

# RFSA MAGAZINE

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

## SPRING MEETING

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## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

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## RFSA VISITS THE DANUBE REGION

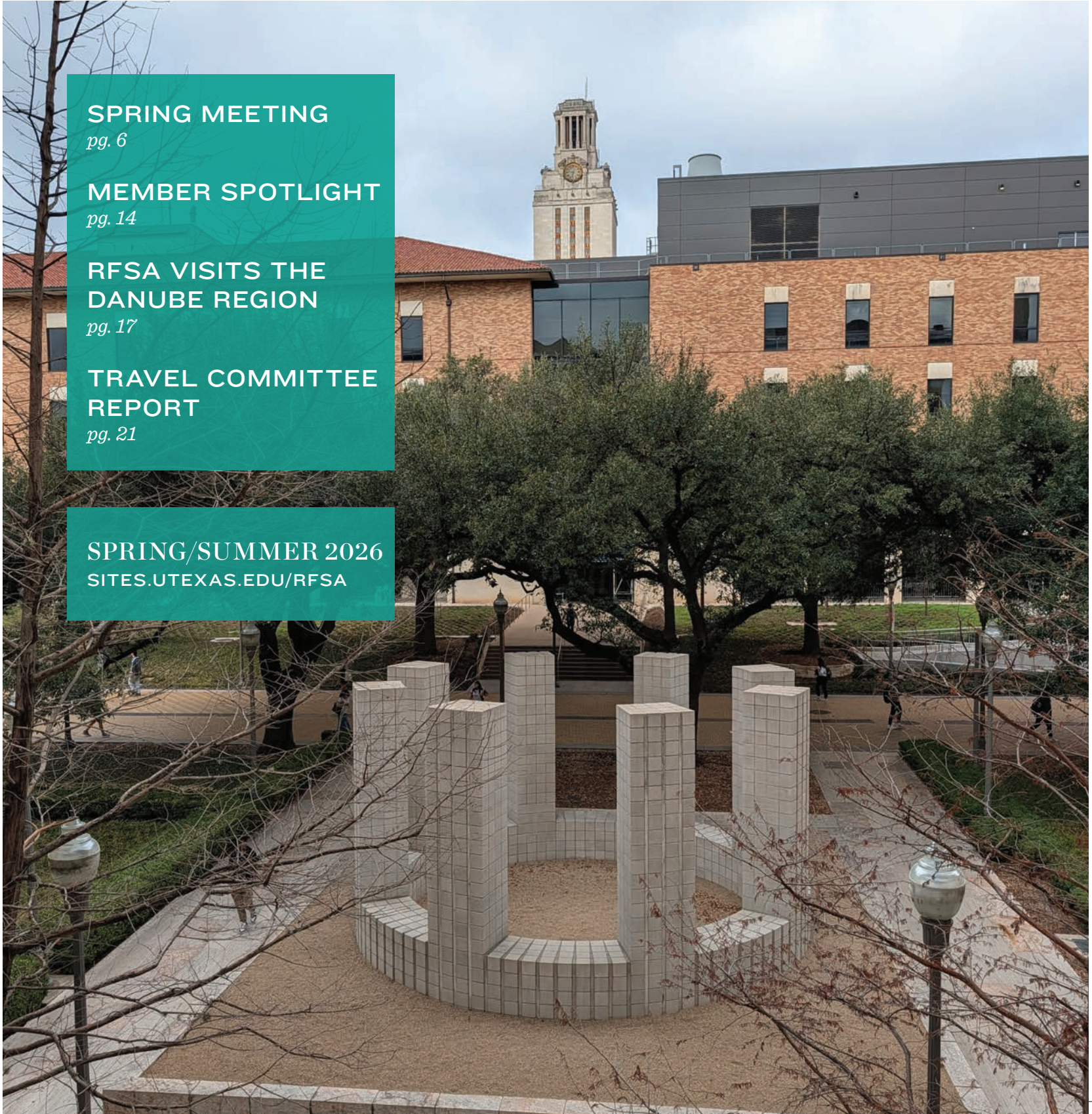
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## TRAVEL COMMITTEE REPORT

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## SPRING/SUMMER 2026

[SITES.UTEXAS.EDU/RFSA](https://sites.utexas.edu/rfsa)



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<b>EXERCISE</b>	Carolyn Wylie	
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<b>SPEAKER SERIES</b>	Phil Kelton & Alice Reinarz	Phil Kelton & Alice Reinarz
<b>TRAVEL</b>	Kathy & Richard Armenta	
<b>INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT &amp; COORDINATION</b>	Carol Barrett and the Texas Exes	Carol Barrett and the Texas Exes

*Cover Photo: Circle With Towers, by Sol LeWitt (1928-2007), acquired by UT Austin as part of Landmarks, the public art program.*

*It is installed at the Speedway entrance to the Bill & Melinda Gates Computer Science Complex and Dell Computer Science Hall.*

*Back Cover Photo: The RFSA Group on the Danube River cruise assembled on the Avalon ship, Passion.*

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



## ► Greetings once again!

I must tell you that this 2025-2026 term as President of RFSA has been a year that will be in my memory book for years to come. It is not only due to the two lovely luncheons each president gets to host but also being involved in two Executive Committee meetings, two Board Meetings, various other committees, and our choice of Interest Groups. I have become a “monthly member” of two of our Interest Groups – Speaker Series and Foodies. The guests invited by the Speaker Series co-chairs are excellent. These are talks that are enjoyable and educational and always make you happy that the speakers are more than willing to share the slides they used in their presentations. To have standing room only left in so many of the presentations tells you why you want to be among those who arrive early! Our chair for the Foodies quite willingly “tests” the restaurants he will take us to. That pays off in success. Our attendance at one of the lunches was in the low 40s – it just must be a record!

These are not our only Interest Groups. There are also Arts & Culture and Bridge. We did have an Exercise Group but our person in charge had to step away from the responsibility. However, since then I have found out that Eldercare Support from Human Resources offers Chair Yoga. I will continue to find out the particulars of this as I become Past President. Our Travel Group has done excellent work for this year and even has the trips coming up in 2027. These are all in our Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer magazines, in the monthly “News for you” that comes over the Internet, our RFSA web site, and Facebook.

The RFSA Spring Luncheon was wonderful. Our speaker was Tony Hunt, Chief Human

Resources Officer at UT Austin. Tony leads efforts to strengthen HR’s role as a strategic partner and enrich the employee experience. His career has covered higher education, Fortune 500 corporations, and global organizations where he has developed a people-centered approach to driving large-scale HR modernization and transformation initiatives. Having a PhD in Human Resources as well as several HR industry certifications, Dr. Hunt strives to unite research with practice to create meaningful impact. On our campus he champions operational excellence by elevating, enhancing, and expanding HR services.

We also had 12 staff from Human Resources who were at the luncheon and led conversations at tables before we started lunch, joined us for lunch, and returned to their info tables after the brief business meeting that always follows the guest speaker. Their conversations covered the Human Resources Center in general, Benefits and Leave Management, Senior Benefits Specialist, HealthPoint Work Life and Wellness, the Employee Assistance Program and Eldercare Support.

It was an enjoyable and beneficial two and a half hours!

I can hardly wait for the Fall semester and our new President, Mary Knight. She will be fantastic in the position. I will leave you the same way I did last Fall:

*Be careful, be safe, be mindful and, above all, be honest and kind!*

**MARTHA HILLEY**

*President, 2025-26*

# SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS



► Our sponsors have been solicited because of their excellent reputation for selling the best goods and providing the best service to customers. We owe our thanks to the long-term sponsors who support RFSA, they include many of Austin's most trusted and well-loved businesses.

Several are family-run institutions that have served our community for generations. These include the Covert Auto Group, the Ravel family of Karavel Shoes, and the Fish family of Weed-Corley-Fish Funeral Homes. Nancy Guilloteau, PhD, UT professor, and realtor

adds a community-minded touch to our sponsor family.

Our other sponsors, while not family owned, share the same dedication to excellent service. They are St. David's HealthCare, University Federal Credit Union, the Westminster Retirement Community, Stan's Heating and Air Conditioning, Fast Park & Relax, and Capital City Village are longtime community mainstays. We are pleased to welcome our newest sponsor, Relaxed Escapes Travel Consultants, offering RFSA members expert, personalized travel planning.

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# SPRING 2026 LUNCHEON AND BUSINESS MEETING

## HIGHLIGHTS

► President **Martha Hilley** presided over the Spring Luncheon and Business Meeting, held Tuesday, May 12, 2026.

### BUSINESS MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### FINANCIAL REPORT

**Mary Knight** provided a financial report as of March 2026, as approved by the Board. There was a beginning balance of \$20,681, Income of \$32,880, and Expenses of \$19,953, resulting in an ending balance as of March 31, 2026, of \$33,608.

#### TRAVEL

Co-chairs **Kathy and Richard Armenta** invited guests to visit their Table. Read their Travel Committee report elsewhere in this issue.

#### PAST PRESIDENTS

**Martha** recognized the Past Presidents in attendance. **Bob Lawrence**, 2025-26 past president, was presented with a token of our appreciation.

#### JOHN MCKETTA AWARDS

Five attendees received a John McKetta \$100 Attendance Award. See group photos for details.

#### ELECTION OF NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Nominations Committee, **Bob Lawrence** (chair), **Martha Hilley**, **Alice Reinartz**, **Hillary Hart**, nominated **Lael Hasty** for President-Elect, **Elvia Rosales** as Interim Treasurer, and **Robin Jarman** will serve another term as Member-at-Large. A motion to approve was approved. Other changes to the Board for 2026-27 are included in the list on page two of this issue.

#### PRESIDENT REMARKS

**Martha** urged members to get involved in RFSA by participating in activities and encouraging retired UT Austin colleagues to take advantage of all that RFSA offers. Martha stated that it was a privilege to have served as President this year and that our board is a group of wonderful visionary and hard-working people. Carol Barrett was applauded for her generous and steadfast support of RFSA. Mary Knight, our president-elect, was installed as the president for 2026-27.



Tony Hunt, our featured speaker, addressing the group

#### FEATURED SPEAKER

**Tony Hunt** is the Associate VP of Human Resources. As the Chief Human Resources Officer, he leads efforts to strengthen HR's role as a strategic partner and enrich the employee experience. He champions operational excellence by elevating, enhancing, and expanding HR services. Twelve HR staff members were available to answer individual questions.



Martha Hilley presenting a gift to Bob Lawrence as he completes his term as past-president.

# SPRING 2026 LUNCHEON AND BUSINESS MEETING

## HIGHLIGHTS

### SPONSOR APPRECIATION

Martha thanked our sponsors for their generous support. Several sponsors were in attendance as our special guests. Our sponsors include:

Capital City Village: Gayle Hight

Covert Chevrolet, Buick, GMC: Rox Covert

FastPark and Relax: Mary Holt

St. David's Healthcare: Molly

Sherman & Lisa Trahan

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Stan's Heating and A/C: Lacey McDaniel

University Federal Credit Union

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Homes: Laurens Fish

Westminster Senior Living Community:

Jordan Bleeker & Tessa Cannon

Bramlett Partners Real Estate:

Nancy Guilloteau

Relaxed Escapes Travel

Consultants: Lori Threatt

Members were encouraged to patronize our sponsors when shopping for goods and services. **Gayle Hight**, was thanked for her dedication and hard work in securing sponsorships and **Nancy Guilloteau**, for her surprise gifts for a few lucky RFSA members.



New member Mulugeta Ferede



Federico Subervi and Julia Subervi

### UT OUTPOST

The UT Outpost staff, Val and Christina, were recognized, and guests were encouraged to contribute non-perishable goods to Outpost at the Student Services Building (100 W Dean Keeton). *Please see the UT Outpost article regarding their recent move elsewhere in this issue.*

### - First-Gen Volunteers

**John De La Garza, Mary Knight and Martha Hilley** represented RFSA at the First-Gen Graduation Festivities. They met the students and their families, and the faculty and staff who took part in the ceremony.



McKetta recipients from left: Cene Titilayo Abrams, Andrea Zabcik, John De La Garza and Frances Castillo



McKetta recipient Jane Cornick-Jamison



Mary Knight, President, 2026-27, visiting the Human Resources Table

# RETIREMENT LIVING ON YOUR TERMS

*Clockwise from top*

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Learning Center Director,  
UT School of Nursing  
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**Kay Coonrod**

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~Kay Coonrod

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# INTEREST GROUPS



Laraine Lasdon and Phil Kelton enjoying the SNL Exhibit in the *Live from New York: The Lorne Michaels Collection* at the Ransom Center.

## ARTS AND CULTURE

► On February 20, 2026, Laraine Lasdon took about 15 RFSA members and friends on a delightful tour of the recently acquired Lorne Michaels Collection at the Ransom Center. The exhibit, which is titled *Live from New York: The Lorne Michaels Collection*, contains items spanning Michaels' long career, including scripts, programs, cue cards, costumes, letters, photographs, and other memorabilia, which make clear the important role he and SNL played in the development of comedy on television.

In late April, a group of about 10 members signed up to attend a Tuesday Twilights at the Lady Bird John Wildflower Center. Unfortunately, the Center had to cancel the event due to heavy rains.

On May 19, 2026, Laraine Lasdon led another tour, this time of an exhibit at the Blanton Museum, *American Modernism from the Charles Butt Collection: From Edward Hopper to Alma Thomas*. The exhibit contains 80 works that are rarely shown.

For information, contact co-chairs Hillary Hart (hart@utexas.edu/512-423-5022) and Madeline Sutherland-Meier (madelinesm@austin.utexas.edu/512-565-0906)

## BRIDGE

► The RFSA bridge group meets monthly throughout the year at the Alumni Center to play “party” (not duplicate) bridge. We meet on the first Monday of each month from 1-4 pm, unless Monday is a holiday. We play with up to four tables of four players each, so you must reserve a spot in advance. You may get on the mailing list for invitations by contacting the bridge chairperson, Mary Kay Hemenway. You need not bring a partner to play bridge with us.

For information, contact Mary Kay Hemenway at mkhemenway@utexas.edu.



From left, George Frock, Liz Wadlington, Barbara Frock, and Kay Knutsen in February

## EXERCISE

► **Thank you, Carolyn Wylie, for 15 years of outstanding leadership and service.**

Carolyn became co-chair of the Exercise group in 2009 and assumed the role of chair the following year, devoting fifteen years of leadership, energy, and care to its success. While the program has come to an end, her commitment made it far more than a series of classes—it became a lasting source of wellness, friendship, and community for many members.

# INTEREST GROUPS



Nancy Guilloteau, Business Sponsor and host, speaking to the group at the Carillon lunch.

## FOODIES

► The RFSA Foodies group remains popular. My contact list for the group has grown to over 120 people. If all those people decide to attend a lunch, it will be interesting.

We have gone to some old favorites and some new places:

In December 2025, we went to Mama Betty's at their newest location on Burnet. There were 27 people for lunch.

January 2026 brought us back to The Grove Wine Bar & Kitchen off Spicewood Springs Rd. This was our most attended lunch to date, 42 people.

For the Lunar New Year in February 2026, we went to New Fortune II in NW Austin. Only 8 people were able to attend this lunch.

We went back to campus for lunch in March 2026 at the Carillon. This was special lunch in that one of our sponsors, Nancy Guilloteau, hosted it. Many thanks to Nancy for hosting the 35 attendees.

In April 2026, we went to 5280 Burger & Taphouse. We had 37 people take over the restaurant and the owner and staff treated us very well.

Early in the year, Hyde Park Bar & Grill was sold. Currently much of the menu remains the same. We are going there for lunch in May. To date, there are 31 people signed up to be there.

In all, except for the February lunch, we average 30 people each month.

In the last Foodie article, I mentioned that I was going to try and add dinners to the monthly offerings. Again, that would be in addition to the lunches and likely would not happen every month. We did start dinners this year:

In February, we went to It's Italian on Lamar. We had 12 people for dinner (I am limiting the reservations to 12 or 13). Everyone had a good time.

In April, we went to Cypress Grill for dinner. There were 13 people in attendance, and again, everyone had a good time.

If you are interested in being placed on the Foodies email list, contact Robert Lawrence at: [rjlawrence1031@gmail.com](mailto:rjlawrence1031@gmail.com)

# INTEREST GROUPS



Dr. Harriett Chaney speaking about Fall Prevention to a rapt audience.

## RFSA SPEAKER SERIES

► The RFSA Speaker Series had an unusually busy semester from January through May, 2026. We had five meetings, bringing our total for the 2025-26 year to eight including the three we had last fall. Our total attendance for all eight meetings was 271, which has continued to increase as effects of the pandemic fade.

Phil Kelton and Alice Reinartz remain as co-chairs of the group. Karen Kelton maintains our google group email list which has now grown to 139 members. We have continued to have good participation from RFSA members and thank everyone for that.

Nancy Guilloteau, Ph.D., was our speaker in January. She is a realtor with the McGuire Team and Bramlett Partners, an RFSA sponsor, and an Associate Professor of Instruction in the UT Department of French and Italian. The topic was "Rightsizing your life: Practical steps for decluttering, preparing your home for sale, and planning your move." She also brought in four panelists to discuss many aspects of this subject. It was very well attended and appreciated by our members.

Our speaker on February 25 was RFSA member Dr. Harriett Chaney. The topic was Fall Prevention for seniors. Her presentation

was based on her experience as an advanced practice nurse who has worked with multiple organizations. We had a lot of positive comments on her presentation.

Mr. Carl Stuart, of the Stuart Investment Advisors wealth management firm in Austin, was our speaker on March 25. He has been a longtime RFSA speaker and we were especially glad to have him back. His talk was excellent, as always.

Dr. Linda J. Quintanilla was our speaker on April 22. She spoke on her book "Warriors for Social Justice." It examined the contributions of Mexican American activists to the nation's democratic values by concentrating on the activism of Maria Jimenez in Houston.

Our final spring 2026 meeting was held on May 13. Our speaker was Ms. Linda McCoy. She is a prominent local history buff and community storyteller and calls herself "The AustinHIPstorian." Her talk was called "Timeless Tarrytown" and explored the early history of the area and especially early Austin pioneer William Walsh. Her talk tied that history into several landmarks still present in Tarrytown. We had a lot of great audience participation which is important to the success of our meetings.

For more information, contact co-chairs Phil Kelton ([pwkelton@gmail.com](mailto:pwkelton@gmail.com)) and Alice Reinartz ([areinartz@tamu.edu](mailto:areinartz@tamu.edu)).



From left, Ruth Rubio, Dr. Linda J. Quintanilla, and Alice Reinartz, after Dr. Quintanilla's discussion of her book, *Warriors for Social Justice*.



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# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## MILES ABERNATHY



Miles Abernathy

### WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?

► I was born and raised just down the road in San Marcos. My family lived on a farm 5 miles east of town, and I attended San Marcos public schools. In the middle of my junior year of high school, we moved first to Washington, D.C. and then to Argentina. Living in a foreign country was an experience that I thoroughly enjoyed.

### TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY

► My father was a department chair at Southwest Texas State University, now renamed to Texas State. My mother always worked outside the home in a wide range of roles, including lab supervisor, bookkeeper, graduate student at SWTSU, social worker, and flea-market vendor, among others. I have a younger brother who is an inventor specializing in multispectral infrared imaging and sonic applications. After my brother and I left home our parents began purchasing a variety of small, abandoned houses and clustering them around their own. After

renovating them, they rented the houses to musicians, college students, and various free spirits. Mom and dad's daily living-room interactions with these young people kept them active and young at heart for the rest of their lives -- my mother lived to the age of 103.

### TALK ABOUT YOUR CAREER

► I graduated from UT with a BS in Chemical Engineering, the only long-haired hippie in my graduating class. Engineering jobs were scarce that year, so I took a position doing maintenance and repairs at a very large apartment complex. The knowledge I gained at that job has been invaluable because I can fix almost anything that breaks around the house. A year after graduation I began working in what became the Utilities and Energy Management department at UT, where I continued for 35 years until retiring. By the time I retired, my responsibilities included overseeing the distribution of water, wastewater, steam, chilled water, and natural gas across the campus, as well as mapping those utility distribution systems. I often joke that as a student my goal was to sneak into the utility tunnels under campus, and as an employee my goal was to prevent students from doing the same.

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## MILES ABERNATHY

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

► Like many other retirees, I am surprised at how little free time I actually have. My wife Maria and I enjoy frequent travel, both within the U.S. and internationally. She volunteers at two local charitable organizations and at her church. I serve as photographer for the RFSA and five other organizations, and I'm part of a group that hikes three mornings a week. In the fall and spring, I take several Lifetime Learning Institute courses, including yoga and the history of cinema. I also attend as many productions as I can at Zach Scott Theatre.



Ready for hiking

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

► The people. RFSA is full of friendly, smart, and interesting individuals who have retired from UT, and it is a genuine pleasure to spend time with them. As the RFSA photographer, I also serve on the Board, which gives me a behind-the-scenes look at the organization and a chance to contribute ideas for upcoming events.

I especially enjoy the Speaker Series, as well as the Foodies and the Arts & Culture interest groups. The Bridge group seems to be thriving, and trips organized by the Travel committee have good participation by the membership and their family and friends. Altogether, these activities keep my mind and body active. People often choose to live in college towns for the intellectual stimulation, and RFSA proves that kind of engagement does not have to end in retirement.

### TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF THAT FEW PEOPLE KNOW.

► Maria and I met in a Texas Union Informal Classes course called Cooking for One. We're both very glad we signed up although neither of us actually learned how to cook.

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Patrician homes in Regensburg, Germany, photo by Kathy Armenta

# **RFSA VISITS**

## **THE DANUBE REGION**

# RFSA VISITS

## THE DANUBE REGION

BY KATHY AND RICHARD ARMENTA  
TRAVEL COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

► Twenty-six RFSA travelers embarked on a breathtaking nine-day cruise on the Danube river from Budapest to Prague, visiting the five countries of Hungary, Austria, Germany, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. Ports included some of Central Europe's most splendid capitals and charming towns along the way.

The weather was often quite brisk, but all participants were well prepared with the necessary layers for comfortable touring. Our Avalon ship, *Passion*, smoothly transported us along the Danube as we traversed through valleys, mountain ranges, and terraced vineyards.

Budapest is the vibrant capital of Hungary and travelers visited the Heroes' Square, Basilica of St. Stephen, the State Opera House, Castle Hill, the bustling indoor farmers market, several magnificent bridges, the Hungarian Parliament and the poignant "Shoes on the Danube Bank" Holocaust memorial, honoring victims shot into the river by Arrow Cross militiamen in 1944-1945.

Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia at the borders of Austria and Hungary, was the next stop with a walk through the medieval

Old Town, Bratislava Castle, the Gothic St. Martin's Cathedral, Michael's Gate, and a quirky bronze sculpture of "Cumil The Sewer Worker," peeking from a manhole. The blend of Baroque and medieval architecture provided plenty of photo opportunities including cannonballs embedded in buildings, a reminder of Napoleon's 3-day visit in 1809.

Vienna, Austria provided a deep immersion into the history of the Hapsburg empire, including a visit to the Imperial Palace complex, the Spanish Riding School, (home of the infamous Lipizzaner stallions), the Vienna Opera House and St. Stephen's Cathedral. Some group members visited the Schönbrunn Palace and explored the artwork and furnishings of the 1400 room summer estate of the Imperial Family. Many attended an evening concert by the Original Vienna Salon Orchestra and top European singers, bringing to life the "Blue Danube Waltz" and several other works by Mozart and Strauss.

Dürnstein, at the entrance of Austria's Wachau Valley, is a charming, fairytale village of cobblestone lanes, apricot orchards, 16th century buildings, and the Dürnstein Castle where England's King Richard the Lionheart was imprisoned on his way back from the Crusades in 1192.



Hungarian Parliament Building, photo by Richard Armenta



Shoes On The Danube Bank Holocaust Memorial in Budapest, Hungary, photo by Brenda Dossey



Cumil the Sewer Worker, in Bratislava, Slovakia by Patti from Toronto



The Blue Church in Bratislava, photo by Brian Mulvaney

From the ancient town of Melk, some travelers visited the Benedictine monastery or the Artstetten Castle and walked the halls of its most famed inhabitants, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and Duchess Sophie, while others did an immersion experience into the world of baking and bees with a demonstration by a master pastry chef and a local apiarist (honey producer).

The next port of Linz, the famed European Cultural Capital, offered a walking tour through Altstadt (Old Town), the lovely Hauptplatz (main square) with its 18th century Trinity Column, Old City Hall, Jesuit Cathedral, and the house where Mozart composed his famous Linz Symphony.

Some members traveled to Salzburg, and explored the Old Town, Lake District, and the Abbey; the site of the memorable wedding scene in “The Sound of Music.”

Other members visited the Mauthausen-Gusen Concentration Camp and Memorial and participated in a poignant guided tour of this former crime scene of atrocities, a place of memory and a cemetery for the mortal remains of thousands murdered by the Nazis from 1938-1945.

The two cities of Passau and Regensburg, Germany, both with historical buildings spanning 2000 years, provided captivating tours highlighting architecture, impact of the Holy Roman Empire, the Middle Ages, religion, and commerce.

We arrived in Prague on Easter Sunday to a glorious day of sunshine and warmer weather. Many participants attended an authentic Czech evening of hearty food, music, and dancing from Bohemian, Moravian, and Slovakian traditions. The following day included a guided tour of the historic highlights of Prague including the Castle district, changing of the guards, the Gothic and Baroque Old Town, and the fascinating Astronomical Clock.

See more photos on the RFSA website: <https://sites.utexas.edu/rfsa/danube-march-2026/>

And Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/131246400563201>



The Prague Astronomical Clock on the Old Town Hall, photo by Lori Threatt

# UT OUTPOST OPENS NEW LOCATION



Ribbon-cutters: Hook 'Em, Serina Menon (UT Outpost), Valeria Martin (Assoc. Director, Office of the Dean of Students), Christina Ciaburri (Outpost coordinator, Office of the Dean of Students), John Dalton (Vice President for Student Affairs), Sari Vatske (president & CEO, Central Texas Food Bank), Jim Davis (UT President), Heidi Post (HEB), Danny Flores (HEB), Susan Buckenmeyer (Assistant Dean, Office of the Dean of Students), and H-E-Buddy

*The Retired Faculty-Staff Association has had a strong relationship with UT Outpost since 2022 as part of our commitment to the UT community. During that time, RFSA has donated \$5,000 to their operations; and we hold a food drive at every Spring Luncheon, asking attendees to bring non-perishable food items to help stock their food pantry. Individual members also regularly donate professional clothing to the career closet. Congratulations on your achievements and new location!*

## STORY AND PHOTO COURTESY OF BAILEY EVERTSON AND UNIVERSITY MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

► In 2016, a group of ambitious student leaders at The University of Texas at Austin recognized a need for a food pantry and career closet on the Forty Acres. In 2017 Will Ross, Outpost's first coordinator, established the food pantry and organized the program's first food drive. In January 2018, the pantry held a soft opening at its original location. Later, the space expanded and partnerships with local organizations such as Keep Austin Fed were solidified.

Nearly a decade later — with the support of University leadership and campus and community partners including H-E-B and Central Texas Food Bank — UT Outpost

has unveiled its new location in the Student Services Building. “Our mission at this University is to transform lives for the benefit of society, and this is a place where it happens — one student at a time,” said UT President Jim Davis at the ribbon-cutting. Outpost Student Leadership Board member Jane Goldberg reflected, “If I had to sum up my experience here in one word, it would be community. The food pantry and career closet are pivotal resources that allow students to focus on their academic, professional and personal endeavors.” At the new location, students can shop for up to 20 pounds of food and personal care items each month, and two professional outfits from the career closet each term. Consistent access to these essentials can make a meaningful difference for students managing tight budgets, busy schedules and the pressures of college life.

# TRAVEL COMMITTEE REPORT

BY KATHY AND RICHARD ARMENTA

► The Travel Committee is happy to report that 2026 trips are well underway. Twenty-six travelers recently returned from the Danube cruise, see photos on the RFSA website and the article in this edition.

Several folks are registered for the upcoming **Alaska cruise and land tour, August 1-12; and the Adirondacks and Finger Lakes tour, September 20-28th.**

## HURRY - SPACES STILL AVAILABLE!



Adirondacks and Finger Lakes



Alaska

Check out [www.relaxedescapes.com/groups](http://www.relaxedescapes.com/groups) for more information.

## EXCITING NEWS!!!! ANNOUNCING 2027 RFSA NEW TOURS

### 1. COSTA del SOL & MADRID tour: April 2-11, 2027.

Explore the southern coastal region of Spain visiting Malaga, Marbella, Ronda, Granada, Alhambra and Madrid; only changing hotels once!

Pricing starts at \$4149 including round trip economy airfare; insurance is additional.



### 2. CANADA & NEW ENGLAND CRUISE: June 8-19, 2027.

Sail with Holland America on the St. Lawrence from Montreal to Quebec City, Newfoundland, Baie-Comeau, Havre-Saint-Pierre, Halifax to Boston.

Fares start at \$3804 with airfare and insurance additional.



### 3. IRISH GOLD LAND TOUR: October 1-9, 2027.

Explore the Cliffs of Moher, Dublin, Galway, Kilarney, Ring of Kerry, Blarney Castle and several Irish cultural experiences. Fares start at \$3675 with airfare and insurance additional.



For more information on any of the upcoming trips, **contact Kathy or Richard Armenta** at [karmenta@utexas.edu](mailto:karmenta@utexas.edu) or [richardarmenta@gmail.com](mailto:richardarmenta@gmail.com) or our Travel Advisor, **Lori Threath** at [lori@relaxedescapes.com](mailto:lori@relaxedescapes.com) or 737-228-3680.



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Lori Threatt, CTA, ACC  
737-228-3680  
[lori@relaxedescapes.com](mailto:lori@relaxedescapes.com)

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*Mother and Child statue, by Charles Umlauf,  
at Alumni Center, photo by Miles Abernathy*



*Autobiography: Circles* by Howardina Pindell, installed on the George I. Sanchez Building plaza and part of the UT Austin “Landmarks” collection, photo by Miles Abernathy



*Austin*, a free-standing building and chapel-like artwork by Ellsworth Kelly, near Blanton Museum of Art, photo by Miles Abernathy

# MEET OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS

BY BOB LAWRENCE, PAST PRESIDENT 2025-26

The Nominations Committee of the Retired Faculty-Staff Association recommends the following RFSA member for an officer position on the RFSA Board. This position was approved by the RFSA membership at our Spring Luncheon.



► **Elvia Rosales is the new Treasurer.** Elvia Rosales earned her BBA and MPA from UT Austin. As a new graduate, she went to work for UT System as an auditor. Her career started at UT Austin in the Contracts and Grants section of the Office. She worked various positions on campus in her 30-year career; the last 17 years in the Budget Office before she retired in December 2019. Elvia enjoys attending UT athletic events (especially the women's sports) and volunteering at Hope Food Pantry.

## TEXAS CONNECT

► *Texas Connect* magazine is available on the RFSA website as a benefit for our dues paying members.

*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 "Magazines" tab if you are on our site.

## 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. Several 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.**

## RFSA SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

GIFTS RECEIVED FROM NOVEMBER 16, 2025 – MAY 1, 2026

Phillip and Karen Kelton

Virginia Phillips

Madeline Sutherland-Meier

Sherry Melecki

In memory of Tom Melecki

Nancy Phillips

Judith K. Davis

In memory of David R. Davis II

David and Phyllis Warner

Patty Hamm

Keith and Sybil Momii

Mary Willman

In memory of Deanne and Dr. Billy Koen

Jeanne Graves

Peggy Mueller

In memory of Marianna Trombatore

In memory of Virginia Phillips

### 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, Texas 78711-2368*

### Donate Online

You are also able to donate online through the UT Online Giving website at <https://bit.ly/RFSAScholarship1>. 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.

## 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

## 2025-2026 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

### **Tony Chae**

Bundang, South Korea,  
and Madison, WI  
College of Engineering  
Electrical and Computer  
Engineering

### **Nathalia Becerril**

Dallas, TX  
College of Liberal Arts  
International Relations  
and Global Studies

### **Frederick Richardson**

Houston, TX  
College of Liberal Arts  
Linguistics

### **Jerry Herrera**

Arlington, TX  
College of Liberal Arts  
French Studies and Italian  
Studies double major

### **Samantha Jansen**

Austin, TX  
College of Liberal Arts  
English, Pre-Physician  
Assistant

### **Emily Kim**

San Antonio, TX  
College of Liberal Arts  
Health & Society

### **Mykal Montgomery**

Plano, TX  
College of Liberal Arts  
Government

### **Anika Ma**

Amarillo, TX  
College of Liberal Arts  
Sociology, Pre-Optometry

### **Thanh Dat Nguyen**

Da Nang City, Viet Nam  
Engineering  
Aerospace Engineering

### **Valeria Meza**

Dallas, TX  
McCombs School of Business  
Economics/Minor: Accounting

### **Alberto Flores**

Laredo, TX  
College of Liberal Arts  
English and Philosophy

### **Angela Baatar**

### **Tarus Bradley**

### **Christina Egan**

### **Carolina Gonzalez**

### **Sofia Russo**



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# 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 November 15, 2025 – May 15, 2026. 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).

**William Carl Bard, 81**

*Senior Lecturer – Electrical Engineering*  
April 30, 2026

**Richard Malcolm Brown, 86**

*Inaugural Holder of the Johnson & Johnson Centennial Chair in Plant Cell Biology*  
December 20, 2025

**Nathan Scot Crow, 57**

*Applied Research Lab*  
February 22, 2026

**Mary Catherine De La Garza, 61**

*Assistant Director,  
Population Research Center*  
March 11, 2026

**Rosemary Foster, 87**

*LBJ School of Public Affairs*  
December 14, 2025

**Roger Hall, 86**

*Senior Staff Psychologist,  
Counseling, Psychological Services*  
January 10, 2026

**Karen Bordelon Hartwell, 87**

*Administrator, Plan II Program*  
March 10, 2026

**Steve Hicks, 74**

*Former member of the Board  
of Regents, UT System;  
Member of the UT Investment  
Management Board;  
Distinguished Alumnus Award,  
Texas Exes*  
January 7, 2026

**Billy Vaughn Koen, 87**

*Professor, Mechanical Engineering*  
October 9, 2025

**Nancy Virginia Phillips, 103**

*Assistant Director,  
Branch Services, UT Libraries*  
February 28, 2026

**Billie Ellen Pierce, 76**

*Dean's Office, Psychology*  
November 14, 2025

**James Magnuson, 84**

*Director, Texas Center for Writers*  
January 18, 2026

**Charles Brown Mullins, 91**

*Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs,  
Ashbel Smith Professor,  
Emeritus of Internal Medicine,  
UT System*  
December 4, 2025

**Harvey Pittel, 82**

*Professor Emeritus,  
Saxophone, Butler School of Music*  
January 24, 2026

**Jenny Roquemore, 78**

*Tarleton Law Library*  
March 21, 2026

**Daniel Perez Rosas, 86**

*Printer, Bureau of Business Research;  
Parking and Transportation Services*  
February 7, 2026

# IN MEMORIAM

**James W. Sarver, 83**

*Director of ERS; Director of UT Employee  
Group Insurance, UT System*  
April 1, 2026

**Clarice “Terry” Starnes, 91**

*Administrative Associate*  
*Applied Research Laboratory*  
April 1, 2026

**Helen C. Spear, 97**

*Para-Professional, Counseling Center;*  
*Taught in Plan II Program, Liberal Arts*  
March 21, 2026

**Morris Stern, 95**

*Professor Emeritus, Aerospace Engineering  
and Engineering Mechanics*  
January 1, 2026

**Mary Martha Vance, 77**

*Counseling and Mental Health Clinic*  
February 13, 2026

**Maurice Ward Widener, 100**

*Defense Research Lab*  
*(now: Applied Research Laboratory)*  
March 14, 2026

**Bill Wiman, 85**

*Professor Emeritus, Art;*  
*Graduate Advisor and Assistant Chair, Studio*  
January 11, 2025

## **RFSA**

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### **THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RETIRED FACULTY-STAFF ASSOCIATION**

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 c/o Texas Exes / P.O. Box 12368 / Austin, TX 78711-2368.

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