

# RFSA MAGAZINE

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

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SPRING/SUMMER 2024

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*Cover Photo: South Mall During Eclipse. Photo credit: The University of Texas at Austin*

*Back Cover Photo: Sandeman and Co Port Wine Cellar, Porto, Portugal,*

*from left Charles, Hermelinda, Barbara, Robin, Margi, Keith, and Sybil. Photo credit: Billie Pierce*

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



► Now in its forty-second year, our Retired Faculty-Staff Association was established to render service to the university, enrich the retirement experience, and represent the concerns of our members to the university. Through the dedicated and tireless work of the RFSB Board members listed on the inside cover of this magazine, we continuously strive to fulfill those purposes. We provide scholarships to deserving UT Austin students. We provide support for programs such as UT Outpost, Horns Helping Horns, Orange Santa, 40 Hours for Forty Acres, and UT Remembers. And we have taken the initiative to find a more effective way to convey the concerns of our members to appropriate institutional officers. Earlier this year, members of the RFSB Board met with Roger Cude, the university's Vice President of People and Talent, and Tasha Beretvas, Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. We discussed important concerns retired faculty and staff members had brought to our attention. I am

happy to report Vice President Cude and Senior Vice Provost Beretvas listened to our concerns with serious interest. They also agreed to meet with us periodically in ongoing discussions, and we are doing that.

I am honored to have worked this year with the extraordinary people who comprise the RFSB Board. You can take great pride in what they are accomplishing for you and the university. But we need your help. Please join us in RFSB activities. The RFSB Website and Facebook page list the many opportunities you have. If you have ideas for improvement of the RFSB, please convey them to the Board. And please help us recruit members. Our ability to serve and to influence on behalf of all retirees depends upon our strength in numbers. Together, we can accomplish even more.

**CHARLES A. ROECKLE,**  
*President, 2023-24*

# SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS



► Our sponsors have been solicited because of their excellent reputations for selling the best goods and providing the best service to customers.

Many of them are family businesses that have been in our community for a long time. These include the Covert family of auto dealerships, the Strand family of Stan's Heating and Cooling, the Ravel family of Karavel Shoes, Vince Martinez Realty, and the Fish family of Weed-Corley-Fish Funeral Homes. Our other sponsors, although not family owned, have a long-time reputation for giving wonderful service to the community. They are St. David's

HealthCare, University Federal Credit Union, the Westminster Retirement Community and Fast Park & Relax. Check our sponsors' ads for information about their services, coupons, and special discounts.

Through their sponsorships, these businesses help us keep our membership dues low and provide support to UT students through the RFSA Scholarship Fund. When you need goods or services, please consider using them – it will be a win-win-win situation for you, for them and for RFSA. And when you use them, please let them know that you belong to RFSA and that we appreciate their support.

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# SPRING LUNCHEON MEETING

## HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ President Charles Roeckle presided over the Spring Luncheon Meeting, held on March 20, 2024, in the Connally Ballroom.

### SERVICE ACTIVITIES

RFSA continues to support UT Outpost, an on-campus resource for students experience food insecurity. Joffery Neissen from UT Outpost was present to answer questions about the program.

UT Remembers is the annual event to honors members of the university community who died during the year. It was held April 26. After the meeting, volunteers stayed to make the annual bookmarks and ribbons for the UT Remembers guests.



Principal Speaker Christine Plonsky, Executive Senior Associate Athletics Director and Charles Roeckle, President

### PRINCIPAL SPEAKER

Christine Plonsky, Executive Senior Associate Athletics Director, Chief of Staff, and Senior Woman Administrator was welcomed to the podium. After a well-received speech, Chris entertained several questions from the audience.

### SPECIAL THANKS were expressed to:

President Jay Hartzell and his staff for their support hosting the luncheon. Since 1982, the Office of the President has provided support for RFSA in many ways, including the luncheon. We are grateful for the ongoing recognition and support.

The Blazers, a UT student service organization for helping with the luncheon.

The Alumni Center set-up team, kitchen staff, servers, bartenders, bus drivers and student volunteers who worked hard to make the luncheon possible.

The Texas Exes staff members, Patricia Shampton, Director of Alumni Relations, and Ann Clary Old, Constituent Relations Manager.



Presenter Holly Thompson

### WEBPAGE PRESENTATION

An RFSA Webpage slide presentation was given by Holly Thompson, IT Manager and Webmaster. Holly's presentation demonstrated features of the updated RFSA webpage.

### BUSINESS MEETING ACTIONS

Mary Knight, RFSA Treasurer was thanked for keeping the organization financially on track.

The Executive Committee previously voted to make the Project Manager position a member of the Executive Committee.

Nominees to the Executive Committee were announced and approved by member vote.

The complete list of RFSA Board Members is found on page 2 of this issue.

To read the entire Luncheon Minutes, open the "About RFSA" tab on our website: <https://sites.utexas.edu/>.

More luncheon photos are found at: <https://sites.utexas.edu/rfsa/2024-spring-luncheon-meeting/>



# SPRING LUNCHEON MEETING

## HIGHLIGHTS

### SPONSOR APPRECIATION

Several Sponsor representatives were in attendance and were recognized as our special guests. Gratitude was expressed for our nine Sponsors and their generous support of RFSA. Members were encouraged to patronize our sponsors when shopping for goods and services.

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Westminster Senior Living Community

University Federal Credit Union



From left: Corky Hilliard, Sharon Justice, Carol Barrett



Susan Kessler with token of appreciation for her contributions.



Cole McClellan

### PAST RFSA PRESIDENTS

Past Presidents were recognized and thanked for their service to the RFSA. We will continue to rely on the experience of our past-presidents for advice and ideas to benefit the organization.

Past Presidents Corky Hilliard, Cecil Martinez, Eleanor Moore, and Ruth Rubio were in attendance.

### ANNOUNCEMENT

UT Austin can no longer hold cultural graduation ceremonies for underrepresented groups. Therefore, The Texas Exes will begin hosting the cultural graduation ceremonies on May 8th and 9th. RFSA members were invited to volunteer or donate to this effort.



From left: Obie Hasty, Joanne Huber, Mary Ann Hemenway, Elvia Rosales, Bretna Hackert

### John McKetta Attendance Awards

Five attendees received a John McKetta \$100 Attendance Award. See group photo.

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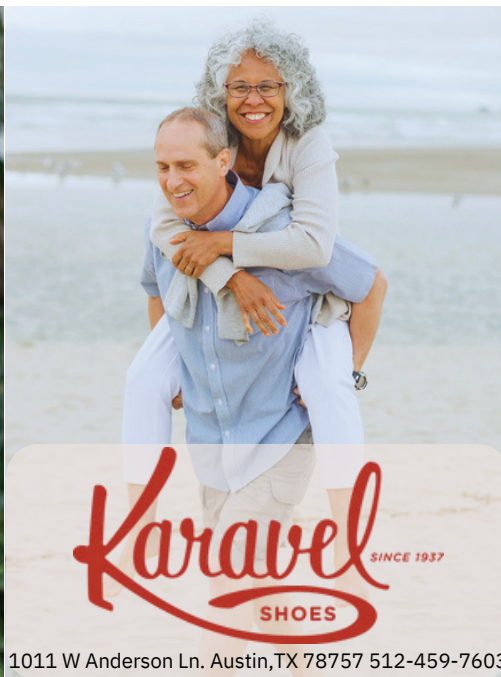


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# INTEREST GROUPS



**ABOVE:** John Worall, Hillary Hart, Madeline Sutherland-Meier  
Ransom Center Public Works Art by Elizabeth Olds February 16

## ARTS AND CULTURE INTEREST GROUP

► In the Spring, we featured some interesting outings for the Arts and Culture group.

On February 26, a very chilly Saturday, a small group toured “Public Works: Art by Elizabeth Olds,” an exhibit at UT’s Harry Ransom Center. Olds (1896–1991) was an innovative artist who was active as a printmaker in the Works Project Administration.

On March 6, we toured a major exhibit at the Blanton Museum, “The Floating World: Masterpieces of Edo Japan,” which featured artwork—woodblock prints and painted scrolls from the Worcester Art Museum. The paintings and prints were sublime: delicate colors, beautiful vistas and interiors and scenes of daily life in upper-class 17th century Japan.

In April, a few of us visited the Wildflower Center during its Tuesday Twilight series. The weather was gorgeous, and every Tuesday event featured music and poetry and food and special walks, and of course flowers at this wondrous time of year in the Austin area.

Our final events occur in May and June. They include a tour of a wonderful exhibit at the Blanton of the textile works of Anni Alberts (1899-1994), considered the most important textile artist of the 20th century. The other opportunity is to see the Clarkson Stanfield Album, which is almost unprecedented due to his historical importance

and fragility. Also, we hope to find time in late May to reschedule the cancelled April tour to see early 19th century photographs.

Here’s hoping for a cooler summer this year.

Co-Chairs are Hillary Hart  
(hart@utexas.edu/512-423-5022) and

Madeline Sutherland-Meier  
(madelinesm@austin.utexas.edu/512-565-0906).

## BRIDGE

► The RFSA bridge group met monthly at the Alumni Center to play “party” bridge (not duplicate) every month this past year. With the Alumni Center closing for renovation in summer 2024, we won’t resume play until August 2024. We usually meet on the first Monday of each month from 1-4 pm, unless Monday is a holiday. Since we play in tables of four (usually two or three tables, but we can have up to four tables), please get on the mailing list for invitations by contacting the bridge chairperson, Mary Kay Hemenway (mk.hemenway@utexas.edu). You need not bring a partner in order to play bridge with us.



## EXERCISE

► The RFSA exercise group meets in Gregory Gym on Monday mornings from 9:00 to 10:00 am. To participate you need to join Rec Sports if you are not already a member. You can join at their office just inside the entrance to Gregory Gym. There is an additional fee of \$10 per month for the RFSA class.

Experienced exercise instructor, Sandy Erickson, leads us in a variety of exercises designed for all ages and fitness levels. She can adapt the exercises for anyone with special needs.

This is a small, friendly group that needs more members. If you are a person who has resisted



# INTEREST GROUPS

caring for your physical needs, come and check us out. Do not be intimidated. We have a lot of fun as well as increasing our fitness levels. (As an extra incentive, we have been known to get together for coffee and snacks after class from time to time.)

For more information, contact Carolyn Wylie, 512-453-2566, cateswylie@gmail.com.

## FOODIES

### Foodies go International!

► In an unannounced theme this year, 2024, I am taking the Foodies on an international tour of food in Austin.

January: We went to Din Ho Chinese BBQ in north Austin to celebrate the Lunar New Year, Year of the Dragon. I chose January to avoid the crowds for the Lunar New Year dates in February.

February: We went to the new El Alma in south Austin. This is their second location for their new-ish style of Mexican food.

March: We went to Bombay to Kathmandu Kitchen & Curry Pizza & bar (that is a mouthful), an Indian restaurant in central Austin.

April: We are headed to the Blue Dahlia Bistro in central Austin. This is a nice neighborhood French-ish style place.

The places we went to were very well received by the Foodies group and we were treated very well.

I am in the process of looking at more restaurants: Japanese, Thai, German, more traditional Mexican, etc. Hopefully we can do an around the world food tasting of places in Austin.

If you are interested in being placed on the Foodies email list, contact Robert Lawrence at: rjlawrence1031@gmail.com I have about 115 people on the Foodie list, with an average attendance of about 23 people at each event. It will give me something to think about if we get more and more people signing up, but we have not gotten there yet.

## RFSA SPEAKER SERIES

► The Speaker Series has had several meetings since the Fall/Winter RFSA magazine came out.

Dr. Phillip Kelton presented a talk on "The Great Texas Solar Eclipse of 8 April 2024" on February 21 at the Yarborough Library. He is a UT Austin McDonald Observatory retiree and longtime member of RFSA. There was an excellent turnout

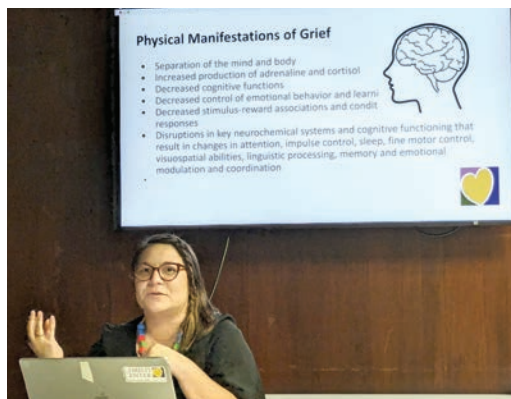


Foodies Group at Din Ho Chinese BBQ



Dr. Bergin addressing an absorbed audience.

# INTEREST GROUPS



Presenter Jocelyn Chamra-Barrera

## RFSA SPEAKER SERIES CONT.

of over 60 attendees, a record for RFSA speaker meetings going back many years. He had three requests to repeat the talk for other groups and gave it a total of four times.

We had a meeting planned for March 20, but it was postponed when the RFSA spring meeting and luncheon were scheduled for that day due to other scheduling conflicts.

Our next meeting was on April 10 with speaker Jocelyn Chamra-Barrera, Executive and Clinical Director of the Christi Center. Her presentation at the Howson Library was titled "Grief 101".

We had previously scheduled Phyllis Zumwalt, Professional Genealogist, to speak on April 10 about DNA testing for genealogy purposes but she developed back problems so we will reschedule her talk in fall 2024.

We scheduled our final spring meeting for May 22 at Howson Library with Dr. Barbara Bergin, who previously spoke to the group about the "granny gait." Dr. Bergin is a retired orthopedic surgeon, and her first talk was very popular with attendees. The talk in May will be about the knee and she offered to do a follow-up talk about the shoulder.

Co-Chairs for the Speaker Series are Alice Reinartz (areinartz@tamu.edu), Phil Kelton (pwwelton@gmail.com), and Karrol Kitt (kkitt@austin.utexas.edu).

## TRAVEL

### RFSA TRAVEL GROUP ADVENTURES IN 2024

► Our Travel Group recently wrapped up our first trip of 2024. RFSA travelers visited Portugal in

April. A detailed article is included in this issue. Be sure to check out the RFSA website for additional trip highlights.

### NEWS from the Travel Committee:

A BIG THANK YOU to Sybil and Keith Momii, outgoing Committee Co-Chairs and WELCOME to Kathy and Richard Armenta, incoming Committee Co-Chairs. Lori Threatt of Relaxed Escapes, our long-time Travel Advisor plans to continue her role through 2026, providing wonderful RFSA group travel opportunities. Planning for 2025 trips is underway and our committee will be announcing destinations and plans in early Fall. We have two new members of our Travel Committee: Robin Jarmon and Federico Subervi; joining current Committee members: Kathy & Richard Armenta (Co-Chairs), Sybil & Keith Momii, Robin Fradenburgh, Karen Harrison, Billie Pierce, and Barbara White.

Please contact Lori Threatt at [lori@relaxedescapes.com](mailto:lori@relaxedescapes.com) or phone her at (737) 228-3680 for current 2024 tour status, details, registration and wait list information.

### CRUISING THE BRITISH ISLES

**June 20-July 2, 2024 -**

**Limited space may be available.**

12 nights and 8 ports on the fabulous Regal Princess ship! Airfare, pre- and post- hotel stays will be offered. Explore the British Isles with Princess, awarded "Best Cruise Line in Europe" and select a variety of optional excursions. Find lots to love in the charming countryside and storybook castles. Discover timeless traditions found in the heart of each town. Listen to traditional tunes at a local venue in Ireland or Beatles songs at a pub in England. Experience age-old traditions and an opportunity to tour the landing beaches of Normandy during this 80th anniversary year of D-Day.

### EXPLORING UTAH'S MIGHTY NATIONAL

**PARKS September 22-27, 2024 -**

**Full, wait list if interested.**

Featuring 7 days and 6 nights, including 5 nights in Moab, Utah! Highlights include travel to the Arches National Park, Capitol Reef National Park, Canyonlands National Park, Dead Horse Point State Park, a Canyonlands by Night cruise, Monument Valley, and a Colorado Wine Tasting. This adventure in some of America's most gorgeous national parks is hosted by Premier World Discovery.





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# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## JOYCE HARRIS



**ABOVE:** Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, April 2024.  
Photo Credit: Cheryl L. Harris

### WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?

► My story began in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on February 26, 1941. I grew up in a loving family, composed of my mother, Ella Marion Addaway, and my Great-Aunt and Uncle, Frances and Joseph Hunter. We lived in the Homewood-Brushton area of Pittsburgh, a working-class neighborhood with a strong sense of stability and community. Winters were long, dark, and snowy, followed in Spring by gloriously radiant dandelions and buttercups, against a backdrop of fresh-green buds that promised leafy shade during the hot, but fleeting months of summer.

After what seemed like forever, I was old enough to start kindergarten at Crescent Elementary School, where I completed Grades 1 -6. I loved school from the start. In elementary school, I learned reading from the Dick and Jane books, cursive writing using the Palmer method, and all the arithmetic that I would ever need. There were field trips to Carnegie Museum, Phipps Conservatory, and even the circus. In June, the end of the school year, there was always a school picnic at Kennywood Park, an amusement park that was a long streetcar ride away.

I attended Baxter Junior High School, grades 7-8, where girls took home economics classes, including sewing and cooking. I played violin in the school orchestra and continued as a violinist through 12th grade at George Westinghouse High School. I was in the orchestra when Westinghouse won the 1956 state championship. I graduated from high school in 1959.

I was in the Fall 1959 freshman class at Penn State University. During orientation, we learned the school songs, donned our freshman dinks (i.e., beanies), and were admonished to, “Look to the left. Look to the right. One of you won’t be here to graduate in four years.” That dire prediction held true.

The next year, I stopped out—took a gap decade, if you will. I married Army Private Alton D. Harris, Jr. and moved to El Paso, Texas, and then to New Jersey, North Carolina, Alabama, Oklahoma, Verona, Italy, Vicenza, Italy, and back to El Paso, Texas. By this time, we had three children, Alton III, Cheryl, and David. My husband, now Captain Harris, was off to his second tour in Viet Nam. I picked up where I’d left off and enrolled as a full-time undergraduate at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP).

### TALK ABOUT YOUR CAREER

► In 1973, I graduated from UTEP with a B. A. in Speech-Language-Hearing Disorders. In 1974, I earned an M. A. in Speech-Language Pathology from UTEP. After graduation, I worked as the only speech-language pathologist for the Clint Independent School District, in Clint, TX from 1974-1979.

Providential circumstances returned me to the UTEP campus as Lecturer, then Instructor, in the Speech and Language Disorders Program. I served as a classroom instructor and clinical supervisor from 1979 to 1984, when I began doctoral study at The University of Texas at Austin in the Communication Sciences and Disorders Program.

After completing the required coursework and advancing to doctoral candidacy, I took a position as a speech-language pathologist at the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans’ Administration Medical Center, Geriatric Extended Care Program in San Antonio, TX. The opportunities and experiences afforded me in that position were invaluable and rekindled my desire for university teaching and research.

In 1992, I received the Ph.D. in Communication Sciences and Disorders from The University of Texas at Austin. I took a faculty position at Memphis State University, now the University of Memphis, where I received tenure and the rank of Associate Professor. From 1999 to 2001, I held a joint appointment as Associate Professor/Interim Director, Office of Diversity, Academic Affairs.

The capstone of my academic career began in 2001 when I accepted a faculty appointment to the Communication Sciences and Disorders Department at The University of Texas at Austin. I taught courses in adult neurogenic language disorders and the sociocultural bases of communication until my retirement in 2011.

Other career highlights included my having had the opportunity to return as a faculty member to the three institutions where I matriculated as a student. Yes,



# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## JOYCE HARRIS

I even taught at Penn State where, in 2000, I was a Summer Scholar in Residence.

In 2001, I was awarded the Distinguished Alumni Gold Nugget Award from the College of Health Sciences at the University of Texas at El Paso. I am a Fellow and Life Member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, and recipient of the Scholar-Mentor Award from the National Black Association for Speech-Language and Hearing.

### TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY

▶ Now that I'm retired, I enjoy a variety of activities. Most of all, I enjoy the company of my adult children, their spouses, and my two grandchildren, Olivia, and Ezra. Olivia graduated from UT last May with a Bachelor's Degree in Art History. She is the third woman in our family with a degree from UT. My daughter, Dr. Cheryl Harris, earned a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from UT's College of Education. My grandson, Ezra, is a third-year chemical engineering major at the University of Arizona. I'm very proud of my family.

I'm also a cat parent to Starr, a short-haired tabby that I rescued from the animal shelter six years ago. She's my first cat. So, we are still figuring things out. I believe she's a keeper, though.



**ABOVE:** Oldeelva, Norway, June 2023

### NOW THAT YOU ARE RETIRED, HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR TIME?

▶ I teach an adult Sunday School class at David Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, where I've been a member for the last 21 years or so. I'm also active with Platinum Plus, my church's Senior Adult Ministry for those age 65 and older. We enjoy tours, riverboat rides, concerts, and socials.



**LEFT:** Centennial Gala of David Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in Austin. Photo credit: Mr. Scruggs.

I volunteer at Zach Theater as an usher and greeter. We are fortunate to have quality theater productions in our community. It makes me happy to participate in the arts in this way. I also volunteer as a Happy Kitchen facilitator for the Sustainable Food Center, which offers classes in cooking and nutrition to members of the community.

Travel, most recently cruising with my family, is another passion. If at all possible, I try to squeeze in two cruises a year.

I like word games, and I try for Genius level on Spelling Bee every day. I belong to a couple of book clubs, and I'm a big fan of Audible books. I have a pretty impressive library of electronic books, now.

### WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A MEMBER OF RFSA?

▶ Last, but by no means least, I participate with the RFSA. I've been an active member since my retirement in 2011. I've traveled with the Travel Interest Group to Portland, Oregon and the Pacific Northwest, the Eastern Canadian Provinces and Niagara Falls, and the Avalon Riverboat tour, Danube Dreams, from Budapest to Vienna. I've shared many enjoyable meals with members of the Foodies Interest Group. And, most recently, I completed a three-year stint on the Executive Committee and the RFSA Board as RFSA Secretary. It's through active participation that I've gotten to know members of the organization that I would not have known otherwise. RFSA has been an integral part of my UT retirement "package," indeed one of the best parts.



ABOVE: Gardens of Quinta da Aveleda, Penafiel, Portugal

# RFSA VISITS PORTUGAL

BY BILLIE PIERCE

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BILLIE PIERCE

► Welcome to Portugal. We had the best Tour Director ever. Benjamin has worked 28 years as a tour director--he is knowledgeable, funny, caring, and he tells the most hilarious or poignant stories about his extensive travels.

Our tour group consisted of 42 travel companions and included 15 from Austin as well as other travelers from California, Arizona, Missouri, and Canada just to name a few home locations. Benjamin served as our Tour Director and Gonzalo drove the coach. Our tour group enjoyed the “Welcome Dinner” the first night in Lisbon without the Austin travelers. We were known as that “late Texas group” since we arrived a day late due to flight issues. Upon arrival, we met our new travel companions on the coach and the group got along famously.

There were many daily highlights, and we covered a lot of ground (about 1,000 miles overall). We stayed in several hotels including the lovely Dos Templários in Tomar and the Tivoli Hotels and Resorts in Lagos.

**Lisbon to Óbidos, Nazaré, Alcobaça, Fátima, and Tomar.** Our trip started in Lisbon with a city walking tour, followed by dinner and traditional Fado music at one of Portugal’s oldest Fado restaurants. The following day we set off for Óbidos, a charming medieval town where we were introduced to Portugal’s Ginjinha—a cherry liqueur served in an edible dark chocolate cup. The church of Santa Maria Monastery awaited us in Alcobaça with its fascinating love story of King Pedro I and his Castilian lover, Ines de Castro. Their stunning tombs adorn this monastery so the lovers may be together forever. Street artists were plentiful in Alcobaça including a local operatic singer who was captivating the crowds—he was great! In Fatima we visited the Sanctuary of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary. We spent the night in the Dos Templários

hotel in Tomar and had time to enjoy the grounds of this hotel and the town of Tomar.

**Tomar to Coimbra and Porto.** Our group visited the Convent of Christ and enjoyed the commentary from our local guide, Tiago, who is a renowned expert and enjoys celebrity as such. We moved on to The University of Coimbra--the oldest university in Portugal and one of the oldest in the world. We were treated to the sight of graduating students throwing up their capes much as we throw our caps in America upon graduation. In Porto we embarked on a Douro River cruise and had dinner at a local Portuguese restaurant.

**Porto.** Our guided sightseeing included a visit to the Church of São Francisco and the renowned Arabian Hall in the Stock Exchange. A tour of the Sandeman Wine Cellars followed with a Port wine



ABOVE: Guimaraes, Portugal



# RFSA VISITS

## PORTUGAL

tasting. It was especially fun to visit the wonderful train station with its decorative tiles and walk through lovely Porto. The hotel Porto Batalha where we stayed is in the city center and was an excellent location for walking around the streets of Porto.

**Porto, Guimaraes, Penafiel, and Viseu.** We walked through charming Guimaraes medieval district and moved on to Penafiel where our group visited the fantastic gardens of the Quinta da Aveleda winery and snacked on Portuguese tapas. The history of the Quinta da Aveleda estate spans the centuries and generations who have preserved the Portuguese traditions of wine making and proud legacy of the Guedes family. We dined on local specialties and spent the night in Viseu.

**Viseu, Belmonte, Castelo de Vide, and Evora.** Belmonte is home to the Jewish Museum—a small but interesting museum. We had time to browse through the Jewish quarter and even do a little shopping. In Castelo de Vide, we were treated to olive oil tasting in a 20th-century olive-oil-factory-turned-museum. As we moved on to Evora, we stopped and toured a traditional cork factory. Our local guide at the cork factory cracked jokes as he informed us about the process of cork manufacturing.

**Evora and Algarve.** Our group enjoyed a walking tour of the Roman-era city of Evora with its architectural tiles and embellished balconies. We toured the magnificent Gothic cathedral, the Sao Francisco Church, and the Ossuary Chapel. We reached Algarve in the late afternoon and enjoyed free time to walk around or explore the Tivoli Lagos Hotel before dining at a local restaurant.

**Algarve.** We traveled to the Promontory of Sagres and Cape St. Vincent and enjoyed stunning views of the southern coastline of Portugal including glorious beaches, towering cliffs, fishing ports, and even a charming lighthouse.

**Algarve, Azeitão, and Lisbon.** A scenic drive along the Serra da Arrábida with views of the Tróia Peninsula was followed by a stop in Azeitão where we visited a traditional tile workshop called Azulejos de Azeitão and watched a demonstration of hand tile-making and painting. We reached Lisbon and met with our tour group for our farewell dinner on the Hotel Mundial rooftop. We left the following day for more travel adventures or for home.

Please have a look at our photos from the trip on the RFSA website: <https://sites.utexas.edu/rfsa/portugal-tour-2024/>.



ABOVE: Olive Oil Factory, Belmonte, Portugal



ABOVE: Street Art, Belmonte, Portugal



ABOVE: Sao Francisco Church, Evora, Portugal

# LONGHORN FYI

## TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE EXPERIENCE ON UT AUSTIN CAMPUS



ABOVE: Photo credit: Trent Lesikar

► On Monday, April 8, nearly 70,000 students, faculty and staff members, and visitors celebrated a Total Eclipse of the Horns at The University of Texas at Austin. We hope you enjoy the comments from five faculty and staff members and the images of the captured of this memorable occasion.

Courtesy of The University of Texas at Austin

Photos courtesy of The University of Texas at Austin, unless otherwise noted





# LONGHORN FYI

## TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE EXPERIENCE ON UT AUSTIN CAMPUS



*Even through the cloudy Austin day, we were able to see parts of the eclipse, and what a majestic sight it was! Such a surreal moment, and one that I will never forget!*

*- Michael Goodman  
Faculty Member, Education*

*What a great University-wide event! The energy of the crowd, many of which were students, but also included faculty, staff, and visitors/guests was amazing! The thought put into the longhorn shades and the musical playlist topped off with Sun Chips and Moon Pies made this an excellent experience despite the cloud coverage. Many thanks to the organizers for their work and effort, it was truly worth it!*

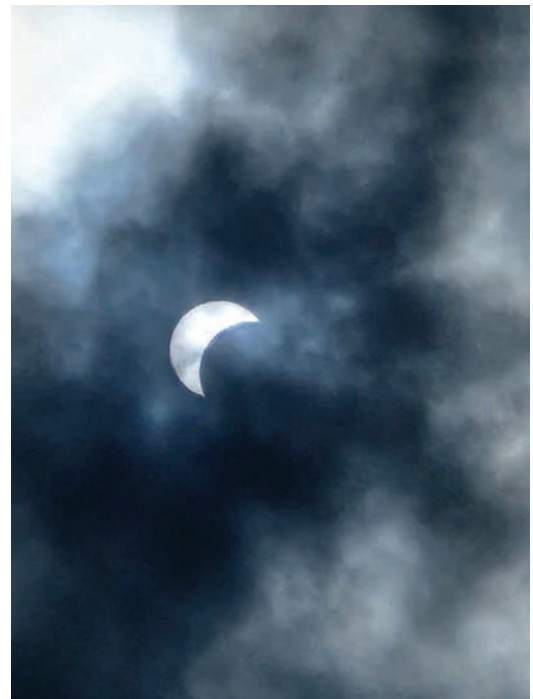
*- Danielle Alsandor  
Deputy Director, Undergraduate College*

*Slightly disappointing with all the clouds, but still impressive. The total eclipse was visible through the clouds for a period of time. I liked the effect on the environment, dark at midday...it was eerie, fascinating and great.*

*- Bob Lawrence  
RFSAs President*

*Despite the cloudy weather, we thoroughly enjoyed the eclipse with our son who was visiting from Seattle. We watched from Tany Norwood's deck. A few tears were shed by those of us who assumed this might be our last eclipse, but happy to know that when our son sees his next eclipse in 20 years, he will be able to remember seeing them with his parents.*

*- Holly Thompson  
RFSAs Secretary and IT webmaster*



**ABOVE:** Photo credit: Holly Thompson



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# MEET OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS

The Nominations Committee of the Retired Faculty-Staff Association recommends the following RFSA members for officer positions on the RFSA Board. These positions were approved by the RFSA membership at our Spring Luncheon on March 20.



▶ **Holly Thompson** is the nominee for Secretary. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees in music (Applied Clarinet) from the University of Texas at Austin (1973-1978), taught and played professionally for several years before going back to school (Computer Science). Holly was a programmer for IBM and a PMP-certified Project Manager; and went on to lead software development teams at multiple companies (BMC Software, PSW, CORT Business Services) for 35 years before retiring from Cort Business Services as Executive Director of Software Development and IT in 2016. She also serves as the Information Technology/Webmaster for RFSA.



▶ **Federico Subervi** is the nominee for Member-at-Large, 1st year. He earned his BA and MA degrees at the University of Puerto Rico and his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin, where he currently holds the position of Honorary/Associate Fellow of the Latin American, Caribbean and Iberian Studies Program. He has served as a professor at four US universities, including thirteen years at UT-Austin. He has been a Fulbright Scholar in Brazil and Chile, a visiting professor at several universities in Latin America and in Europe. In 2018 he was selected as Visiting Leverhulme professor at the University of Leeds. Dr. Subervi has authored and edited four books, and dozens of book chapters, articles, and reports. From his home in Austin, he serves as co-editor-in-chief of the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity and Communication*.



▶ **Robin Jarman** is the nominee for Member-at-Large, 2nd year. She retired in January 2023 after a career in human resources. She began at the University in the benefits section of Human Resources, then managed the employee records and onboarding section for many years. While working in Human Resources and, later, with Enterprise Business Information Technology Solutions (eBITS), she served as lead or principal HR consultant in her areas of expertise on projects to develop software and implement HR systems for campus. More recently she has returned to her benefits roots, working part-time in the Provost's Office as an academic benefits specialist. When not working, she can be found camping or obsessing over the latest jigsaw puzzle.

In addition to the above slate of candidates, the Nominations Committee recommended new co-chairs for two Interest Groups. The Executive Officers approved these nominees in February, and their terms took effect immediately.



▶ **Hillary Hart**. As Distinguished Sr. Lecturer, Dr. Hillary Hart was a full-time faculty member in the Department of Civil, Architectural, and Environmental Engineering (CAEE) at UT Austin from 1987-2016. She created and ran the CAEE program in Engineering Communication for 30 years, teaching over 150 undergraduate engineering students yearly. As Director of the campus-wide Faculty Innovation Center (FIC), she developed The Experiential Learning Initiative (ELI), which trained UT faculty to teach using experiential-learning techniques. She served on the UT Faculty Council for five years, including as Chair in 2013-14 (the first non-tenure-track faculty member to be elected to this position) and then Secretary of the General Faculty. In March 2015, Hillary received the Civitatis award from her colleagues and President Powers.



# MEET OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS



► **Madeline Sutherland-Meier** was a faculty member in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese for 37 years (nine of them as department chair) before she retired on September 1, 2023. She taught Spanish language, literature, and culture courses at all levels—from first-semester Spanish to specialized graduate seminars. She was a member of the Faculty Senate and the University Council, back when those two bodies existed, and was elected Vice Chair of the Senate. Over the years, she also served on numerous college and university committees. Her scholarly interests include Spanish Ballads (*or romances*), the eighteenth-century periodical press, and disability studies.



► **Kathy and Richard Armenta** are the incoming Travel Interest group co-chairs and have been members of RFSa since 2018. Kathy retired as Clinical Professor from the Steve Hicks School of Social Work, twenty-one years on the faculty. She has been a social worker for fifty-one years, with practice experience in Arizona and Texas in child and family mental health, school social work and community organizing. She currently serves on the Management Board for UT Elementary School in east Austin.

Richard retired from Austin Community College in 2020, after thirty-two years, serving as a Dean and as an Associate Vice-President. He began his career as a public school teacher and later moved into community college administration. He consults with “Catch The Next, Inc.,” a statewide college recruitment program for underserved students. They have two children and two grandchildren and enjoy traveling, reading, gardening, bird watching, trying new restaurants, and spending time with family and friends.

Congratulations to these nominees and new board members from the RFSa Nominations Committee: Joyce Harris, Liz Hastings, Bob Lawrence, Charles Roeckle, and Susan Kessler, Chair.

## TEXAS CONNECT

► We are delighted to announce a new Retired Faculty-Staff Association benefit for our dues paying members. *Texas Connect* magazine is available on the RFSa website.

*Texas Connect* is a magazine for staff and faculty that was created in partnership between University Marketing and Communications and Texas Student Media in the Moody College of Communication. *Texas Connect* was created to shine a light on the people who power this university and to provide information that will help them thrive. We want to offer a chance for all members of the university’s staff and faculty to celebrate our stories and meet their colleagues across the hall, down the street and throughout the UT community. The magazine includes storytelling, design and photography contributed by upper-division students as well as staff and faculty members. It is self-funded through advertising revenue.

RFSa advertises in *Texas Connect* with a goal of letting faculty and staff learn about our organization before they retire. You can find the latest issue at this location on our webpage at [texasconnect.utexas.edu](https://texasconnect.utexas.edu) or in the “ETC” tab if you are on our site.

# LONGHORN FYI

## WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION DIVISION OF CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



COURTESY OF JESSICA SINN,  
CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY  
OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

► The Division of Campus and Community Engagement hosted its inaugural Women's History Month Celebration on March 27 from 11 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on the Main Mall. The University-wide event honored the many women of The University of Texas at Austin who have made a positive impact here on the campus and in the community. The event was coordinated by a number of volunteers from faculty, staff and students.

The day featured speakers, performances, women-owned local businesses, and student organizations tabling with interactive activities. The official color of International Women's Day is purple representing dignity, power, creativity, and hope. Purple has been used by feminist movements throughout history and has become a powerful symbol of the ongoing struggle for gender equality. Women wore their favorite shade of purple to honor Women's History Month. One of the tables was strewn with purple beads and participants were invited to share messages of support.





## ABOUT OUR SCHOLARSHIP FUND

RFSA's Scholarship Fund is our main, and most impactful, service project. It was created in 1983 and the first scholarship was awarded in 1988. Two years ago, our fund reached a milestone of surpassing one million dollars in market value.

In addition to undesignated donations, members and friends are encouraged to make contributions in memory or honor of family, friends, and colleagues; in celebration of particular events, and through estate donations. In 2018, our organization committed to match any donations with reallocated operating funds, and some of that match is still available. So, if you donate soon, you can double the amount of your donation

Please consider a contribution – it will truly make a difference in a student's life.

**A donation card is included in this magazine. Make a difference in a student's life this year and send your donation to RFSA for the next group of students receiving an RFSA Scholarship.**

### Donate By Mail

Checks should be made payable to  
**The University of Texas at Austin**

And mailed to the following address;  
*Carol Barrett, RFSA Coordinator*  
*Texas Exes*  
*P.O. Box 12368*  
*Austin, TX 78711-2368*

### Donate Online

You are also able to donate online through the UT Online Giving website at [giving.utexas.edu/RFSA2012](https://giving.utexas.edu/RFSA2012). The "Gift Designation" line should read "Retired Faculty-Staff Association." Enter the amount you wish to give and complete the rest of the information requested. You will receive an electronic acknowledgement from UT and a written acknowledgement from RFSA in the mail.

## RFSA SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

GIFTS RECEIVED FROM NOVEMBER 16, 2023 – MAY 1, 2024

Martha Boyd  
In memory of Jim Vick

James Crook  
In memory of George L. Clayton, Jr.

Dr. Phillip and Karen Kelton

Michael Corley

Virginia Phillips  
In honor of Peggy Mueller

Retired Faculty Staff Association  
In memory of Hunter March

Lael Hasty

Obie Hasty

Lisa Gahagan

Donna Bellinghausen

Karrol Kitt

Peggy Mueller  
In memory of Darlene Ticer Gavenda  
In memory of Sweet and Betty Mueller  
In memory of Louise Lunn

Holly Thompson

Tany Norwood

Carol Barrett

## STAY CONNECTED ONLINE

► There are two ways for you to stay connected to RFSA online: our RFSA website and our Facebook group. Be sure you have our new website bookmarked [sites.utexas.edu/rfsa](https://sites.utexas.edu/rfsa), where you will find photos, information about our organization, upcoming events, and other RFSA news.

If you are a Facebook user, join us at [facebook.com/groups/131246400563201/members](https://facebook.com/groups/131246400563201/members), or by searching groups for "University of Texas Retired Faculty-Staff Association." 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.

# SCHOLARSHIPS

## 2023-24 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

### **Devin Wallets**

Denton, Texas

Liberal Arts

Psychology

### **Bill Geng**

San Antonio, Texas

College of Natural Sciences

Biology

### **Nicole Casaca-Watkins**

Crosby, Texas

Liberal Arts

Psychology

### **Angela New**

Austin, Texas

Moody College of  
Communication

Radio-Television-Film and  
Entrepreneurship

### **Breyona Mitchell**

Houston, Texas

College of Liberal Arts and Fine Arts

English and Studio Art  
(Double Major)

### **Louis Cao**

Richmond, Texas

McCombs School of Business

Business Analytics/  
McCombs Success Scholar  
and Computational Science  
and Engineering Program and  
Elements of Computing

### **Bilal Choudhry**

Murphy, Texas

McCombs School of Business

Business

### **Janny Li**

Katy, Texas

Liberal Arts

Psychology & Social and  
Behavioral Sciences

### **Lucas Lin**

Keller, Texas

Natural Sciences

Biology, Healthcare Reform and  
Innovation

### **Santino Hassett**

Oak Lawn, Texas

Cockrell School of Engineering

Chemical Engineering

### **Zhihao Fan**

China

Education, Natural Sciences

Exercise Science and Allied  
Health Professions

### **Zayana Uddin**

Wichita Falls, Texas

Liberal Arts, Fine Arts

Psychology and Art History

### **Olivia Willemssen**

Round Rock, Texas

Liberal Arts, Business

Psychology and Business

### **Virginia Bilic Gutierrez**

Richmond, Texas

Cockrell School of Engineering

Chemical Engineering

### **Mira Want**

Missouri City, Texas

McCombs School of Business

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# SPECIAL PROGRAMS

## PEGGY MUELLER SPECIAL PROGRAMS CHAIR

▶ RFSA members have many participation opportunities in campus organizations throughout the year, including UT Outpost, Orange Santa, scholarships for students through the RFSA Scholarship Fund, making mementos for UT Remembers and assisting in activities.

**Orange Santa 2023:** Donations to help make the holidays brighter for children of UT students, staff and faculty

*RFSA members contributed online donations, plus \$741.00 in cash donations collected at the Holiday Reception, and donated \$50 gift cards to 1,350 children from 645 families. Total donations of \$70,000 were raised campus-wide, including the match from President Hartzell.*

**40 Hours for 40 Acres 2024:** online giving campaign for UT programs, colleges, departments across UT

RFSA participates by asking for donations to the RFSA Scholarship Fund; five members contributed \$400.

**UT Remembers April 26, 2024:** memorial program honoring and remembering students, faculty, staff and retirees who have died in the previous year

*25 RFSA members gathered after the Spring Luncheon Meeting (March 20, 2024) and made, and then pinned, orange memorial loops on 400 small cards with the Tower logo to be distributed to families, visitors and friends on the day of the program.*

**UT Outpost 2024:** free food pantry on campus for students experiencing food insecurity

*RFSA members brought non-perishable food to the Spring Meeting and Luncheon (March 20, 2024) and filled two large bins.*

# IN MEMORIAM

This column honors the memory of retired University of Texas at Austin faculty and staff and retired University of Texas System staff whose deaths have been made known to us between December 1, 2023 – April 15, 2024. 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, as well as notable friends of the University. Any additions or corrections to the list should be addressed to Barbara Frock, Historian, at [jbfrock@gmail.com](mailto:jbfrock@gmail.com).

**Donald B. Arthur**

*Bibliographer Cataloger,  
Slavic Studies  
January 24, 2024*

**John Wesley Barnes, 78**

*Cullen Trust Professor for Higher  
Education in Engineering  
December 23, 2023*

**Adan Benavides Jr, 76**

*Research Librarian, Nettie  
Lee Benson Latin American Collection  
December 20, 2023*

**Sharon S. Bramblett, 82**

*First Webmaster, Natural Sciences,  
Research Engineer/Science Assistant  
February 21, 2024*

**Floyd Stanley Brandt, 93**

*Marlene & Morton Meyerson  
Centennial Professor Emeritus,  
Management  
December 13, 2023*

**George L. Cardwell III, 83**

*Senior Lecturer,  
Electrical Engineering  
December 30, 2023*

**Elizabeth Cameron, 92**

*Head of Reserve Collection,  
Undergraduate Library,  
Library Assistant III  
January 25, 2024*

**John Day Dollard, 87**

*Chair, Mathematics;  
Associate Dean & Vice Provost*

**William “Bill” Espey Jr, 86**

*Researcher, Consultant and  
Educator, Civil Engineering  
February 17, 2024*

**Etta “Darlene” Ticer Gavenda, 89**

*Assistant Director,  
International Office  
February 19, 2024*

**Dagmar S. Hamilton, 92**

*Professor and Dean,  
LBJ School of Public Affairs*

**George Kitto, 92**

*Professor, Chemistry and Biochemistry  
January 25, 2024*

**George Allen Holmes, 88**

*Photographer II  
Huntington Art Gallery  
April 3, 2024*

**Leon Lasdon, 85**

*David Bruton Jr Centennial  
Chair, Business Decision  
Support Systems;  
Professor Emeritus, Business  
January 31, 2024*

**Shirley Hebert Lukenbill, 84**

*Lecturer, Graduate School of  
Library Science (Now School of Information)  
February 25, 2024*

**Harold Kohl III, 63**

*Associate Regional Dean for Academic Affairs,  
Epidemiology, UTHealth Health  
Science Center & UT Austin  
January 7, 2023*

**Jane Carlisle Maxwell, 81**

*First Female Graduate of LBJ  
School of Public Affairs,  
Research Professor Emeritus  
January 3, 2024*

**Dennis Michael Perrotta, 72**

*Professor, Epidemiology,  
School of Nursing  
January 13, 2024*



# IN MEMORIAM

**Herbert J Rieth Jr, 80**

*Professor Emeritus, Audrey Rogers Myers  
Centennial Professor,  
Department Chair, Special Education  
December 22, 2023*

**Kaye Judith Lehmkuhl Roth, 87**

*Widow, Chuck Roth,  
Assistant Professor  
December 6, 2023*

**Ana Salinas, 83**

*Monographs Cataloger, Benson  
Latin American Collection,  
Perry Casteneda Library  
December 3, 2023*

**Patricia S Savage, 87**

*Created first courses in Women's  
History, Faculty member, Plan II, Liberal Arts  
February 5, 2024*

**Juergen A Schmandt, 94**

*Professor, LBJ School of Public Affairs  
November 29, 2023*

**Henry Anderson Selby, 89**

*Professor, Anthropology & Archaeology  
January 29, 2024*

**Della Jo Sprager, 85**

*Research Fellow, Lozano Long  
Institute of Latin American Studies  
December 19, 2023*

**Mary Louise Tovar, 87**

*Executive Assistant, Chancellor's Office,  
UT System Government Relations  
February 16, 2024*

**Michael Wayne Vandervort, 81**

*Director, Internal Audits;  
Associate Vice President of Business Affairs  
October 10, 2023*

**Renee Wallace, 63**

*Director of Payroll, Associate VP,  
Office of Sr Vice President;  
Vice Provost, Provost's Office  
February 19, 2024*

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The Retired Faculty-Staff Association of The University of Texas at Austin provides the point of connection, continuity and communication for the mutual benefit of its members and The University. A complete statement of the purposes of the association can be found in the constitution. Submissions may be emailed to [donnabell1015@gmail.com](mailto:donnabell1015@gmail.com) or mailed to Carol Barrett, RFSA Coordinator, Texas Exes / P.O. Box 12368 / Austin, TX 78711-2368.

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