# RFSA MAGAZINE

RETIRED FACULTY-STAFF ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN



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#### A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



I have enjoyed serving as your president this year. It has been a very busy year for me and RFSA and seems like it went by far too quickly. As always, there is still much to be done but you have a very capable leader coming on board in President Cecil Martinez with a wonderful Board to support him.

The Luncheon Meetings, generously hosted by President Fenves and the President's Office, continue to be joyous events with an outstanding attendance of 200+ for the April 26 event. The Treasurer's report provided proof of our stability and we continue our student support with 13 scholarships this year. We were pleased to have two of our scholars, David Davis and Jeremy Binagia, join us for the luncheon. It was so special that the RFSA McKetta scholar could be present and be seated with Dr. McKetta. You could tell the pride in his voice when Dr. McKetta referred to Jeremy's accomplishments.

In the fall we were excited to celebrate Dr. McKetta's 100th birthday. He continues to be his vibrant self, and at the Spring Luncheon he joyously presented his attendance awards to five lucky winners whose numbers were drawn from a basket of tickets. Dephanie Cates, Jim Bedrich, Edna Armendariz, Barbara L. White, and Bill Crook received awards of \$200 each. What a generous friend we have in Dr. McKetta, not only to individuals for

the attendance award but especially for his annual scholarship gift. We are also fortunate to have a generous group of sponsors. You'll see their advertisements throughout this magazine. What great friends they are!

We are grateful to Rod Caspers for answering our call for a special musical presentation. Chip Dolan on the piano and Ellie Shuttles rattled the rafters with the Julie Andrews rendition of "These are a Few of My Favorite Things" and the beautiful "The Way We Were." I've heard that our "Singa-Long" prompted the suggestion of starting a Singing Group comprised of our members! See Cecil if you are interested.

Travel Chair Carol Kay Johnson enlightened us on the RFSA's February travels in Cuba. Carol Kay has provided scores of interesting travel adventures during her 10 years of chairing that committee. Now she feels it is time to step away from the chair and has recruited Karen and John Harrison along with Mike and Marcia Arn as cochairs with the continued professional leadership of Karen Bluethman of Heart of Texas Tours. Read more details of Cuba and approaching trips in Carol Kay's articles.

RFSA revolves around a terrific list of Interest Groups. Details are provided by the chairs of each. I encourage you to take advantage of all that these groups have to offer. I know you will find it a rewarding experience, and we welcome your suggestions for new subjects and leadership. We continue to search for new leaders and welcome volunteers in those roles. Norm Minter and Carol Obianwu have done a fabulous job leading the Health group for many years and both have elected to retire from those positions. They have secured great speakers from lists provided by

various health care institutions. A great opportunity for new volunteers!

Another REALLY great opportunity has been presented to retirees via SILVERSNEAKERS. You should have received information about this program provided through our health insurance. Elizabeth Matthews of UT System's Human Resources spoke to us at our luncheon, encouraging everyone to participate. I've already started with membership in the 24 Hour Fitness on US 183. Membership with daily use of the facility is provided by our insurance coverage. What a fabulous opportunity to get our bodies in shape – or at least in better condition!

RFSA continues to support UT's annual fund drive through participation in the Heart of Texas Campaign. A new volunteer endeavor this year organized by Peggy Mueller supported the President's Office by helping to prepare ribbons and bookmarks for the annual UT Remembers program on May 6, 2016. Peggy was also instrumental in securing the IT staff who provided retiree ID cards for members during our luncheon-such a convenience for us. I appreciate all the many things Peggy has initiated and the tremendous support she provided to me throughout the year.

I close in tribute to the life of a wonderful First Lady, Priscilla Pond Flawn.

Mrs. Flawn served with her husband during his two terms as President of our great University. Professionally, she was a teacher and Head Teacher at Good Shepherd School in Austin. She was a founding member of the Austin Association for the Education of Young Children. Upon Dr. Peter Flawn's first retirement from UT in 1984, friends of Mrs. Flawn set up a Professorship in Child Development

with the Department of Human Ecology—recently designated as the School of Human Ecology. Mrs. Flawn was a life member of the Advisory Council of Human Ecology. In 2002, when the Sarah M. and Charles E. Seay Psychology Building was dedicated on the University of Texas campus, the Child and Family Laboratory School in that building was named in her honor.

For more than 50 years, she loved and supported the University of Texas. In 1985, with matching funds from the Board of Regents, two additional Priscilla Pond Flawn Professorships were established—one in Organ or Piano Performance in the School of Music and one in Early Childhood Education in the College of Education. As part of the Bass Performing Arts Center 2001 Gala, two scholarships in

the College of Fine Arts were created in her honor – one in Theatre and Dance and one in Music. She was a member of the University Ladies Club for more than 55 years and President in the mid-70's. She served on the Advisory Council of the Harry Ransom Humanities Center from 1992-1995 and on the Restoration of the Hogg Auditorium Committee. She was an honorary member of the Advisory Council for the Texas Memorial Museum and served on the Executive Committee of the Chancellor's Council.

On a personal note, I was thrilled the day she called and asked me to accompany her on a walking tour of the Campus with a new First Lady. Peg Berdahl had attended many events on the Campus but Pris wanted to help her know more about everyday life on the Campus. The three of us COVERED the 40 Acres ON FOOT to Littlefield Fountain, down and back up the Mall, through the Main Building, down what was lovingly called "Science Row" in my student days – 24th Street, to the Texas Memorial Museum and back again for lunch with students in the Union. It was a joy to accompany these two wonderful ladies. I also recall Pris' love for the Littlefield Home and her involvement in refurbishing the first

First Lady Priscilla Pond Flawn's charm, grace, and presence in Austin and the UT Campus will be greatly missed.

Nancy Payne RFSA President, 2015-16

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#### BRIDGE

Our bridge group members usually make up three, and occasionally four, tables, but we would love to have some new retirees join us. We usually play the first Monday of each month at the Ex-Students Association. If you are interested, please contact Carol Barrett (512-471-8081) or Bill Crook (210-251-3584 or wcrook@satx.rr.com.)

#### DISCUSSION

The RFSA Discussion Group meets the first Wednesdays of most fall and spring months. We have speakers and lively Q&A on interesting topics. Our sessions begin at 1:30 p.m. at the Howson Branch Library, 2500 Exposition. We invite you to participate and bring guests.

We had an active spring series this year, and attempted to invite experts from different fields to cover a variety of interests. This season, we hosted Dr. Mike Mauk, UT Professor in the Center for Learning and Memory, on February 3. He spoke on human brain function and dysfunction, and his presentation was particularly powerful because his family has been affected by both



Nancy Payne, John Rigdon, and Alice Reinarz

Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases. Dr. Mauk was able to provide current scientific information in a way to resonate with the audience.

On Wednesday, March 2, our speaker was Texas House Representative Donna Howard. As Vice Chair of the Committee on Higher Education, Representative Howard addressed both the political and practical realities of funding and policies in universities. She also

addressed recent controversial issues like campus carry gun laws.

Our third spring speaker was John Rigdon, the Director of Planning and Design for the Waller Creek Conservancy. His April 6 presentation focused on how the Waller Creek Development initiative will revitalize and expand on recreational and ecological opportunities in central Austin and its location adjacent to the new Dell Medical Complex at UT Austin.

We hope that knowing about these presentations will whet your interest in the Discussion Group. If you suggestions for topics or speakers for the group, please let us know. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at our gatherings. Please



Pauline Lopez, Donald Yacktman, and Phil Kelton

contact co-chairs Don Davis (dgdavis@ ischool.utexas.edu) or Alice Reinarz (areinarz@tamu.edu) with feedback, questions or suggestions.

#### **EXERCISE**

The RFSA exercise class meets Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:30 to 9:30 at the Recreational Sports Center, room 1.106, where experienced exercise instructors Helen Scaffa and Kaitlin Jolly lead us in a variety of exercises designed for all ages and fitness levels. These include balance work, stretches, yoga, and low-impact pilates, using exercise balls, hand weights, and thera-bands.

To participate, you need to join Rec Sports; there is a 50% discount for retirees. For more information, contact chair Carolyn Wylie (cateswylie@gmail.com or 512-453-2556).

#### FINANCE/INVESTMENTS

We have had diverse and interesting speakers this spring. On January 11, Kenneth Price of Per Stirling Capital Management spoke on "Implementing Tax-Advantaged Strategies in the Retirement Distribution Phase". He covered strategies to minimize taxes during the distribution phase of retirement so that retirees' cash flow and wealth

is maximized. His talk included asset class location, tax bracket utilization, standard versus itemized deductions, and Roth conversions.

Elliott Weir of III Financial spoke on February 8 on the topic of "Pursuing a Better Investment Experience." His presentation included how many people invest and the mental errors they make; comparing "active" investment vs. using indexes vs. using "dimension" investing; and how to best use the market by focusing on what you can control.

Our final speaker this spring was Donald Yacktman of Yacktman Asset Management, who presented on May 9. His Yacktman Fund has a 10-year performance record which has significantly outperformed the S&P 500 benchmark. He spoke on "Viewing Stocks as Bonds."

The Finance Interest Group meets on the second Monday of the month at 1 p.m., usually in the Howson Library. Contact co-chairs Phil Kelton (pwkelton@gmail.com) or Pauline Lopez (psanlopez@yahoo.com) for more information or to become involved.

#### **FINE ARTS**

The Fine Arts Interest Group has four members who plan events:

• Carolyn Wylie, who keeps RFSA members abreast of musical events in and around Austin, with emphasis on those that are free or low cost. (cateswylie@gmail.com);

• Judy Amis arranges the theater parties, usually including a happy hour or dinner. We've done this several times already – always fun for all, with easy



Foodies at Barley Swine

access to the theater as well as a nearby restaurant. (judy.amis@yahoo.com);

- Laraine Lasdon, art docent extraordinaire; and
- Deena Mersky, Fine Arts Chair (merskd@gmail.com or 512-477-4152). RFSA members are encouraged to contact any of us with ideas and suggestions for fine arts related possibilities. We also want to keep an email list of interested arts enthusiasts. Please let me know if you wish to be on such a specialized list. Best of all, join our committee to participate in planning some informative and enriching events!

#### **FOODIES**

Our newest interest group, Foodies, was created to give RFSA members a chance to try new restaurants with friends. We all enjoy our meals, but the best part of our outings is always the company!

Foodies ended the fall with dinner on

November 17 at Bullfight, a Spanish small-plates restaurant. On January 28, the group had lunch at Dai Due, famous for farm-to-table fare and an in-

house butcher shop. Next up was lunch at Fork & Vine on February 5. Its eclectic food received a thumbs-up from all the attendees. Foodies wrapped up February with an early dinner at Apothecary Café and Wine Bar.

March dining experiences included lunch at Liberty Kitchen, a delicious meal at a downtown venue that actually had plenty of parking! Saffron was our March 17 dinner destination, "combining flavors of Nepal and India with a modern dining sensibility."

The April rains cleared for our lunch on April 20 at Launderette, inside a former laundromat in East Austin. The food was delicious and attendees all agreed they would return – maybe even scheduling a Foodies evening meal...? Then



Dr. David Nation addresses RFSA

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#### INTEREST GROUPS

we had dinner at Barley Swine on May 4, a unique small-plates experience; and our final spring lunch at Sala & Betty's on May 13.

If you are interesting in being included in Foodies events, contact chair Sharon Justice (dsshj@austin.utexas.edu) and she will put you on the notification list. She would also love to hear your suggestions for restaurants to try! And let Sharon know of other local food events and she will be happy to share them with our Foodies members.

#### **HEALTH**

We wrapped up the fall semester with a presentation by Diane Owens, physical therapist and assistant administrator of St. David's Rehabilitation Hospital, on December 21. She spoke on "Tips from Physical Therapy to Keep You Moving and Feeling Like a Youngster!" Her advice was important not only for healing after illness or injury, but in our everyday lives. On February 16, we heard from Dr. David Nation, vascular surgeon at St. David's and Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgeons, Austin. He spoke about advances in vascular surgery in the heart, lungs, chest, esophagus and major blood vessels of the body. Then, on March 21, Rev. Mi-



Diane Owens with Carol Obianwu



Touring the Texas General Land Office

chael Barber, Chaplain at St. David's, spoke on "Questions and Answers You Never Thought You Wanted to Know About Advanced Directives, Hospitals and End of Life Issues." Our final meeting of the spring was on April 18. Dustin Swayze of St. David's spoke on advances in radiology – instead of just X-rays, we now have a whole array of tools, including ultrasound, CT scans, PET scans and MRI's.

The Health Interest Group will have new chairs in the fall, so stay tuned!

#### TRAVEL

Members interested in travel found they could stay in Austin or venture farther afield. 2016 started with the long awaited trip to Cuba to experience the Colonial Cities. The next trip was closer to home-The Texas General Land Office—and though the group stayed in town, they travelled back in time and explored the whole state as they looked at historical land grants and maps. This fascinating tour was limited to the first 25 people who signed up, which happened almost immediately after the tour was announced. Kevin Klaus, Information Specialist, led the tour; and we give special thanks to Virginia Phillips who made the arrangements.

In August, with passports in hand, the group will experience the Best of Eastern Canada, traveling from Montreal to Quebec, on to Ottawa, cruising the Lake of 1000 islands, experiencing Niagara Falls from the Canadian side and then flying home from Toronto. Travel plans do not end there, with a trip to Costa Rica planned for February 2017, as well as visits to campus locations.

RFSA invites you to come travel with us! Information about upcoming day trips will be released as details are confirmed. If you have a destination in mind, let us know.

Are you interested in being part of the travel committee? Volunteers are welcome. Contact co-chairs Mike and Marcia Arn (texmarn@att.net and mjarn50@hotmail.com) or Karen Harrison (kjharrison17@gmail.com).



The weather was gorgeous and on full display through the massive windows of the Connally Ballroom of the Alumni Center for our Spring Luncheon. Over 200 RFSA members and guests enjoyed a delicious meal, an overview of the RFSA trip to Cuba, inspiring musical entertainment – and five people each won \$200 in the John McKetta Attendance Awards! Thanks to photographer Miles Abernathy for capturing so many special moments.











This page, clockwise from top: watching photos from Cuba while we eat; Carol Kay Johnson shares highlights on RFSA's trip to Cuba; Treasurer Clemith Houston presents his financial report; Dr. John McKetta, Tany Norwood and Nancy Payne draw names for the McKetta Attendance Awards; Peggy Mueller announces the UT ID Center is on site to make retiree ID's. Facing page, clockwise from top: Front row, McKetta Attendance Award winners: Bill Crook, Edna Armendariz, Dephanie Cates, Jim Bedrich and Barbara L. White. Back row: Dr. John McKetta, Jeremy Binagia and Nancy Payne; Ellie Shuttles, singer extraordinaire, entertains us; RFSA Scholarship recipient David Davis; RFSA McKetta Scholarship recipient Jeremy Binagia









With apologies to Rodgers and Hammerstein,

### "My Favorite Things" Parody

Botox and nose drops and needles for knitting, Walkers and handrails and new dental fittings, Bundles of magazines tied up in string, These are a few of my favorite things.

Cadillacs and cataracts, hearing aids and glasses, Polident and Fixodent and false teeth in glasses, Pacemakers, golf carts and porches with swings, These are a few of my favorite things.

When the pipes leak,
When the bones creak,
When the knees go bad,
I simply remember my favorite things
And then I don't feel so bad.

Hot tea and crumpets and corn pads for bunions, No spicy hot food or food cooked with onions, Bathrobes and heating pads and hot meals they bring, These are a few of my favorite things.

Back pain, confused brains and no need for sinnin', Thin bones and fractures and hair that is thinnin', And we won't mention our short shrunken frames, When we remember our favorite things.

When the joints ache,
When the hips break,
When the eyes grow dim,
Then I remember the great life I've had,
And then I don't feel so bad.

#### JOHN MCKETTA HONORED

The John J. McKetta Jr. Department of Chemical Engineering in the Cockrell School of Engineering at The University of Texas at Austin has successfully completed its "Challenge for McKetta," an ambitious fundraising campaign to advance the department and honor one of its most beloved teachers and leaders.

The campaign raised \$28 million from UT Austin engineering alumni, friends and corporate partners, far exceeding the goal of \$25 million. It marks the largest department fundraising campaign in the Cockrell School's history.

The campaign's success culminates two centennial celebrations for the department in the current academic year: Professor Emeritus John McKetta Jr.'s 100th birthday, which occurred October 17, 2015, and 100 years of chemical engineering education and innovation at UT-Austin.

Campaign funds will support student scholarships and academic initiatives, upgrade chemical engineering facilities and provide critical resources to advance research projects — strengthening every part of the department and ensuring its continued success.

"Completing this campaign is an extraordinary accomplishment for our department and for the Cockrell School," said Thomas Truskett, chair of the McKetta Department of Chemical Engineering. "I am extremely proud of how our chemical engineering community — from new undergraduate students to the most accomplished alumni — came together in an effort to honor Dr. McKetta, who has helped shape this department for decades."

The Challenge for McKetta was launched in 2010 at an event celebrating McKetta's 95th birthday. The campaign galvanized generations of supporters who were inspired by McKetta's leadership, passion for teaching, innovation in the field of chemical engineering and commitment to the university. When the campaign hit the \$10 million mark in 2012, the department was officially renamed in his honor.

"I'm so grateful to everyone who contributed to the Challenge for McKetta and helped recognize the department's centennial," McKetta said. "I've always considered students and members of this department family, and it means the world to me that we've come together to ensure the continued success of the department — and, more importantly, the future success of its students."



nial celebrations for the department in the current Dr. McKetta celebrates with students at the Cockrell School of Engineering

McKetta was born in 1915 to Ukrainian immigrant parents and grew up in Wyano, a small coal-mining town in western Pennsylvania. After graduating from high school, he went to work digging coal alongside his father and brother. He soon decided that he wanted to learn how to make chemicals from coal rather than dig it in the mines. He attended Tri-State College, now Trine University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering. He went on to earn a master's degree and doctorate in chemical engineering from the University of Michigan in 1944 and 1946, respectively.

In 1946, McKetta joined UT Austin's chemical engineering faculty. Throughout his 70-year affiliation with the university, McKetta served as department chair of chemical engineering, dean of the Cockrell School and vice chancellor of the University of Texas System. Regarded by former students as a caring, effective teacher, McKetta was voted one of UT Austin's 10 most inspiring professors by the Texas Exes and was featured in *Alcalde* magazine in 2013.

McKetta is recognized as a global authority on the thermodynamic properties of hydrocarbons and has served as an energy adviser to five U.S. presidents. He authored 87 books, including the 69-volume Encyclopedia for Chemical Processing and Design. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering and, in 2009, was named one of the "50 Chemical Engineers of the Foundation Age" by the American Institute of Chemical Engineers. And he has been, and continues to be, an active and involved member of the UT Retired Faculty-Staff Association. Thank you and congratulations, Dr. McKetta!

### MARGARET C. BERRY HONORED

To celebrate Dr. Margaret Berry's 100th birthday last year, her friends fulfilled one of her dreams – to create an endowed scholarship in Religious Studies at UT in honor of her parents. The Lillian and Winfred Berry Endowed Presidential Scholarship in Religious Studies was established by the Board of Regents on October 15, 2015. This spring, the

first two recipients of that scholarship were awarded. Tori Pell and Kylie McDaniel received the inaugural scholarships at a reception hosted by Department Chair Dr. Martha Newman held on May 9 in the Dean's Room at the UT Club. Tori is graduating this semester with Departmental Honors in Religious Studies, and will begin her MA Degree in Middle Eastern Studies at UT this fall. Kylie will continue her studies at UT in the fall and will be pursuing Religious Studies Departmental Honors and Honors through the Polymathic Scholars Program.



Kylie McDaniel, Dr. Margaret Berry, Tori Pell

Congratulations, Dr. Berry, on fulfilling your dream and helping Tori and Kylie toward fulfilling theirs!

### **UT REMEMBERS**

Thirty RFSA members assisted University Events by preparing bookmarks and orange ribbon loops for the guests at the UT Remembers programs on May 6, 2016. We gathered in Littlefield Home on April 27-28, 2016 to lend our hands to this activity.

This year is the first time we've assisted with this service project. Nimble (or not so nimble) fingers made remembrance loops from orange ribbon and then pinned the loops onto small schedule cards. Volunteers also added both orange and white ribbons to the bookmarks made to commemorate the day.

UT Remembers is an annual day of remembrance honoring members of the University of Texas at Austin community who died in the previous year. Flags on the Main Mall are lowered during a brief program at 8:45 a.m. The UT Remembers Service is held from 2-3 p.m. in the Tower Garden (south of the Tower near the turtle ponds).

From events.utexas.edu/ utremembers:

UT Remembers began in 1998 when the UT Cares Committee developed a program to honor members of the univer-

sity community — students and current and retired faculty and staff — who died in the prior year. On the last day of the spring semester, families, friends, colleagues and co-workers gather to remember those who died, to reflect upon who they were, what they gave to the institution and what they meant to the people whose lives they touched.

This RFSA service project will continue in future years; many thanks to our members who helped this initial year. Watch for announcements in late April 2017 and sign up to assist.



#### RFSA SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Retired Faculty-Staff Association created a scholarship fund in 1983 and awarded the first scholarship five years later in 1988. Members and friends donate to that endowment, which had a market value of over \$654,000 on February 29, 2016. Available income from that fund varies, depending on prevailing interest rates and market conditions. For 2015-2016, we were able to award scholarships to 13 students for the Fall and Spring semesters (at \$1,250 per session), totaling

\$32,500. Scholarship recipients are chosen by Student Financial Services based on several criteria.

In addition to undesignated donations, the scholarship endowment benefits from gifts made in memory or honor of family, friends and colleagues; in celebration of particular events; and estate donations. Please consider making a contribution to the scholarship fund – it will make a difference in a student's life!

### Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 Scholarship Recipients

#### Nathan Berkowitz

Senior, Biochemistry Plan II Honors / Radio-Television-Film

#### Jeremy Binagia

Senior, Chemical Engineering

#### **David Davis**

Senior, International Relations & Global Studies / French

#### **Manuel Diaz**

Senior, Physics / Mathematics

#### **Marjorie Dininger**

Sophomore, Nursing

#### Cody Dornak

Senior, Athletic Training / Allied Health Professions

#### **Andrew Faris**

Junior, Finance / Business Honors

#### Jeremiah Lee

Senior, Neuroscience

#### Chad Lehmann

Senior, Economics / Finance

#### **Kaylen Parker**

Junior, Architecture / Interior Design

#### Summer Williams

Junior, Social Work / Youth & Community Studies

#### Erinn Wright

Senior, Marketing

#### **Amy Zhang**

Senior, Human Development / Family Sciences

#### GIFTS TO THE RFSA SCHOLARSHIP FUND

 $Please\ consider\ making\ a\ contribution\ to\ the\ RFSA\ Scholarship\ Fund-it\ will\ make\ a\ difference\ in\ a\ student's\ life!$ 

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## Significant Gift to Scholarship Fund

On December 15, 2015, RFSA received an unexpected and very generous gift to its scholarship fund. The Franklin Lindsay Student Aid Fund provided a grant of \$23,240 for RFSA scholarships. Special thanks go to two RFSA members, William Lasher and Robert Mettlen, who recommended this grant in their roles as Loan Committee members of this student aid fund managed by J.P. Morgan Chase Bank. The

funds are designated to be used over the 2016 calendar year and are restricted to scholarships.

This gift, and every donation to our RFSA Scholarship Fund, allows us to increase the impact of our RFSA scholarships every year.

### Thank you to our donors!

Larry Faulkner

Sharon H. & Dean Justice

Philip W. Kelton

Franklin Lindsay Student Aid Fund

Joyce L. McClendon

Peggy Mueller

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We invite you to call **512.454.4643** or visit us us online to explore the rewards of life at Westminster.







On every survey for destinations RFSA travelers have wanted to visit, Cuba has been close to the top of the list. When the Colonial Cities of Cuba tour was offered, we knew that was our chance to experience the country just 90 miles across the water from our border. In February, with passports and visas in hand, we boarded a charter flight in Miami and 90 minutes later landed in Camaguey, Cuba. Lines for immigration were short. Not only were we photographed, but dogs were on duty investigating as we stood in line. (Fun fact - in Camaguey they were spaniels, but in Havana they were beagles.) Before leaving the airport, we changed US dollars for Cuban CUCs (Cuban Convertible Peso), the only legal currency other than euros for Americans to use, since no credit cards issued by US banks are accepted. Our US guide accompanied us from Miami, and once in Cuba we were met by Dani, our Cuban guide, and boarded the bus (which had been made in China) that was to be our

transportation for the next week.

Camaguey is Cuba's third largest city. Founded 500 years ago, it is known as the "City of Squares" connected by narrow cobblestone streets and was recently designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. During the next week, we would walk miles over cobblestone streets and along narrow sidewalks, fascinated by the colorful buildings, and never knowing what would be around the next corner. Our first lunch in Cuba was at Restaurante 1800 and it set the standard for all the wonderful food that was to come. We ate well with shrimp and lobster on the menu several times along with pork, lamb, chicken, and lots of local vegetables, fruits, and delicious desserts. Listening to our guide, we found out that seafood is not part of the diet for locals, since all fishing is highly regulated and all catches are reserved for tourists or exported. All Cubans are on a ration system that included, among other staples,

five eggs per person per month. When we asked how five eggs could be enough, she explained that each additional egg was 5¢ (that makes a dozen eggs cheaper in Cuba than in the US). However, to put this in perspective, people make only \$25-\$30 per month. Our tour guide's sister was a doctor, but it was interesting to learn that Dani made more money during tourist season, so her sister would stay home to take care of the children during those months.

Our group travelled on "people to people" visas that required documented interaction with the local people, artists, teachers, dancers, and singers. We experienced it all. In Camaguey we visited Pepe's Art Factory and met local artist Jose de Guiterriez who worked with leather (goat skin) to create a variety of figures, many of which looked as if they had been carved from wood. His large seahorses were mounted to their bases in such a way that they gently

swaved in the slightest breeze, as though they were underwater. In Camaguey's Plaza de Carmen, we visited the studio of Martha Jimenez who sculpted the lifesize bronze figures that were sitting around the square in front of her gallery. Those figures were engaged in activities that reflected the life of the villagers, including a group of gossipers, a couple in love, a man reading a paper and a man pushing a wheelbarrow. Her colorful paintings featured

women and their role in society, and many contained the theme of sewing machines, a symbol of how women's work helped create their community. At Casanova Pottery in Camaguey we watched the potter at work and I was drafted to try my hand at the potter's



Our 15 minutes of beach time!

wheel. There was the salsa lesson after dinner at the hotel in Camaguey and the invitation to join the flamenco dancers on the dance floor after dinner at La Compaña de Toledo. We watched a special performance by the Contemporary Ballet Company in Camaguey and then talked with the dancers. In Cienfuegos,

we toured the ornate Thomas Terry Theater that had been built in 1890 and walked across the square to a hear performance by the Cienfuegos Choir, where some of our members joined in the music and dance. At lunch in Havana a former baseball player (Professor Rolando Macias), talked about the sport in Cuba and its future. Every day we would have lunch at a pal-

ador, which is a restaurant, frequently in a home, run by self-employed Cubans serving authentic Cuban food. You would find yourself walking upstairs through part of the home to the palador. Mojitos or Cuba Libres were frequently offered first and then came courses of



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soup, salad, vegetables, a meat and/or seafood, followed by dessert and wonderful espresso.

Being from Texas, we were interested to visit the King Ranch in Cuba. We might think of it as only a Texas institution, but they have holdings all over the world. After the revolution, the state took over the King Ranch and we had an opportunity to visit, have lunch and attend a rodeo. The lunch was wonderful and we

could explore the grounds and watch them barbecuing. The brand was familiar, and we all know what a rodeo would involve here in the US, but this rodeo lacked the "Texas touch." We rode in horse-drawn carts to the nearby village where the ranch workers lived, and had the opportunity to visit the school and see the homes of the workers. Although the villagers didn't have much in the material sense, they were warm and welcoming and proud to show us their homes and how they lived. The school was fascinating—just two rooms, but full of books, maps and art. There was an old Mac computer with books sitting beside it, one of which

was Clifford the Big Red Dog in English. One of the successes of the revolution, of which the Cuban people are very proud, is the fact that everyone is taught to read for a 100% literacy rate. All are taught to write cursive in first grade.

Leaving Camaguey, we drove past fields of sugar cane. At a stop in the colorful village of Manaca Iznaga, we walked the cobblestone street through an outdoor market that featured the most beautiful embroidered fabrics – from children's dresses to gorgeous tablecloths. At the end of the street was an architecturally interesting tower dating from the 1750s built to watch for fires and make sure the slaves were working the sugar cane fields. The next stop was Trinidad, an-

other UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is a perfectly preserved Spanish Colonial settlement built on the riches amassed from the surrounding sugar fields, featuring the colonial architecture of colorful ornately decorated buildings in the city squares. Lunch was at the scenic La Ceiba, where we sat under the canopy of a huge ceiba tree on the upstairs balcony of the home—a quiet oasis for our superb lobster lunch. After that delicious noon repast, we boarded the coach for the ride



Casanova Pottery artisan and owner

across Cuba to the Melia Cayo Santa Maria, our hotel on the beautiful white sand beach for the next two nights. It is the only Cuban-run resort along the cayos and is a destination for many of the foreign visitors who come for the ultimate beach vacation. One unique fact – to get to the hotel required a 25-mile scenic drive crossing 41 bridges. In season, it is home to many flamingos. Our full schedule did not allow us leisurely days on the beach, but we did take every opportunity we could to enjoy the white sand and blue waters.

Our next day's journey took us back over the bridges to the town of Remedios and the Museo de la Agroindustria Azucarera (the sugar mill museum).

There we had an opportunity to sample freshly squeezed sugar cane juice, a delicious treat. The sugar mill had been shut down and turned into a museum. We found it interesting that most of the huge metal machines used had been made in the USA. There were well done bronze sculptures depicting the early sugar cane cultivation and harvest – as opposed to the more modern machinery that came later. After a short bus ride, we stopped to visit the Iglesia Mayor of San

Juan Bautista, with its famous gilded high altar and mahogany ceiling. The pregnant Immaculada Conception is said to be the only sculpture of its kind in Cuba. The next stop was in Santa Clara, at Restaurante Sabore Arte where we had another tasty lunch in a palador - this time with the added bonus of a shopping experience for some native handcrafted items. Next stop was the impressive memorial and mausoleum for Che Guevara, a beloved revolutionary hero. The memorial was erected in 1987 to mark the 20th anniversary of Che Guevara's death. Unfortunately, the museum was closed without notice, an occurrence we found happened frequently on our journey.

By this point, we had travelled many miles - all the time on a comfortable bus, but how were the Cubans getting around the towns and down the country roads from place to place? In the cities there were colorful pedicabs (called bici-taxis) that could take you short distances. As we travelled from town to town, we did see many Cubans riding bikes, travelling in horse drawn carts, piled into the back of a truck, in buses, riding in vintage cars, or walking. We would see families walking one direction when we left in the morning and coming back the other direction when we returned. I did not ask our driver how many miles we covered during the course of our travels, but it was hundreds of miles, many more than you would even think possible on an island.

We spent the last few days of our sojourn in Havana. It was a long day's ride from our beachfront resort through Cienfuegos to Havana. The visit to the Thomas Terry Theater and the concert by the Contores de Cienfuegos was a perfect interlude. There was a typical town square in Cienfuegos that we crossed at the same time that the children were getting out of school for lunch. We had learned that all the students wore uniforms. Burgundy skirts or pants indicated elementary while gold indicated junior high. Next stop was the palador D'Carmelina for a lunch of many courses while we were entertained by the musical members of the family, a most pleasant interlude. Traveling to Havana from Cienfuegos took us by the Playa Giron or what we in the US know as the Bay of

Pigs. The Museum was closed for renovations, but to be in the location that we can all remember from the 1960s was fascinating. Obviously the Cuban and American perspectives are very different, but it is a part of history. We noted that along the highways there are no signs that advertise products, but there are billboards with pictures of the revolutionaries and praise for them.

We spent the last few days in Havana, starting with a bus tour around the city. The first stop was at the impressive Plaza of the Revolution, a huge concrete plaza where Fidel Castro used to address the Cuban people. There is a statue of José Martí on one side and on the buildings opposite are grandiose metal portraits of Che Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos

overlooking the large square. Parked along the street you see many vintage cars, some of which serve as taxis. Behind the plaza is the government building where Raul Castro governs. Next stop was the Bocov Rum Factory where we had the opportunity to purchase the Havana Club rum as well as the famed Cohiba cigars. The show stealer was the flaming coffee that you could purchase, and it was well worth the price just for the ceremony that accompanied its preparation. Next on the itinerary was Old Havana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We toured Cathedral Square with the City Historian, a very personable and articulate young man who was Cuban by birth, and educated in Zurich. He chose to back to Cuba, while his brother opted to live in the US. He explained

Captions, left to right: Flaming coffee; lined up on a street in Trinidad; bronze sculpture in the Camaguey square, by artist Martha Jimenez; cowboys at the King Ranch greet their American guests; bici-taxis in Camaguey













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how the state owns the land one's house sits on, but the people own the house, and because of economics several generations live under one roof. There are grave concerns about preserving the buildings that are disintegrating due to a lack of funds. The afternoon included a visit to the Museum of the Revolution which is housed in the former Presidential Palace that had been home to Cuba's leaders until 1959. Outside it was surrounded by displays of planes, gun boats, jeeps and tanks, all from the Bay of Pigs era. Inside exhibits included everything from pre-Columbian culture to the present day socialist regime. Interestingly enough, there was a bust of Abraham Lincoln (who the Cubans admire) and also unflattering caricatures of US presidents Reagan, Bush (41) and Bush (43). The benefits of the revolution exhibit included this label: "Despite the incredulity of many foreign personalities, the Revolutionary Government was determined to abolish illiteracy in a one year period; from January to December 1961. To achieve this ambitious task around 300,000 persons managed to teach more than 700,000 adults to read and write." The afternoon ended with a stop at the San Jose Craft Market and Art Center where booth after booth of artists and



Our last night in Cuba, at our Havana hotel, with after-dinner cigars.

vendors displayed local crafts. That evening a group of us went to the worldfamous Tropicana Cabaret, which had opened in 1939 and is an extravagant spectacle that presents song-and-dance routines reminiscent of 1950's Cuba.

visit to Empresa Tabacco de Cuba, a cigar rolling factory. In the gallery we watched the workers in action, sorting the leaves and rolling the cigars. The #1 leaves are set aside for the Cohiba

cigars. Next was a walking tour with a local historian of the fascinating Colon Cemetery, founded in 1876 and named after Christopher Columbus. It is noted for its many elaborate sculpted memorials and contains more than 500 major mausoleums, chapels, and family vaults. Our last day in Havana started with a Many consider it to be one of the most ornate in the world. Several of our travelers found graves of family members, which made it an even more meaningful experience. Our last lunch at a palador was at Café Laurent, which had been written up in the NY Times travel section shortly before we started the trip. Our tour of Havana would not have been complete without a trip to Finca La Vigia (Lookout Farm), the home where Ernest Hemingway lived from 1939-1960. Though you could not walk through the rooms, all doors and windows were open so you could look into his world. From Hemingway's home we travelled to experience the mosaics of world-renowned Jose Fuster (Cuba's Picasso) who had spent 10 years rebuilding and decorating with mosaics 80 homes in a small fishing village on the outskirts of Havana.



Ernest Hemingway's living room

All good things must come to an end. and there could have been no better way to conclude our Cuban adventure than with a parade to dinner, riding in vintage cars with honking horns through downtown Havana.



# **Summer Reading List**

#### COLONY

#### by Anne Rivers Siddons

Maude, a southern woman, marries a wealthy man and spends her summers at Retreat, Maine, where she doesn't fit in and

is deemed unacceptable as a daughter-in-law. But she learns that this summer colony is held together by strong women, and we watch her life and growth over 70 years in this wonderful novel. A "perfect book to take to the beach." Recommended by Dorothy Rishling.

#### THE NIGHTINGALE by Kristin Hannah

The story of two sisters who experience World War II in France. Each is involved with the underground, but in different ways. It is one of those books that is hard to put down, and will transport you to a different time and place. One of the best books I have read in years.

(Near Koenig Ln) (512) 459-7603

#### **COMETH THE HOUR**

#### by Jeffrey Archer

KRISTIN

This is the sixth and latest book in the Clifton Chronicles series that tells the story of one family across generations,

> across oceans, and from heartbreak to triumph. Archer's writing is gripping, and has been described as "keeping your blood pressure high; you'll risk back injury just from being kept on the edge of your seat." This novel opens with the reading of a suicide note which has devastating consequences, and keeps you intrigued with extraordinary storytelling and Archer's trademark twists. Recommended by Dorothy Rishling.



#### by Jeffrey Eugenides

"I was born twice: first, as a baby girl, on a remarkably smogless Detroit day of January 1960; and then again, as a teenage boy, in an emergency room near Petoskey, Michigan,



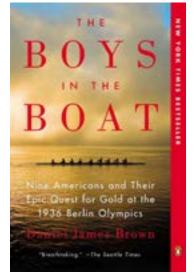
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in August of 1974." Our country is currently struggling with many issues that run through this book, including gender identity laws and immigration issues. This book takes us through a family's story while weaving in our country's 20th century history.

# THE SWANS OF FIFTH AVENUE by Melanie Benjamin

It's catty! It's gossipy! It's a quick read! It's a historical novel by the author of *The Aviator's Wife*. She takes you back to New York high society in the 50's and 60's where she explores the relationship between the gorgeous, wealthy, jeweled Babe Paley and the author of *In Cold Blood* and *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, Tru-

man Capote. With the author's vivid descriptions and rich character development, you will be able to visualize yourself having a glass of wine at La Cote Basque along with Babe and the other swans. The author gives you a rich look behind the closed doors of this world and you will discover a Truman Capote that you may never have known. His self-destructive urges that eventually rupture the bonds between him and Paley are not surprising, but it is heartbreaking. *Highly recommended by Sharon Justice*.



#### THE BOYS IN THE BOAT: NINE AMERI-CANS AND THEIR EPIC QUEST FOR GOLD AT THE 1936 BERLIN OLYMPICS

#### by Daniel James Brown

As the 2016 Rio Olympics are approaching, we all have a little Olympic Fever. This book takes us back to the 1936 Berlin Olympics, where Jesse Owens repudiated Adolf Hitler's notion of white supremacy. It is the remarkable story of a group of young rowers, rough and tumble, not worldly, but used to hard work, as they take on the best rowers in the world. This book offers a vivid picture of the socioeconomic landscape of 1930's America, and is a story that informs as it inspires. Although it is nonfiction, it is as engrossing as fiction. Highly recommended by Colleen Mehner.

#### BETWEEN THE WORLD AND ME

#### by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Between the World and Me is Ta-nehisi Coates's letter to his 15-year-old son about the realities of being black in America. It is eloquent, moving, funny and painful. Coates does not believe in what he calls the "Dream" of racial equality. He addresses this Dream and most black people's apparent belief in it in the context of the connection between the Ameri-

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can Dream as it is lived in the suburbs and the violence that ruled his daily life growing up in Baltimore. Although he and his wife and son are now well-situated in middle class New York, where he works as a staff writer for the *Atlantic*, he believes that they are all living one small gesture or step from the abyss of racial violence, including the black on black variety, offering examples from his own life and that of his son. Sadly, recent events seem to support this argument. On the upside he pays moving tribute to his heritage and his ancestors' struggle. This is a brilliant, funny, poetically written and timely book about race and family. It offers no answers but instead challenges us to wrestle with the questions on our own. *Recommended by Linda Peterson*.

# A LOVE LETTER TO TEXAS WOMEN by Sarah Bird



This short (80 page) book is written by one of my favorite authors, and gets right to the heart of what it means to be a Texas woman. Sarah's writing is smart and funny and touching, and everyone who has lived in Texas will love the familiar scenes she paints – from our love of Dr. Pepper and good mascara to the ladies working at the Hyde Park Beauty Salon. Or pick up anything else Sarah has ever written – you'll love it all.

# **Favorite Vacations**

Two members recommended European river cruises on Uniworld Cruise Lines. Those ships are small and luxurious, but without the fussiness of some other lines. Dorothy Rishling loved her cruise on the Danube, and Tany Norwood adored her "Castles Along the Rhine" trip. The meals are delicious, and you quickly learn the names of the ship staff, who you will see all over the ship taking care of your every need. It is such an easy way to travel, too. You unpack once, then watch the beautiful scenery go past your balcony or from the lounge or top deck. You dock at various ports, large cities and small villages, and can choose how you want to see them – you can go on an arranged tour, explore on your own with a bike from the boat, or borrow a hiking stick and set out. Or just stay on the boat, which is a worthy destination on its own. It is a very different experience from a large cruise ship, more like being in a boutique hotel that moves. And you will quickly make lots of new friends of your fellow passengers. (Note: Tany discovered Uniworld through Costco Travel Services, and confirmed by shopping around that they have the best prices.)

Dorothy Rishling also says that her all-time favorite vacation area is northern lower Michigan – Mackinac Island, Petoskey, Charlevoix and Traverse City. They are beautiful and particularly appealing as a summer escape from our Texas heat.

Linda Peterson writes "My ancestral village of Duluth, MN, is my favorite summer destination. Because of its location on beautiful Lake Superior, it has a bustling harbor, spectacular scenery and one of the best beaches in the continental U.S. Excellent restaurants abound in the lakeshore visitors' sector and there are also miles of hiking and strolling trails both along the shore and inland. For those who love canoeing and camping. Duluth is the gateway to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, a pristine woodland with glorious fish-filled lakes and streams, wildlife, and campsites where motorized conveyances are forbidden, making for a rare time of silence in our ever noisier world. I also recommend a visit to the International Wolf Center in nearby Ely. Here visitors from all around the world come to watch wolves in native habitat and hear about much-needed conservation efforts on behalf of these fascinating animals."

Turks & Caicos is another favorite destination. This group of 40 islands are technically in the Atlantic, although the perfectly clear turquoise waters are Caribbean-esque. The T&C Islands are a British Crown Colony (so you drive on the left side of the road), but the official currency is the US dollar. Trade winds keep the temperatures moderate. There is amazing snorkeling and diving, including Travelers' Choice awarded Grace Bay Beach, "the #1 beach in the world." If your ideal vacation is relaxing on the beach, this is the place to go.



Turks & Caicos © Provo Golf Club

#### I'VE HAD A GREAT TIME!

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your Magazine Editor for the last four years. I have enjoyed getting to know so many of you, and look forward to my future adventures in RFSA! Your new Editor, Linda Peterson, is already doing a fantastic job, and I am sure she will enjoy her position as much as I did.

Our organization and our magazine are here for you, so please keep your suggestions and ideas coming – you are what makes RFSA great! —*Tany Norwood*-



Clouseau, my magazine muse and typo-generator

### SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS

Our sponsors have been solicited because of their excellent reputations in selling the best goods and supplying the best services to customers. Most of them are family businesses that have been in our community for a long time. We are privileged to have the Covert family (autos), the Strand family (Stan's A/C), the Ravel family (Karavel Shoes), the Goff family (Mr. Appliance), the Keld family (The Bug Master) and Sytha Minter (Real Estate.) The others, although not family-owned, have a long-time reputation for giving outstanding service to our community. They are St. David's HealthCare, the

University Federal Credit Union, and the Westminster Retirement Community.

These businesses are more than sponsors, they are our partners. Their sponsorship helps us to keep our membership dues low and helps increase our scholarship funds for UT students. When you need the goods and services that they offer, we ask that you give them a call and give them an opportunity to help you with your needs. It will be a win-win-win situation for you, for them, and for RFSA. When you use them, please let them know that you are in RFSA and that we appreciate their support. Thank you for considering their goods and services and using them! -Cecil Martinez, President

#### STAY CONNECTED ONLINE

We have two ways for you to stay connected to RFSA online: our RFSA website and our Facebook group.

You can find photos and information about our organization and upcoming events on our website. Our RFSA Magazine is also posted here as soon as it is mailed to members. Note: UT recently changed the URL of many websites, so

be sure you have our new website bookmarked: http://sites.utexas.edu/RFSA And if you are a Facebook user, please join our group! Search Facebook for "University of Texas Retired Faculty-Staff Association" or Google "Retired Faculty Staff Association at the University of Texas Facebook. We want this to be a place where members can post activities, updates and photos, and not just those about RFSA. We want to create a community for our members to share all kinds of information.

#### SILVERSNEAKERS

If you are a member of the UT Select Health Plan, you should have recently received a member ID card to Silver-Sneakers. This program allows you to access more than 13,000 national gyms and fitness locations at no cost. In Austin, those include Gold's Gyms, Anytime Fitness, Planet Fitness, LA Fitness, 24 Hour Fitness and many other locations too numerous to list here. You can use fitness equipment and free weights, swim laps, take classes in yoga or tai chi, join an exercise or walking group, and lots of other options, depending on the facility you visit. You can also enroll at multiple locations, to customize your fitness routine. For more information. visit the website at silversneakers.com.



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December 10, 2015

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Lecturer, Civil Engineering, Center for Electrical & Computer Engineering, Biomedical Engineering December 17, 2015

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November 1, 2015

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Housing & Food Services, Jester Dining March 22, 2016

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Physicist, Applied Research Labs February 24, 2016

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Charles and Elizabeth Prothro Regents Chair in Health Care Management, Department of Management Science and Information Systems February 7, 2016

#### Virgil Wesley Moore, 71

Sr. Operating System Specialist, Applied Research Labs January 30, 2016

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#### Betty Nunley, 89

Office Manager, African & African American Studies November 2, 2015 This column honors the memory of active and retired University of Texas at Austin and University of Texas System faculty and staff who have died. Every attempt has been made to identify the university affiliation of each individual or their contributions to the university community. Also included, when known, are spouses of retired faculty and staff members. Any additions or corrections to the list should be addressed to Barbara Frock, Historian, at bfrock@austin.rr.com.

#### Martha Laughton Poe, 96

Widow of W. Douglas Poe, Sr. Lecturer, Economics November 20, 2015

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Nuclear Chemist, Engineering March 23, 2016

#### Marilyn Parker Reeder, 88

Widow of William Thomas Reeder, Coordinator, Dean of Engineering's Office March 5, 2016

#### Dr. Donald Taylor Rippey, 89

Professor Emeritus, Educational Administration; Interim President, UT Permian Basin March 16, 2016

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Widow of Royston Roberts, Professor Emeritus, Chemistry January 30, 2016

#### Sue Rodi, 73

Sr. Lecturer, English December 27, 2015

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Widow of Gerard Rohlich, Civil
Engineering and LBJ School of Public
Affairs
February 3, 2016

#### Barbara Ruud, 94

Widow of Millard Ruud, John S. Redditt Professor Emeritus in State & Local Government, School of Law April 7, 2016

#### Cecil Joe "Buddy" Salyer, 84

Asst. Electrician Supervisor, Physical Plant, Maintenance Dept. December 12, 2015

#### Gary Shelton, 78

Asst. Director, Texas Union December 17, 2015

#### Linward Paul Shivers, 85

Office of General Counsel, UT System April 6, 2016

#### Adele Goldstucker Silberberg, 87

Secretary in Defense Research Laboratory and wife of Harold Silberberg, Research Engineer, Petroleum & Geosystems Engineering March 22, 2016

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December 4, 2015

#### Maurice Knox Sparkman, 91

Astronomy
December 18, 2015

#### Mary Louise Van Winkle, 100

Widow of Matthew Van Winkle, Professor, Chemical Engineering April 10, 2016

#### Leandro Prado "Lee" Vasquez, 82

Asst. Building Attendant, Physical Plant Custodial Services February 22, 2016

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#### Robert A. Webb, 71

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The RFSA provides a wide range of activities designed to enrich the retirement experiences of its members. In addition, it serves as a mechanism for advising UT officials about the suitability of current retirement benefits. A complete statement of the purposes of the association can be found in the constitution. Submissions may be emailed to: lp78757@gmail.com or mailed to Carol Barrett, RFSA Coordinator, Texas Exes | P.O. Box 7278 | Austin, TX 78713