.

"But I hope it can be done. I believe the retirees are a continuing resource for the university, and that their association will continue to give important service to ASU and to their own membership."

(Dr. J. Russell Nelson was President of ASU at the time the retirees organization was being planned).

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## BARRY GOLDWATER STORIES

In 1988, when Barry Goldwater agreed to make several guest appearances in on-campus classes, professors were asked to submit requests for these limited appearances. Senator Goldwater would make the selections.

Journalism Professor Joe Milner was correct in his belief that Sen. Goldwater would choose his graduate seminar in Media Ethics as one of the classes.

Sen. Goldwater's appearance was in September following the Republican convention that elected George Bush to head the ticket. One of the students asked Goldwater what he thought of Bush's selection of Dan Quayle as his running mate.

Goldwater replied, "I was in the bathtub when I heard the announcement on television, and I damned near drowned."

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In another Goldwater appearance on campus, he was in an elevator in the Memorial Union with a student aide when a name tag on another passenger grabbed his attention. He said to Jeri Goldfader, "Our names are similar."

Jeri Goldfader replied, "Yes, but everybody knows you, and nobody knows who I am."

Goldwater responded, "Sometimes I wish nobody knew who I am."

## *Chapter Six*

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# REGNER'S CONFERENCE ROOM

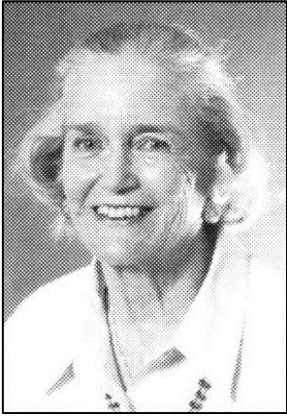
**A**ugust 18, 1995, was a day of ill portent for the ASU Retirees Association. It was on that day that the university moved the association office out of its quarters in the front of the Visitor Information Center (Room 103) into apparent exile at the rear. Because the retirees were essentially beggars, they could not be choosers. They were grateful that space, telephone and utilities were being provided free of charge, but the ouster from the front to the rear of the building seemed to some as a signal of diminished importance.

Those fears, as later events demonstrated, were groundless.

The cause for the move was the decision to bring several ASU Alumni Association offices into the building. Soon the alumni operations were in full swing, and a long counter full of ASU promotional material greeted visitors who came by for information or assistance.

ASURA President Diana Regner struggled mightily to preserve enough room for retiree services, but for a time the battle seemed lost. The newly-assigned office was barely large enough for a desk and files, and Corrine Irvan and her fellow office staffers had very little storage space.

Regner has a persuasive manner. She kept telling Irvan how nice it would be to have the adjoining office for small meetings and administrative functions. This space was occupied by Southwest Center for Education and the Natural Environment (SCENE) at the time and there was no indication that this office was moving. When Irvan heard rumors about such a move, Regner kept "putting the bite" on Frank Hidalgo,



Diana Regner

administrator of the building. Regner had planted the seed. Hidalgo agreed, and when SCENE moved, the room became part of the association's office suite. ASURA now had storage space and a small conference room.

George Morrell, who as ASU purchasing manager for many a decade had worked procurement miracles of many kinds, did it again — helping Irvan find a conference table, chairs, and other furnishings for the new meeting room through ASU Salvage. Morrell is much respected, so Salvage was eager to help.

Because Regner was persistent in the quest for more space, it was named "The Diana Regner Memorial Conference Room," and a sign designates it. Committee sessions, small mailouts, and other meetings are frequently conducted there and it is sometimes difficult to find it unoccupied.

Neither room has windows, so an outdoor look was created by the use of "window" mirrors with valences in one room and murals in the other.

Regner became ASURA's fifth president rather unexpectedly, as a result of Vice President Guido Weigend's decision not to advance to the presidency.

"I was in shock when I was chosen," she says, "and I wasn't sure that I had been active in the association long enough to do a good job."

Perhaps it was her determination to do a good job under the circumstances that made her presidential year a success.

She had been a member of ASURA only three years, and had not been on the board of directors until a year before her election to the presidency. But her colleagues in the association soon recognized her abilities and her dedication. Almost as soon as she joined, she agreed to head the "Adopt-a-Family" program. Her major goal in that effort was to broaden the program, and to make it a year-around service project instead of assisting a family only at Christmas. As a board member, she gave generously of





Alfred Thomas Jr.

her time and talents to several areas of ASURA activity. Her fellow association leaders believed she was ready for considerably more responsibility.

A graduate of the University of California at Los Angeles, with majors in English literature and political science, Regner served with the Red Cross in Italy at the end of World War II and met her future husband there. She worked at Fort Huachuca in southern Arizona from 1968 to 1970 and came to Phoenix in 1971. Then came service with the Maricopa County Community College District as a specialist in urban Indian education and preparation for employment. Robert Menke, director of ASU's Career Services office, hired her as an advisor in liberal arts and she remained in that department for more than 15 years, retiring from the university in 1986.

"When the ASU Retirees Association was formed, I watched its growth with interest and soon joined," she recalls. "I was especially impressed with the optimism and positive attitudes of its members, and with the spirit of cooperation I found in it."

After her installation as president in April 1995, she set two goals for advancing the organization: increasing membership and expanding involvement of retirees in ASURA's many programs.

The association was blessed with excellent officers, board members, and committee chairs during 1995-96. Don Gieschen, professor emeritus of philosophy, gave Regner strong support as vice president. Mat Betz, professor emeritus of engineering and a long-time academic administrator, served as treasurer, and Nick Salerno, professor emeritus of English, was secretary.

A notable event of the year was the publication of the revised Goals and Objectives statement, which had been under preparation by Alfred

Thomas and his committee for well over a year.

Among the principal objectives:

- To work for legislation favorable to university retirees.
- To better inform members about ASURA programs and activities.
- To schedule more social events and trips.
- To educate members through programs and seminars.
- To strengthen volunteer programs.
- To further the work of the Adopt-a-Family effort.
- To give retirees a stronger voice in influencing university governance.



Ruth Wineberg

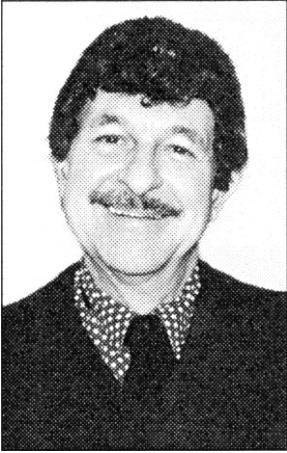
The list has stood the test of time, it seems, and all the objectives listed are still in the forefront of ASURA activity today.

One of the programs in which Regner takes special pride is that of the ASURA Scholarship effort.

"We were accumulating a sizable balance in our treasury," she says, "and our board believed that we should use our money for a good cause. We decided to fund a scholarship, covering in-state tuition and fees for a year, and to award it to an older student who was returning to college after being in the work force."

Guido Weigend accepted the chairmanship of the Scholarship Committee, which also included Mat Betz, Susanne (Sue) Shafer, and Bob Beeman. The first scholarship, awarded for the fall semester of 1996, went to Jonathan D. Wayne of Scottsdale.

A significant step forward was announced in early 1996: the mailing of *ASU Insight*, the weekly publication of university news and progress, to retired staff members of ASURA who wished to receive it. (Faculty were already receiving it.) Many did express a desire to have the newspaper sent to them. It has proved to be a strong force in keeping



Nick Salerno

members closer to the university, better informed about its activities, and is a good recruitment tool.

Mailing of *ASU Insight* to retired staff was done courtesy of Allan Price, who succeeded Brent Brown as Vice President for Institutional Advancement. The considerable cost of the mailing was, and still is, financed by Institutional Advancement at no charge to the Retirees Association. (The Provost's Office mails *Insight* to retired faculty.) ASURA members are grateful for this contribution and other financial support provided by that office.

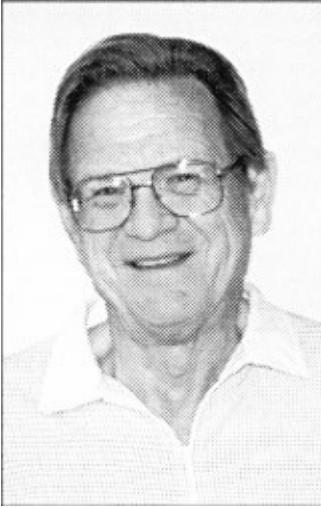
Receiving the publication, with its computerized format, professional writing and editing, photographs, and many pages, is far removed from the old mimeographed *Green Sheet*, first circulated when Grady Gammage was president and delivered weekly for many decades. Once it contained, in addition to news of institutional significance, personal items, birthdays, and social events. The modern *Insight* is another example of how much larger and more sophisticated the university is today.

At about this same time, the first *Prime Times* issue edited by Carolyn Brown was published. Her work has continued to make the ASURA newsletter an invaluable tool for informing and uniting retirees.

Retirees Day, which grew in importance and attendance each year, was chaired in 1996 by Ruth Wineberg. Eighty-four members and eight guests participated in the event.

"I can still see Ruth, maybe five feet tall, barely able to peer over the lectern at the opening session," one member recalls. "But she was a bundle of energy and efficiency, and the sessions went off without a hitch."

Pat Murphy, publisher of the *Arizona Republic*, was the featured speaker at Retirees Day. Soon after his address, he wrote President Regner



Leon Kemper

that "It's always easy and a pleasure speaking to well-read, curious listeners who appreciate discourse on topics that a lot of others ignore."

Only a month after that February event, ASURA lost a much loved and respected leader, Willard Pedrick, who died after a series of strokes. He was the founding dean of the ASU College of Law and the organizer of seminars and counseling sessions on legal matters for ASURA.

Perhaps the most important function of ASURA is that of looking after the welfare of ASU retirees in the fields of legislation, retirement, and health insurance. The association has been blessed with able and persistent leaders in all three categories.

Joe Milner, legislative liaison chair, reported in March that "There should be further discussion on a bill in the legislature concerning retiree programs. If passed, it would allow certain retired members who fell under the defined contribution program, and who were transferred to the defined benefit program in 1981, to switch, with some restrictions. These would probably include buybacks and limitations on retirement dates."

Bob Ellis and Gale Richards, Arizona State Retirement System liaisons, told the ASURA board that they had been attending ASRS meetings and learned that our system falls within the top 10 percent of all public retirement funds. "ASRS is getting a good return on its investments, 6.4 percent, as compared to Standard and Poor's 5.2 percent," Ellis said. But, he added, we will continue to keep a close eye on ASRS activity.

During the recent health insurance open enrollment period, said Dick Murra, 18,000 telephone calls were received at ASRS from retirees inquiring about their options. Murra's telephone was busier than ever, too. Diana Regner, who had been including the President's Letter in each issue

of *Prime Times*, had this to say in her final letter (March 1996): "It's hard for me to accept the fact that, just as I have settled in as your president, we are in the midst of an election to choose another one. You'll find a much better choice than we have on the national scene."

At the annual membership meeting in April, she turned over the gavel to her vice president, Don Gieschen.

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## THE GAVEL STORY

Diana Regner frequently complained that ASURA should have a gavel for meetings. So, for the final meeting that she conducted (the annual membership meeting in April), she was presented with her own inscribed gavel as a memento.

ASURA has since received a special gavel. Carved by Dave Thomas, it was presented by Bill Kajikawa to the association and is available for each president to use if so desired.



## Chapter Seven

### PHILOSOPHER DON GIESCHEN

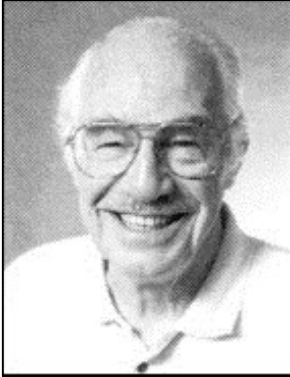
**T**he sixth president of ASURA served Arizona State University for a quarter century, retiring as an associate professor of philosophy, and Don Gieschen wanted to continue his service when the ASU Retirees Association was formed in 1991. When the first appeal for retiree volunteers went out during the association's organization meeting, he stepped forward and offered himself as a member of the board of directors or as a member of the education committee.

"I was sure I would be put to work right away," he says, "but, strangely enough, my offer went unheeded. Nobody responded to my volunteering effort."

Philosophers are supposed to be philosophic about such slights, however, so he shrugged it off and awaited his summons. It came eventually, when President Anne Pittman asked him to chair the education committee.

Gieschen soon demonstrated his dedication and his ability. Retirees Day was his pet project, and he envisioned it as an all-day session of seminars, discussion groups, and visits to university classrooms and research centers. His plans were trimmed a bit, with a format of morning seminars, a luncheon speaker, and a few campus tours. But the basic idea continues to draw large numbers of ASURA members to Retirees Day, and he derives considerable satisfaction from its success.

Bob Beeman nominated him for a seat on the board of directors, and he was soon elected vice president. He succeeded Diana Regner as president in April 1996.



Don Gieschen

Don Gieschen earned his bachelor's degree from Northwestern University and his master and doctorate degrees from the University of Minnesota. He served on the faculty of Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota before coming to the Arizona State University Department of Philosophy in 1959.

The institution only recently had matured to university status and had won its present name by a vote of the Arizona electorate in November, 1958. Grady Gammage was serving his final months as president when Gieschen joined the faculty. It was during the ensuing nine-year presidency of G. Homer Durham that the university made rapid strides in academic excellence, and young Dr. Gieschen proved his mettle in his chosen field. His love of ASU also developed over the years, and he continues to devote much of his time to its service.

ASURA members love outings of all kinds, and two of them were enjoyed in early 1996. In April, 44 of them gathered at Canyon Lake for a cruise and dinner aboard a steamship that explored the lake and its surrounding flora and fauna for some two hours. Photos of the event give proof that all concerned enjoyed a rollicking good time.

Denis Kigin, Activities committee chair, organized the Canyon Lake cruise. His faithful hosting of European tours has earned him the gratitude of the association. He also led the Flamenco Fling tour to Spain in May. The 37 participants came home with memories that will always be cherished.

Closer to home, 76 members gathered for an outing to Tempe's Red River Opry for an evening of music and fun during the holiday season. They dined before the program in the big tent next to the Opry House.

Prime Times editor Carolyn Brown noted in the newsletter that there were ASURA members in many foreign countries, including England, Belgium, Canada, and Bulgaria. In the November edition, it was





Carolyn Brown

announced that the association had boosted its membership to 761. ASURA was proving its worth to an increasing number of retirees.

The association's growth made it a force to be reckoned with in the state legislature. ASURA members attended several of the ASU Alumni Association's legislative coffees, at which legislators from each of the East Valley districts speak and give retirees, alumni, and friends an opportunity to voice their concerns for action in the coming legislative session.

Legislative relations has been one of Gieschen's major interests ever since he joined ASURA. Along with Bob Ellis, Joe Milner and others, he represented ASURA in the coalition of state university retirees associations to plan strategies for action in the legislature. Several ASURA members were regular attendees at the legislature during the 1997 session. Gale Richards submitted a proposal to the board for formation of the Legislative Action Committee to oversee ASURA liaison with all agencies affecting retiree interests. In addition to the legislature, his proposal included the ASU administration and faculty, the Board of Regents, and the Arizona State Retirement System. The proposal was approved by the board at its March meeting.

The Alumni Association's annual picnic for legislators in Wesley Bolin Plaza near the Capitol has been enthusiastically supported by ASURA, and each year many members attend the event to meet and talk with members of the legislature.

In January 1997, the ASURA board of directors voted unanimously to oppose the effort of Senator Carol Springer (R-Yavapai) to give Arizona's community colleges the right to grant upper-division academic credit, a move that would pave the way for their granting of bachelor's degrees. Springer also asked the legislature to give Yavapai College in Prescott a grant of \$925,000 from the state general fund. While supporting the community colleges in their important educational role throughout



Joe Milner



Sue Blumer



Guido Weigend

Arizona, the Arizona Board of Regents had spoken out vigorously against the Springer proposals, which failed to gain the legislature's approval. The three state university retiree associations joined in supporting the Regents' action.

Participation by ASU retirees in legislative liaison and in a variety of state agency meetings was beginning to reinforce the perception that our association is a force to be reckoned with in Arizona governance.

An important goal in the founding of the ASU Retirees Association was that of service to Arizona State University and the community. President Gieschen voiced his feelings in a letter to his board of directors: "I think we should go beyond self-interest and pocketbook issues," he wrote, "and serve a broad range of interests." He went on to outline the many areas of service in which ASURA is involved: promoting ASU interests, volunteering for service in university departments, ASU scholarships, the "Adopt-a-Family" program, travel, social events, educational programs, and others. We should emphasize those programs, he added, when we seek to add new members to the association.

One of Gieschen's goals was not so service oriented, but almost as important. He believed that the association could attract better attendance at the annual ASURA meeting in April if we shortened the business session and its sometimes lengthy committee reports. In January 1997 he

instructed committee and sub-committee chairs to prepare written reports ("not longer than one page" he declared) to be submitted in lieu of the oral presentation.

First on the ASURA agenda in 1997, however, was the fourth annual Retirees Day, planned and brought into being in February by the education committee, chaired again by Ruth Wineberg. For the first time, attendance at the event topped 100. Regent Rudy Campbell was the luncheon speaker, discussing current and future plans for the three state universities. Featured at the morning educational sessions were: Gardening, Vic Miller; Grandparenting, Robert Strom; Arizona Politics, Dave Berman; Genealogy, Linda Swain; Computer Applications, Michael Flemister; Women in Arizona Government, former legislator Polly Rosenbaum; Leisure Reading, Pierre O'Rourke; and Cartooning, Don Robinson. Tours were conducted after lunch at the Memorial Union to the computer commons and to the art museum.

At the February board meeting, JoAnn Hennington, Volunteer Coordinator, reported one of the more unusual gifts made to ASU. The Garden Rose Council made a presentation of a thousand rose bushes, total value \$6,000, honoring ASU's participation in the 1997 Rose Bowl football game in Pasadena. (In its second Rose Bowl appearance, ASU had led Ohio State until the final minute, when the Buckeyes scored on a long pass play.) Hennington asked for ASURA volunteers to help plant them.

In other action at that meeting, Leon Kemper reported that members were signing up for a tour of Scotland. It was also noted that the bylaws needed to be changed to reflect changing of names of agencies of special interest to the association. The University Relations office is now the Institutional Advancement office, and the Faculty Senate is now the Academic Assembly.

In March, it was decided to establish an \$11,000 scholarship endowment fund at the ASU Foundation, from which interest earnings would eventually pay for the annual ASURA scholarship awards. The scholarship covers an award equivalent to in-state tuition and fees,

amounting to more than \$2,000. Sara McLennan was announced as the second recipient of the scholarship.

Merlin Duval, member of the Arizona State Retirement System board, spoke at the annual membership meeting in April. Seventy-five association members were in attendance.

Five newly-elected members of the ASURA board of directors were introduced: Bonnie Peplow, Sam Hunter, Zeke Prust, Ruth Wineberg, Bruce Mason, and Joe Milner.

Succeeding Gieschen as president was Madelyn Wright. Other officers for 1997-98 were Hal White, vice president; Prust, treasurer; and Sue Blumer, secretary.

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## THE SENATOR GOT HER OUT OF BED

If anyone has doubts about ASURA's ability to influence legislators, the story of Madelyn Wright and Senator Gary Richardson should be convincing.

Senator Richardson of Tempe had been a staunch supporter of Arizona State University and of its retirees, but through some lapse in communication, he voted against a bill that all three Arizona university retirees' organizations had been strongly supporting.

As a result, Wright and several other ASURA leaders called the senator to express their disappointment about his vote.

"He had promised to support the bill," she recalls, "but he voted against it. That made a lot of our people angry."

Richardson soon learned how effective the ASURA legislative effort can be. In an effort to heal the wound, he made a frantic call to President Wright to explain what had happened.

"He called early in the morning and got me out of bed," she remembers with a chuckle. "He said it was all a mistake, and begged for an opportunity to speak at our next board meeting to explain what had

happened. I accepted his apology, but told him it would not be possible under our rules to have him address the board."

There were several factors that may have contributed to Richardson's defeat at the hands of Tempe ex-mayor Harry Mitchell in the upcoming election, but the erosion of his support by the retirees could have been one of them.

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## ESCAPING WORK THE HARD WAY

In a completely unplanned way, Leon Kemper was relieved of his committee chair responsibilities. The November 1997 issue of Prime Times told how.

The Activities Committee chair, who had done yeoman service in planning the ASURA trip to Scotland and other adventures, was riding his bike when he hit a low tree limb and was knocked unconscious for 30 hours. Kemper subsequently underwent months of recovery and therapy.

Kelly Stadmiller took over Kemper's responsibilities as Activities chair. Her work in setting up the tour to Italy was so successful that she continued in the post, with excellent results.

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## THE NAU CONNECTION

Attending legislative hearings has brought retired members of the three state universities together as they join forces at the State Capitol to be heard and seen when bills affecting retirees' interests are debated in the House and Senate.

During the 1998 legislative session, when the real push began to seek Constitutional protection for the state retirement fund, the ASURA Legislative Liaison of Don Gieschen, Bruce Mason and Joe Milner were at the hearings almost every week with regulars Herb Abrams and Hal

Marshall of the University of Arizona, and Dan Julien and Ken Bean of Northern Arizona University.

At one particular Senate Government Operations Committee, a host of new people gathered in the Hall of the Senate chambers and hastily made informal introductions. Once inside the meeting room, Gieschen asked the woman seated next to him what NAU academic area she represented.

Clara Lovett replied, "I'm the President."

## Chapter Eight

### THE LADY WHO NEVER REALLY RETIRED

**M**adelyn Wright began working for Arizona State University in 1953. She never has stopped. "Oh, I retired in 1989," she says, "but I was already becoming involved in ASU Retirees Association planning and I worked with Bob Ellis and others to bring the organization into being. I served as treasurer on the first ASURA board of directors, and have been involved in association activities ever since."

The seventh president of ASURA has enjoyed every moment of her long service to retirees.

"We have people of unbelievable dedication," she declares, "and the organization has been more successful than anybody dared hope in the beginning. ASURA has won some important legislative victories, and it has served its members well. Not only that, but it has helped the university in many ways, protected the interests of its members, kept retirees in touch with ASU, and reached out to help worthy students and families in need."

For many years, Madelyn served as ASU's assistant registrar. Later she headed the Academic Scheduling Office. Both posts called for unusual ability in pouring oil over troubled waters, resolving seemingly insoluble problems.

In Alfred Thomas' office, she sat down with many an angry or panicky student to work out difficulties in gaining entrance to a class or finding a way for a senior to get the necessary credits to graduate. In her academic scheduling role, under Elmer Gooding, she was in charge of finding



Madelyn Wright

rooms for classes and special events in every college and in resolving conflicts of many kinds.

"For years after I left one of those positions, people would come to me with their problems," she says. "I suppose I should have been flattered that they looked to me for help, but it did get trying at times."

She has exhibited that same problem-solving ability in her many ASURA positions. After her two years as treasurer, she served on the Adopt-a-Family committee, as a member of the board of directors twice, and as vice president under Don Gieschen. At this writing, she heads the Volunteer Committee, placing retiree volunteers in positions of service with the university libraries, the art museum, Gammage Auditorium, and other departments.

"We are always trying to match retiree volunteers with jobs that need to be done at the university," Wright says, "but we are careful not to place a volunteer in a position that results in a regular employee or student losing his or her job."

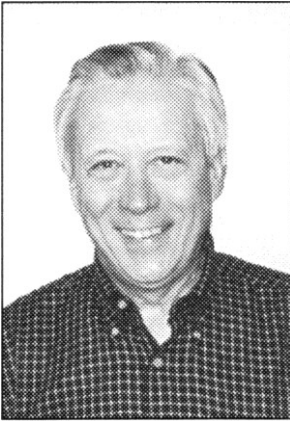
At the March, 1997 meeting of the ASURA board, George Morrell reported that ASURA membership had grown to 753, and that members were spread much of the way around the world.

"During our recent election," he said, "we got a response from Dorothy Greaves, who now lives in Sofia, Bulgaria, and serves with the Peace Corps. She sent the money for US stamps so we could send her ballot to her. We need more members with that kind of dedication."

(By the end of January, 1998, membership had taken a major upturn, with 821 retirees paying dues to the association.)

JoAnn Hennington told the board at the March meeting that the 1,000 rose bushes donated to the university had now been planted, mostly by





Mat Betz

retirees. The ASU arboretum coordinator issued a call for more ASURA volunteers and expressed thanks for all the help members had provided at the facility.

It was reported that Don Gieschen testified at the most recent Arizona State Retirement System board meeting arguing against the proposal to make management of the retirement fund an internal function.

On the legislative front, the board heard Joe Milner's report that the top priorities of the Arizona Coalition (retirees of the three universities) would not be heard by the committee of the whole of the legislature until the following year. These were a reduction in the threshold for COLAs, and an increase in the medical insurance subsidy. But our lobbyists will continue to press for these and other benefits, he said.

The business of ASURA was indeed varied and far-reaching, and the association's efforts were bearing fruit on many fronts.

President Wright decided that her No. 1 goal in 1997-98 was to make the association's legislative relations effort even stronger than ever. She worked closely with Hal White, who headed the legislative relations program. White and his ASURA associates were frequent participants in committee hearings, both in the Arizona Senate and House of Representatives. Employing an effective telephone network, volunteers were notified of upcoming hearings on bills important to retirees, and they came to the Capitol when asked.

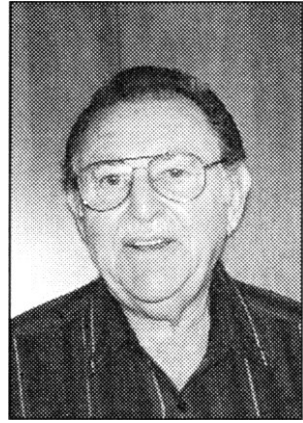
Because of the uncertainties of the state legislature's procedures — hearings cancelled, or scheduled bills not being included as planned — ASURA representatives often had to make the trip to Phoenix in vain, or to sit through hours of argument on other bills until theirs finally appeared on the agenda.



Dorothy Alexander



Bonnie Peplow



Marvin Fisher

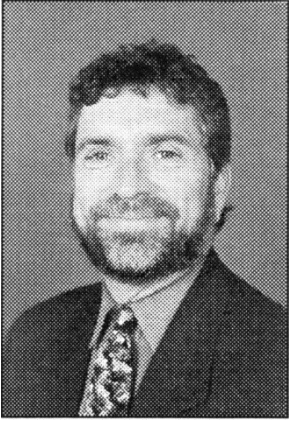
But there was little complaining. Those familiar with the legislature and its foibles understood that such disappointments were part of the game. Just as important, they knew that their presence at the Capitol kept legislators aware that university retirees were organized, concerned, and effective in delivering votes.

Another of Wright's goals was to foster a stronger bond of friendship among ASURA members. She went on outings, attended social events, and joined the summer tour to Scotland, "but we never did see Nessie, the Loch Ness monster," she laments. That tour was a big success, despite the fact that the luggage of several members of the group disappeared for seven days. (Wright's was one of them.)

A third goal was that of bolstering the scholarship program. A permanent fund was set up, with earnings earmarked for support of the annual scholarship.

At the September, 1997 board meeting Darwyn Linder, representing the ASU Academic Assembly, reported on the quality of the new freshman class. It was a glowing report.

"This is the best freshman class in the history of the university," he declared. "It includes a record 55 Merit Scholars and hundreds of holders of Regents scholarships, among others with honors at entrance."



Allan Price

Linder also spoke of efforts to preserve faculty tenure, which has frequently come under fire from legislators.

Because of these briefings, ASURA leaders are now keeping abreast of the latest developments on campus, and many are learning more about the functioning of the university than they were able to do in decades of active employment.

Assistant Athletic Director Jill DeMichele addressed the board in February, 1998, as did Bettie Julkes, tutorial coordinator for the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. They reported that ASU now has 450 athletes in 21 sports, many of whom are in need of tutors to help them keep academic eligibility. Retirees can serve the university by offering their services as tutors, both as volunteers and in a paid capacity.

As Wright's term neared its end, she could look back with satisfaction on the year's accomplishments. In the spring of 1998 a schedule of ASURA events for 1998-99 was published, legislative liaison was progressing, Kelly Stadmiller was attempting to put together a tour of Australia and New Zealand, and Ruth Wineberg staged another successful Retirees Day, her third and last as education chair.

Most of Wright's goals had been reached: legislative activity, social events, and closer ties with the university, among others.

Ready to take office in April was a new slate of officers: Hal White, president; Zeke Prust, vice president; Sue Blumer, secretary; and Joe Milner, treasurer.

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## THE TELEPHONE TREE

Through the efforts of the ASURA, there is a growing interest in a statewide association with the University of Arizona and the Northern Arizona University retirees groups.

After about four years of notes and telephone calls between Corrine Irvan of ASURA and Jency Houser, a past president of UARA, an ASU contingent of Irvan, Marilyn Wahl, Martha Waltemath and Tina Creswell drove to Tucson in the early morning of June 16, 1998, for a luncheon and campus tour with UARA representatives.

The following year, members of retirees' associations of the three universities met at the Holiday Inn across from the ASURA office for lunch. Out of this meeting, a great idea for a Telephone Tree was presented by the group.

## Chapter Nine

# BATTLING FOR RETIREE LEGISLATION

**I**t's a near miracle that Hal White became involved in the ASU Retirees Association at all. About the time he retired from the university faculty in 1993, his friend Mat Betz tried to persuade him to join the association. White refused because of his involvement in other organizations. Not long thereafter, Betz tried again, with the same result.

But Betz was not easily discouraged. Aware of White's leadership talents and his record of loyal service to ASU, Betz was determined to enlist him in the growing army of retiree activists. For the third time, he urged White to join ASURA.

This time he said "yes." He was soon named to the board of directors, and then agreed to serve as treasurer.

However, he was out of state and missed the first two board meetings. Somehow he forgot the date of the next meeting and was again among those absent.

That was in early 1996. It did not seem likely at that point that he would ever be a leader in ASURA. Perhaps it was to atone for missing those early meetings that he buckled down and soon became one of the pillars of the organization. He accepted the vice presidency in 1996-97 and became ASURA's eight president in 1997-98.

Hal White earned his Ph.D. degree in management at the University of Florida, taught at Idaho State University, and came to ASU's College of Business Administration in 1966, largely because of his respect for Keith Davis, an internationally known author of books on management.



Hal White

During the next 27 years he earned enthusiastic plaudits from his students and faculty colleagues for his teaching and his service to the university. In 1989 he was elected president of the Faculty Senate.

It was during that term that he became increasingly convinced that the university administration was not sufficiently active in pushing for legislation favorable to higher education, and ASU in particular. Only if the university's top administrators, the staff, and alumni joined forces in a combined effort, he reasoned, could ASU achieve its legislative goals.

White was active in forming the Legislative Task Force, which included all segments of ASU supporters. That group made it a point to become better acquainted with legislators, to invite them to the Memorial Union for productive sessions on university concerns. It was partly through his efforts that the annual series of legislative district coffees was inaugurated, bringing legislators and ASU supporters together for informative discussions.

So it was only natural that he continued these efforts when he became a member of the ASURA board.

"I found that many members of our retirees' organization were well equipped, through past efforts and current interest, to work with the ASURA legislative liaison effort," he says. "Bruce Mason was a natural, a man to whom this kind of activity was mother's milk and who had several of his former political science students in the legislature. Bob Ellis was an effective worker, as were Don Gieschen, Gale Richards, Zeke Prust, Bob Beeman and others."

During White's presidency, the retirees organizations of the three universities worked with faculty and alumni groups to form a bloc that legislators could not afford to ignore.



Jeri Goldfader

One of the early achievements of the White presidential year was that of forging closer ties between ASURA and the Academic Assembly (formerly the Faculty Senate). At the May, 1998 meeting of the ASURA board, the Academic Assembly president, Darwyn Linder, reported that the Assembly had adopted a resolution to make the president of ASURA an ex-officio member of the Assembly.

The ties between the two groups have been especially valuable to ASURA because the Assembly president (always an ex officio member) makes periodic reports to the ASURA board, bringing its members up to date on academic and administrative activities in the university

Kelly Stadmiller's Activities Committee was especially busy in mid-1998. At the October board meeting, she announced these coming events: Halloween picnic on October 29; Valley Christmas lights bus tour, December 17; Boyce Thompson Arboretum tour, led by Vic Miller, March 18. Stadmiller resigned later that year and Denis Kigin agreed to return for another term as chair of the Activities Committee.

At the October meeting it was reported that Arizona historian and entertainer Marshall Trimble would be the principal speaker at the next Retirees Day.

In October, 1998 President White approached Dean Smith, author of several books and articles about ASU history, with the idea of preparing a history of the ASU Retirees Association. White wanted to be sure that information about the founding and early years of the association was published while the principal participants in those events were still around to tell their stories. Smith agreed to undertake the project, which was to be completed sometime before the end of the association's first decade of existence.



Gayle Shuman

To assist him in that task, Smith recruited an ad hoc history committee composed of Bob Ellis, George Morrell, June Payne, Joe Milner, Ruth Wineberg, Denis Kigin, Anne Pittman, Zeke Prust, Carolyn Brown, and Corrine Irvan. Other ASURA members gave of their time and expertise as the project developed.

The association assisted in the restoration of Old Main, the most venerable (1898) building on the ASU campus. The board of directors authorized the purchase of a \$500 brick to be placed in the Alumni Terrace of the building.

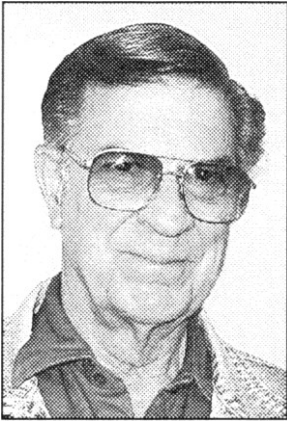
Many retirees also have made individual contributions to the restoration. Old Main, where Normal School students attended classes and where Teddy Roosevelt delivered a memorable 1911 address, has always been revered by the ASU family. A national campaign has been in progress for several years to raise \$6 million for the restoration. (An inflation note: Old Main was originally built at a cost of \$44,000).

While all this activity was going on, the principal thrust of White's presidential year continued to be legislative liaison. "Just being there for meetings with legislators, and at House and Senate committee meetings at the State Capitol, is a vital service all retirees can render," he declared. "We need to make our presence felt and our concerns known."

Zeke Prust and members of the Legislative Liaison Council concentrated their efforts during the fall on securing the approval of Proposition 100, and they were instrumental in winning its approval by the Arizona electorate in the November general election. That victory protected the corpus of the Arizona State Retirement System fund from invasion by the legislature or any other government agency.

Attendance of retirees at the legislative district coffees increased, as did contacts with individual legislators. COLA issues, state subsidies for





Don Robinson

retiree health care, and bolstering ASU's legislative appropriation continued to be of major interest to those working with legislative liaison.

As his presidential term approached its close, White looked back on its achievements with satisfaction.

"I feel good about what we accomplished," he declared. 'Association membership increased, we put an additional \$5,000 into the scholarship fund, we assisted the university on several fronts, and we continued to strengthen our presence in the legislative arena. There were many other areas of progress. Our association is doing very

well."

The annual membership meeting on April 8, 1999 attracted more than 100 retirees, including a group from the Faculty Emeriti Club. A highlight of that meeting was the presentation of a plaque and gift to Corrine Irvan in recognition of the many hundreds of hours she has devoted to ASURA each year since ASURA's founding.

At the meeting's conclusion, White handed over the gavel to the new president, Zeke Prust.

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## WE CAN INFLUENCE LEGISLATION!

The ASURA Legislative Liaison Committee, acting in concert with other Arizona university and public employees organizations, has had remarkable success during recent sessions of the Arizona Legislature in gaining passage of bills favorable to retirees. Bob Beeman, chair of the ASU committee, has this to say about those efforts:

"The 1991 Legislature approved an increase to 2 percent in the multiplier used to calculate retirement benefits, as well as a 3 percent



Kelly Stadmiller

permanent tax equity increase. These actions resulted in an increase of about 5 percent in the checks of retirees. Another 5 percent increase was passed in 1992.

"In 1994, Senate Bill 1058 established for the first time a permanent formula for calculating an annual 'cost of living' benefit increase. Any such increase would depend on Retirement System investment earnings exceeding the threshold of 9 percent.

"The ASRS fund received protection via a constitutional amendment in 1998 when Senate Concurrent Resolution 1009 was passed, assuring that ASRS funds could be used for no purpose which did not directly benefit members of the System.

"In 1999, the benefit formula was improved in three ways: (1) the excess earnings threshold of 9 percent was reduced to 8 percent; (2) the increase limit was raised from 3 to 4 percent, and (3) the relationship to the Consumer Price Index was eliminated. Also, the retirement benefit multiplier was raised from 2.0 to 2.1 percent.

"Several other measures benefiting specific groups of retirees were successfully supported during those years.

"Now our committee is working to gain passage of a bill which would increase the health insurance premium subsidy provided by the ASRS, and two measures that would further increase the retirement benefit formula. The committee has every reason to be optimistic about the passage of these measures."

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## LAPEL PIN TRADE

Despite the ASU-UofA athletic rivalry, in many areas the two institutions come to each other's aid.

Francis "Sledge" Hammer was one of the early leaders of the University of Arizona Retirees Association and provided encouragement in the founding days of ASURA.

In the Fall of 1998, when Hammer was serving his second stint as president of the UofA retirees group, he invited ASURA President Hal White and wife Lucile to a UARA luncheon and asked Hal to speak to the group about ASURA activities.

Hal appeared wearing a UofA lapel pin, given him by a UofA graduate and fellow parishioner at Mt. Carmel Catholic Church in Tempe.

When Sledge introduced Hal, he directed attention of the attendees to the UofA pin. Hal's response was that those loyal to the UofA might be surprised how seldom he had an opportunity to wear the pin at ASU.

He then presented Sledge with an ASU lapel pin, which Sledge immediately put on his jacket — to the enthusiastic response of the UofA retirees.

When Sledge was invited to be a guest of the annual ASURA Retirees Day the following February, he arrived wearing a big grin and his ASU lapel pin.

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**WE MADE IT!**

At the February 2000 board meeting, signs decorated the walls declaring that the goal of 900 members had been achieved. A new goal of 1,000 is now under way.



## Chapter Ten

# STRENGTHENING THE COMMITTEES

**Z**eke Prust threw himself into the presidency of ASURA with much the same enthusiasm and resolve that propelled him onto Omaha Beach in the 1944 Normandy D-Day invasion. Prust survived that hellish experience with only a minor injury, and went on to fight with the armored infantry in the Battle of the Bulge six months later.

ASURA's ninth president is a mild-mannered, cerebral, and friendly sort of man; a fellow who is hard to picture as a gung-ho soldier bent on killing Germans before they could kill him. But he was. It has been the good fortune of ASU retirees that he survived his battles — one of only two men in his unit to escape unscathed throughout the European campaign.

Ever since he joined the faculty of Arizona State University's Department of Industrial Education (now the Division of Technology) in 1959, Prust has contributed mightily to the development of his university and his community. After his retirement from teaching in 1988, he served as president of the Faculty Emeriti Club and has been a leader in his chosen field of printing technology.

"George Morrell persuaded me to become active in the new ASU Retirees Association," he recalls. "Another colleague who introduced me to the association was Denis Kigin, with whom I officed when I first came to the ASU faculty."

Not many people know that Prust's given name is Zenas, and that he may be the only Arizonan so named today. He has been known as Zeke since his youth in Wisconsin. When he enrolled at the University of Wisconsin, he intended to become an architect, but after two years of



Zeke Prust

study in that field he decided it was not for him and earned his degree in teaching instead. Later he earned a master's degree at the University of Minnesota and his doctorate at the University of Northern Colorado. He taught for a time in a middle school, owned his own print shop, and came to Arizona in 1955 to accept a job as a teacher of printing at Phoenix Union High School. He came to Arizona State University four years later as "one of (Dean) Lee Thompson's boys," as he tells it.

Prust's officers were a mixture of the old and the new in 1999-2000. Joe Milner, a long-time ASURA work horse, continued as treasurer. Peggy Randolph replaced Sue Blumer as secretary. The new vice president, Don Dotts, long-time head of the ASU Alumni Association, was still working part-time in the Development Office, directing the campaign to restore Old Main.

Dotts had served ASU without interruption from his student days, when he assisted the Alumni's executive secretary Jim Creasman, in conducting the 1958 name-change effort. His willingness to take an active role in the ASU Retirees Association even before becoming completely retired impressed association leaders.

"I was fortunate in having capable officers, a strong and active board, and hard-working committee chairs," says Prust. "Probably my primary thrust in my year as president was to involve the committees more actively in the work of the association. The association had grown so rapidly and moved into so many areas of service that we needed the leadership and participation of our committees more than ever before."

His predecessor in the presidency, Hal White, had given his vice president, Prust, more responsibility than in any previous administration, and Prust was determined to continue the effort to involve more people in board activity, on standing committees, and in special projects.



Peggy Randolph

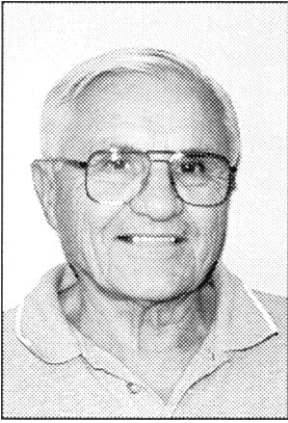
One of White's actions was to appoint Prust as head of the legislative liaison effort. It was an area that Prust knew little about at the time, but he soon became enthusiastic about working with legislators and marshaling the association's efforts to support legislation for retiree benefits. He asked Bob Beeman to succeed him as legislative liaison chair and Don Gieschen to serve as co-chair. Both had extensive experience in that effort, and both were effective during the year. Prust joined them in many a meeting and legislative committee hearing along with other proposals to invest much more of the State Retirement System funds in venture capital companies. Retiree leaders from all three state universities believed that such investments would endanger the safety of the fund. A top priority was that of increasing state health insurance subsidies for retirees.

Another legislative goal, as explained by Bruce Mason at the November board meeting, was to gain passage of a "catch-up bill" to provide retirees with extremely small pensions a monthly pension of \$1,000. Beneficiaries would be those who were on minimum wage schedules while serving the universities.

An important achievement in legislative lobbying was that of securing a 5 percent increase in monthly retiree pension payments, effective July 1, 2000.

An important thrust in the Prust administration was that of increasing membership in the association. A goal of 900 members was set, and it was approaching fulfillment as the year ended. [The February 2000 Board meeting had posters on all the walls declaring that 905 had been reached.]

"We can have many more members, and thus increase our strength in many areas, if we spread the word about ASURA activities to retirees — especially those just leaving full-time service to the university" he says.



Sam Hunter

In his President's Message in the September, 1999 *Prime Times*, Prust urged association members to make growth a priority. "Remember, we are all recruiters," he declared.

That issue of the association newsletter carried a schedule of volunteers on duty at the ASURA office. Most of those listed had been giving their time to that effort for years (since 1991). The schedule: Monday a.m., Pat Skinner; Monday p.m., Gale Richards; Tuesday a.m., Esther Hardesty; Tuesday p.m., Maxine LaRoux; Wednesday a.m., Bob Beeman/Ed Scannell; Wednesday p.m., Marilyn Wahl; Thursday a.m., Corrine Irvan; Thursday p.m., Lee Weber; Friday a.m., Martha Waltemath; Friday p.m., Dorolis Wade.

Revision of ASURA bylaws was a major concern of Gale Richards' Bylaws Committee during the year. That committee submitted its recommendations to the board of directors on October 14. Among the changes recommended:

- The vice president shall be an ex-officio member of the Education Committee.
- An annual audit of the association treasury will be made.
- Added to the list of five standing committees (Community Relations, Education, Finance, Health Insurance, and Membership) are the Executive, Activities, and Legislative Liaison committees.
- The Finance Committee will include the president, vice president, treasurer, and business operations manager.
- The immediate past president will serve ex-officio on the Health Insurance Committee.

Prust favors another important change: the inclusion of the immediate past president as a member of the board of directors. One of the continuing





June Payne

problems worrying retirees during 1999-2000 was that of health insurance uncertainties. Several HMO organizations dropped doctors or entire senior programs, one HMO became insolvent, and many doctors opted not to accept HMO patients. Newspaper articles on the problem caused much uneasiness among ASURA members and kept Dick Murra busy monitoring the changing health insurance scene.

In his report to the board at its December 1999 meeting, Murra said: "People call me and ask what they can do when their HMO doesn't want them anymore. I tell them that state employees enrolled in an HMO that becomes insolvent will be allowed to enroll in another program. An option would be to return to the basic Medicare coverage."

The outlook continued to be bleak, with sharply increasing insurance payments a very real prospect for most retirees. The situation prompted the Legislative Liaison Committee to redouble its efforts to gain passage of legislation increasing the state's contribution to retiree health insurance.

As president of the Academic Assembly, David Burstein's reports to the ASURA board were a valuable source of information about academic problems and achievements of Arizona State University. At the January board meeting, Burstein expressed concern that key figures in the current State Legislature have demonstrated an unwillingness to support the state universities, and that funding "falls within the discretionary rather than the obligatory, category."

In order to effect long-term change, he said, the university community must become more involved in the political process and urge alumni to support candidates in the 2000 elections who are supportive of the university.

An excellent turnout of ASU alumni, faculty, staff, and retirees at the annual Statehood Day Legislative Picnic in February in Wesley Bolin Park at the Capitol enabled ASU friends to meet legislators and urge them to be more supportive.

Retirees Day, held on Saturday, February 19, was again a rousing success, with 140 ASURA members and guests attending the events in the Memorial Union. Diana Regner chaired the Education Committee, members of which planned the eight educational seminars and the luncheon meeting.

Presenters at the seventh annual Retirees Days were: Home Improvement, Gene Thome, Payless Cashways; Contemporary Issues in Arizona Education, Sen. John Huppenthal; Gardening in Arizona, Victor Miller, ASU professor emeritus; Environmental Issues, Brenda Shears, ASU Center for Environmental Studies; Collectibles/Antiques, C.W. Moody, archivist; Elder Legal Affairs, Ron Blake, attorney; Surfing the Internet, Kathee Runo and Bill Austin, AZTEC. Ted Rogers, popular speaker on lifestyle strategies, spoke at the luncheon on "Creating Healthy Attitudes for Daily Actions."

At the April, 2000 annual meeting of the Arizona State University Retirees Association, veteran Zeke Prust turned over the gavel of leadership to newcomer Don Dotts. The term "newcomer" is applicable to Dotts only as it concerns his ascendancy to high office in the association. From his student days in the late 1950s to the present, he has devoted most of his time, talent, and energy to building ASU.

ASURA will have capable leadership in its tenth year of existence.

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## JERI AND THE PRESIDENT

In 1979, Jeri Goldfader began working in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. She kept seeing a man amble up and down the top floor of the Administration Building. She wondered why he kept appearing, and what he was up to.

Finally, one morning when he was strolling down the hall, she confronted him. "Do you work here?" she asked.

In typical dry wit fashion, President John Schwada replied, "I'm sure many people would ask if I do work on this floor or not."

## Chapter Eleven

### FULL SPEED AHEAD

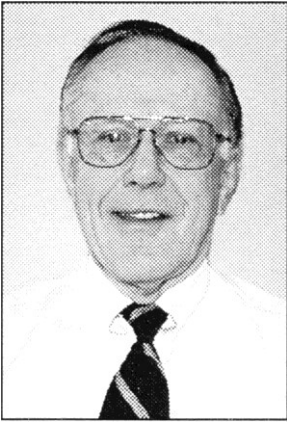
**B**ob Ellis formed the organizing committee for the ASU Retirees Association in 1990, and served as its interim president in 1991-92. Then, in order, came Presidents Denis Kigin, Anne Pittman, Bob Beeman, Diana Regner, Don Gieschen, Madelyn Wright, Hal White, and Zeke Prust.

And in the association's tenth year, the president is Don Dotts.

One of ASURA's original goals was to share leadership between retired faculty and staff. There have been five presidents from the faculty. In Dotts, who headed the Alumni Association for three decades and after retirement still serves the Development Office, ASURA has its fifth staff president. Leadership during the first decade, therefore, could not have been more evenly shared.

Dotts worked as an assistant to Jim Creasman in the ASU Alumni Association while he was still a student. One of his most memorable experiences during that period was his service in the 1958 campaign to win voter approval of the name change to Arizona State University. As Creasman's successor in the Alumni Association, and in recent years as director of the \$6 million campaign to restore and refurbish Old Main, he has been a potent force in the development of his alma mater.

Although retired from full-time service to ASU, he continues to serve the Development Office on a part-time basis and as a volunteer in ASURA.



Don Dotts

As vice president in Zeke Prust's regime, Dotts has been a quick study of retiree problems and aspirations. In his early weeks as ASURA president, he has demonstrated that he will give dedicated and knowledgeable service to the association.

"It would be hard to find an organization anywhere with more dedicated and talented people than we have in ASURA," Dotts declares. "We have an impressive number of members who spend many hours every week on Retirees Association business, and they never seem to tire. They believe in their organization, and they sincerely enjoy working for it. I consider it a rare privilege to be able to serve as its president.

"I'm launching my ASURA presidential year with four major goals in mind," Dotts says.

"First, I'm determined, with the help of many others, to push the association's membership past the 1,000 mark. George Morrell and Corrine Irvan have led the long campaign to top 900, and we should be grateful to them and to others who have persuaded retirees to join. We should be especially attentive to new retirees, and bring them in early. There are hundreds of older retirees in the area who have for some reason failed to join. We just have to let them know how important ASURA can be to them in their retirement years.

"Second, I want to make our excellent legislative relations effort even more effective. We need to work more closely with the Alumni Association in this effort. And we must enlist many more retirees in contacting legislators on behalf of legislation we hope to pass. ASURA, together with the other university retiree organizations and alumni groups, can be a formidable force in the legislature.

"Third, I want to broaden our program offerings. They're really good: travel, education, Retirees Day, our annual scholarship, legislative liaison,

Adopt-A-Family, and others. But we can do even more, and involve more retirees in doing so.

"Fourth, I hope to make our association a more effective instrument in serving Arizona State University, and Arizona higher education as a whole. ASURA must not be perceived as a strictly selfish group, working only for our own benefit. We are people who have given our lives to higher education, and we have an obligation to work closely with the university administration, faculty, Development Office, Alumni Association, and other entities that are dedicated to building an even greater ASU. We have the time, the know-how, and the energy to do that, and we must use all those resources in getting the job done."

At this writing, the ASU Retirees Association is well into its tenth year of existence. The progress that has been made in this decade is little short of amazing. All the original goals of the founders are being met: maintaining retirees' ties with the university; influencing legislation; cooperating with retirees organizations in our sister universities; providing educational, social and recreational programs for members; reaching out to serve the community; helping our university to become better than before.

Membership has more than tripled, retirees are being helped to solve health insurance and other problems, retirees are no longer forgotten when they leave the university, and legislators listen when they speak. Certainly those who organized ASURA could not have envisioned a decade ago how far the association would come in such a short time.

But this is only the beginning. From this time forward, it's full speed ahead!

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## WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

The ASU Retirees Association has a broad and ever widening scope of activities to benefit its members and the university. But new activities are being suggested. Among them:

Retiree counseling, to be offered by ASURA members to those preparing to retire from active employment in the university.

An annual event of major proportions to be sponsored by ASURA, such as a concert, drama, lecture, or social event.

New retirees reception. An informational and social activity aimed at informing new retirees about the benefits Of ASURA membership.

Expanding *Prime Times* to include news of retiree achievements, general news for retirees, and a brief summary of ASU news.

Tenth anniversary gala: An event in April 2001 to celebrate the first decade of ASURA existence.

Service awards to those who have served ASURA with special distinction.

An oral history project, getting the voices of ASURA leaders, and perhaps other ASU leaders, on tape to preserve our history.

More involvement in serving retiree widows and widowers.

A joint ASURA, UARA, and NAURA social get-together.

# VOLUNTEERS, OH, VOLUNTEERS! (WITHOUT THEM WHAT WOULD WE DO?)



Frances Bell



Esther Hardesty



Maxine LaRoux

Anyone active in the ASU Retirees Association knows that the volunteer office staff is the heart of the organization. Since Day One, when Marilyn Wahl was the first office manager, office personnel has been predominately retired staff, although retired faculty are on the list. The volunteers answer the telephone, sort the mail, and take care of the many mailings to the membership.

The office staff has 10 volunteers, each doing three-hour weekly stints. When Corrine Irvan became office manager, she originated monthly dutch-treat luncheons for volunteers, because they rarely saw each other. The first one was at the University Club. The newsletter editor and current president were soon invited. Because the luncheons were so enjoyable, many began bringing their wives or husbands.



Pat Skinner



Dorolis Wade



Lee Weber

Recognizing the importance of the volunteers who staff the office, the Anne Pittman board in 1993-94 established the annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon for all office volunteers. The first one on May 25, 1994, included the immediate past president, the newsletter editor, and members of the immediate past executive board.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**T**hanking every member of the Retirees Association History Committee is a next-to-impossible task. We started the project with a dozen or so participants, but during the past 16 months, the list of those who helped make this book possible has grown ten-fold.

All ten ASURA presidents sat still for interviews, as did many committee chairs, and other association leaders. University administrators, including two presidents, contributed their recollections. Corrine Irvan and Martha Waltemath produced records and performed other tasks. Carolyn Brown tracked down photos.

President Hal White asked me in late 1998 to serve as coordinator of this history project. On the original group assembled were: June Payne, Bob Ellis, Joe Milner, Ruth Wineberg, George Morrell, Denis Kigin, Anne Pittman, Zeke Prust, Gale Richards, and Corrine Irvan. Through it all, members of the History Committee made suggestions, interviewed, read first drafts, and provided many other kinds of help. They were great.

Payne probably devoted more time to the project than most, serving as editor and arbiter of the many bits and pieces that found their way into the manuscript. Zeke Prust, who knows more about printing than the rest of our members put together, supervised production of the book. Albert Camasto, an associate member and long-time art director of ASU publications, furnished expertise for the graphic design.

I regret that I cannot acknowledge the help of everyone who participated. But be assured that your efforts have been much appreciated.

A final note to Hal White: If I had only known at the outset what a huge job this was going to be — I would have said 'yes' anyway! It has been a most edifying and enjoyable experience.

Dean Smith, Chair, History Committee

## EDITOR'S NOTES

The photos in this volume came from many sources and this acknowledges that variety of people and agencies. Thank you to everyone.

Carolyn Brown and Kelly Stadmiller furnished many of the photos of the Board of Directors. Tim Trumble, senior photographer with Media Relations and Public Information, spent hours searching files for some of the older photos, as well as taking several new portraits. The University Library Department of Archives and Manuscripts also furnished missing photos.

June P. Payne

# APPENDIX

## Arizona State University Retirees Association

**Officers, Board Members, Committee Chairpersons, and  
Ex Officio Members**

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### **1991-92 Officers**

*(These are members of the organizing committee.)*

***President:*** Robert (Bob) Ellis

***Vice President:*** George Morrell

***Secretary:*** Gale Richards

***Treasurer:*** James (Jim) Creasman

***Board Members:*** Brent Brown, Anne Pittman, Alan Matheson, Aileen Nilsen, Raul Armendariz, Fred Amaro, Smith

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### **1992-93 Officers**

***President:*** Denis Kigin

***Vice President:*** Dean Smith

***Secretary:*** Marilyn Wahl

***Treasurer / Finance:*** Madelyn Wright

***Board Members:*** Willard Abraham, Ed Hickcox, Bruce Mason,  
Willard Pedrick, Anne Pittman

***Ex Officio:*** Fred Amaro, Raul Armendariz, Brent Brown,  
Alan Matheson, Alleen Nilsen

### ***Standing Committee Chairpersons:***

***Membership:*** George Morrell

***Education:*** Gale Richards

***Community Relations:*** Bruce Mason

***Legislative Liaison:*** Bruce Mason, Gale Richards, Alan  
Matheson

***Legislative Task Force:*** Robert (Bob) Ellis

***Government Relation:*** Heinz Hink

***Retirement Systems Liaison:*** Richard (Dick) Murra, George  
Morrell,

Robert (Bob) Ellis

***University Liaisons:*** Dean Smith, Robert (Bob) Beeman

***University Club Liaison:*** Gordon Inskeep

***Arizona Council of Retired University Employees (ASU, UofA, NAU):***

Robert (Bob) Ellis, Bruce Mason, Anne Pittman, Willard Pedrick

***Newsletter:*** June P. Payne

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**1993-94 Officers**

**President:** Anne Pittman

**Vice President:** Dean Smith

**Secretary:** Robert (Bob) D. Beeman

**Treasurer:** Madelyn Wright

**Board Members:** Mathew (Mat) J. Betz, Carolyn Brown, Hildegard S. Crane, Wilfred (Bill) Ferrell,<sup>2</sup> Bernard L. Jackson, Patricia L. Kelley, Denis Kigin, Willard Pedrick, Henry C. Reeves, Diana M. Regner, Marilyn Wahl, Guido G. Weigend.

**Standing Committee Chairpersons:**

**Finance:** Madelyn Wright

**Membership:** George Morrell

**Community Relations:**

*Legislative Task Force:* Bruce Mason

*Retirement System Liaison:* Robert (Bob) Ellis

*University Liaison:* Dean Smith

*University Club Liaison:* Gordon Inskeep

**Education:** Donald (Don) Gieschen

**Health Insurance:** Richard (Dick) Murra

**Arizona Council of Retired University Employees (ASU/UofA/NAU):**

Gale Richards

**Newsletter:** June P. Payne

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<sup>2</sup> Bill Ferrell passed away, 8/21/93, and Weigend replaced him.

**1994-95 Officers**

**President:** Robert (Bob) D. Beeman

**Vice President:** Guido G. Weigend

**Secretary:** Martha A. Waltemath

**Treasurer:** Mathew (Mat) J. Betz

**Board Members:** Carolyn Brown, Donald (Don) W Gieschen, Jo Ann Hennington, Denis Kigin, Richard (Dick) J. Murra, June P Payne, Willard Pedrick, Anne Pittman, Henry C. Reeves, Diana M. Regner, Alfred Thomas Jr.

**Standing Committee Chairpersons:**

**Membership:** George Morrell

**Finance / Treasurer:** Mathew (Mat) Betz

**Community Relations (Liaisons):**

*Legislative Task Force:* Robert (Bob) Ellis

*University Liaison:* Denis Kigin

*University Club:* George Morrell

**Education:** Donald (Don) Gieschen

**Health Insurance:** Richard (Dick) J. Murra

**Arizona Council of Retired University Employees (ASU, UofA, NAU):**

Robert (Bob) Beeman and Guido Weigend

**Newsletter:** June P Payne

**Ex Officio Non-Voting Members:** Philomena Bell / Reba Wilson, Classified Staff; Brent W. Brown, University Relations; Carole Johnson, Academic Vice President's Office; Robert F Frazier / Connie Wood, Human Resources; Deborah N. Losse, Academic Senate

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**1995-96 Officers**

***President:*** Diana M. Regner

***Vice President:*** Donald (Don) W. Gieschen

***Secretary:*** Nicholas (Nick) A. Salerno

***Treasurer:*** Mathew (Mat) J. Betz

***Board Members:*** Robert (Bob) D. Beeman, Joel Benedict, Carolyn Brown, Jo Ann Hennington, Richard (Dick) J. Murra, Glenn Overman, Susanne (Sue) Shafer, Alfred Thomas Jr., Martha A. Waltemath, Guido G. Weigend, Madelyn Wright

***Ex Officio Non Voting Members:*** Reba Wilson, Classified Staff; Frank Hidalgo, Institutional Advancement; Carole Johnson, Academic Vice President's Office; Robert F Frazier, Human Resources; Deborah N. Losse, Academic Senate

**1996-97 Officers**

**President:** Donald (Don) W. Gieschen

**Vice President:** Madelyn Wright

**Secretary:** Sue Blumer

**Treasurer/Finance:** Harold (Hal) White

**Board Members:** Dorothy Alexander, Joel Benedict, Robert (Bob) Ellis, Jo Ann Hennington, Leon Kemper, Richard (Dick) Murra, Glenn Overman, Nicholas (Nick) Salerno, Susanne (Sue) Shafer, Alfred Thomas Jr., Martha Waltemath

**Ex Officio Non-Voting Members:** Tom Callarman, Academic Senate; Allan Price, Institutional Advancement; Reba Wilson, Classified Staff; Robert Frazier, Human Resources; Carole Johnson, Academic Vice President's Office

**Standing Committee Chairpersons:**

*Activities:* Leon Kemper

*Adopt-A-Family:* Maxine LaRoux

*Education:* Ruth Wineberg

*Health Insurance:* Richard (Dick) Murra

*Legislature:* Joe Milner

*Membership:* George Morrell

*Newsletter:* Carolyn Brown

*Retirement System:* Robert (Bob) Ellis, Gale Richards

*Scholarship:* Guido Weigend

*University Relations:* Frank Hidalgo

*University Club:* George Morrell

*Volunteers:* Jo Ann Hennington



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**1997-98 Officers**

***President:*** Madelyn Wright

***Vice President:*** Harold (Hal) White

***Secretary:*** Sue Blumer

***Treasurer:*** Zeke Prust

***Board Members:*** Dorothy Alexander, Joel Benedict, Robert (Bob) Ellis, Sam Hunter, Leon Kemper, Bruce Mason, Joe Milner, Glenn Overman, Bonnie Peplow, Nicholas (Nick) Salerno, Ruth Wineberg

***Ex Officio Non-Voting Members:*** Darwyn Linder, Academic Senate; Allan Price, Institutional Advancement, Robert Frazier, Human Resources; Carole Johnson, Academic Vice President's Office; Ken Chapman, Classified Staff

***Standing Committee Chairpersons:***

***ASURA Office:*** Corrine Irvan, Coordinator

***Activities:*** Leon Kemper

***Adopt-A-Family:*** Robin Whitaker, Maxine LaRoux

***Education:*** Ruth Wineberg

***Health Insurance:*** Richard (Dick) Murra, Martha Waltemath

***Legislative Liaisons:*** Joe Milner, Donald (Don) Gieschen; Bruce Mason

***Membership:*** George Morrell

***Newsletter:*** Carolyn Brown

***Retirement System:*** Robert (Bob) Ellis, Gale Richards

***Scholarship:*** Guido Weigend

***University Relations:*** Frank Hidalgo

***University Club:*** George Morrell

***Volunteers:*** Jo Ann Hennington

**1998-99 Officers**

***President:*** Harold (Hal) White

***Vice President:*** Zeke Prust

***Secretary:*** Sue Blumer

***Treasurer:*** Joe Milner

***Board Members:*** Dorothy Alexander, Don Dotts, Robert (Bob) Ellis, Marvin Fisher, Sam Hunter, Gordon Inskeep, Leon Kemper, Bruce Mason, Bonnie Peplow, Kelly Stadmiller, Ruth Wineberg

***Ex Officio Non-Voting Members:*** Bill Davey, Academic Senate, John Heenan, Human Resources; Allan Price, Institutional Advancement; Carole Johnson, Academic Vice President's Office; Marie Weinhold, Classified Staff

***Standing Committee Chairpersons:***

***ASURA Office:*** Corrine Irvan, Coordinator

***Activities:*** Kelly Stadmiller, Leon Kemper

***Adopt-A-Family:*** Robin Whitaker

***Education:*** Diana Regner

***Health Insurance:*** Richard (Dick) Murra, Martha Waltemath

***Legislative Liaison Council:*** Zeke Prust (Chair); Robert (Bob) Beeman, Mathew (Mat) Betz, Robert (Bob) Ellis, Donald Fausel, Donald (Don) Gieschen, Bruce Mason, Joe Milner, Bob Mings, Gale Richards, Dean Smith, Harold (Hal) White

***Membership:*** George Morrell

***Newsletter:*** Carolyn Brown

***Retirement System:*** Robert (Bob) Ellis, Gale Richards

***Scholarship:*** Mathew (Mat) Betz

***University Relations:*** Frank Hidalgo

***University Club:*** George Morrell

***Volunteers:*** Madelyn Wright

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**1999-2000 Officers**

**President:** Zeke Prust

**Vice President:** Don Dotts

**Secretary:** Peggy Randolph

**Treasurer:** Joe Milner

**Board Members:** Mathew (Mat) Betz, Marvin Fisher, Sam Hunter, Gordon Inskip, Bruce Mason, June Payne, Bonnie Peplow, Don Robinson, Gayle Shuman, Kelly Stadmiller, Ruth Wineberg

**Ex Officio Non-Voting Members:** David Burstein, Academic Senate; Christine Cervantes, Human Resources; Joan Leard, Classified Staff; Carole Johnson, Academic Vice President's Office

**Standing Committee Chairpersons:**

*ASURA Office:* Corrine Irvan, Coordinator

*Activities:* Denis Kigin

*Adopt-A-Family:* Jeri Goldfader

*Education:* Diana Regner

*Health Insurance:* Richard (Dick) Murra, Martha Waltemath

*History Project:* Dean Smith

*Legislative Liaison Council:* Robert (Bob) Beeman (Chair); Mathew (Mat) Betz, Donald Fausel, Donald (Don) Gieschen, Bruce Mason, Joe Milner, Bob Mings, Zeke Prust, Gale Richards, Dean Smith

*Membership:* George Morrell

*Newsletter:* Carolyn Brown

*Retirement System:* Gale Richards

*Scholarship:* Mathew (Mat) Betz

*University Relations:* Frank Hidalgo

*University Club:* George Morrell

*Volunteers:* Madelyn Wright

**2000-01 Officers**

***President:*** Don Dotts

***Vice President:*** Mathew (Mat) Betz

***Secretary:*** Peggy Randolph

***Treasurer:*** Kelly Stadmiller

***Past President:*** Zeke Prust

***Board Members:*** William Baxter, Quentin Bogart, Ellamae Branstetter, Marvin Fisher, Vivienne Gardner, Sam Hunter, Gordon Inskeep, Bruce Mason, June Payne, Bonnie Peplow, Gayle Shuman, Ruth Wineberg, Charles Woolf

***Ex Officio Non Voting Members:*** David Burstein, Academic Senate; Christine Cervantes, Human Resources; Frank Hidalgo, University Relations; Joan Leard, Classified Staff; Carole Johnson, Academic Vice President's Office

***Standing Committee Chairpersons:***

*Activities Committee:* Denis Kigin

*Adopt-A-Family:* Jeri Goldfader

*Community Relations:*

*Legislative Liaison Council:* Robert (Bob) Beeman, Donald (Don) Gieschen

*Retirement System Liaison:* Gale Richards

*University Club Liaison:* George Morrell

*Education:*

*Health Insurance:* Richard (Dick) Murra, Martha Waltemath

*History Project:* Dean Smith, June Payne

*Membership:* George Morrell

*Newsletter:* Carolyn Brown

*Scholarship:* Mathew (Mat) Betz

*Volunteers:* Madelyn Wright



ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY  
RETIREES ASSOCIATION



