



Association of Retired Rice University Faculty
2021-2022 Annual Report

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Prepared for

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The Association of Rice University Retired Faculty

Annual Report: 2021-2022

Summary

From the Charter of the Association of Rice University Retired Faculty (ARRUF):

The Association of Retired Rice University Faculty serves the interests of Rice University and the association's members, affirming key Rice values: Responsibility, Integrity, Community, and Engagement. The mission of the Association of Retired Rice University Faculty is to transform traditional forms of faculty retirement through innovation and collaboration. It promotes intellectual and scholarly activities, service, and collegiality among members. The Association organizes its affairs independently; it also may work collaboratively with the University's Schools, Departments, Institutes, Centers, Programs, and organizations.

Monthly meetings featuring conversations with university leaders and ARRUF members, lunches, receptions, and field trips emphasize collegiality. Smaller interest groups keen to explore nature, travel, and the arts arrange attendance at special events, afterparties, and a range of enjoyable activities. Sponsoring conferences, especially on topics associated with longevity and retirement, allows ARRUF members to learn about and appreciate innovative research and personally relevant new directions.

All retired Rice University faculty, both tenure-track and non-tenure-track, are automatically accorded full membership in ARRUF as of the date of their retirement. Spouses and partners of full members may also participate in ARRUF activities as non-voting associate members, and are encouraged to do so.

This report summarizes and highlights ARRUF activities during the 2021-2022 academic year. In contrast to the all-Zoom format of 2020-2021, several in-person activities were added to provide variety and enhance collegiality. The range of these activities was still limited by university policies and regulations put in place to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. If the pandemic continues to subside, ARRUF will likely use a mix of in-person, Zoom, and hybrid in-person/Zoom meetings in 2022-2023.

Highlights for 2021-2022

- This year ARRUF held not one but two receptions recognizing recent retirees – one in Fall 2021 and the other in Spring 2022. The Fall 2021 reception welcomed retirees from 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, because the welcoming receptions for those years could not be held due to the COVID pandemic. The Spring 2022 reception recognized faculty who retired during the 2021-2022 academic year.
- The Fall 2021 multidisciplinary webinar on cognition and aging featured speakers from Rice, the University of Houston, and the Texas Medical Center.
- A behind-the-scenes tour of the new Brockman Hall for Opera attracted many members for their first views of this latest addition to Rice’s cultural scene.
- The Nature Interest Group provided opportunities to learn more about birds of note from around the world, on the Rice campus, and in our own backyard, the latter via a birdwalk through Fiorenza Park in west Houston.
- The Director of Rice’s Office of International Students and Scholars described the makeup of Rice’s visiting international community, with a focus on the challenges they face in a COVID-troubled world, as well as what Rice is doing to help them.
- The Arts Interest Group organized a trip to Bayou Bend and a follow-up presentation by a senior docent at Bayou Bend describing Ima Hogg’s life and her lasting impact on Houston culture, education, and public health.

As we plan new events for the 2022-2023 academic year, ARRUF expects to continue the focus on opportunities and concerns of interest to our members regarding longevity and the increasing diversity of the Houston area community.

In addition, we plan to

- Review the responses to this year’s activities
- Interview a subset of members about on how ARRUF can be more relevant to them personally, and
- Meet soon with the President and Provost to discuss how ARRUF’s role in the university community can best achieve the emerging vision of Rice’s future.

We seek to make ARRUF’s future programs an avenue for all members to share continued happy years of high endeavor. What used to be called “retirement” is poised to become a period of greater civic engagement, enriched collaboration

across professional and social groups, and transformed identity crucial to our new understanding of American equality.

To individuals, ARRUF can offer Intellectual companionship as disciplinary specializations blossom in interest groups and in an active multidisciplinary community. To Rice University ARRUF could become a keystone for organizing new sorts of programs and research that facilitate emerging collaborative goals.

Committee Reports

Membership Committee

Thad Logan, Chair

The Membership Committee is responsible for updating and maintaining contact information for all current Rice University Faculty retirees. The chair of the committee works with the Communications Director to ensure that retirees are informed about the existence, goals, and activities of ARRUF on a timely basis.

Over the past three years (2019-2020 through 2021-2022), at least 48 faculty members have retired from Rice. In the past year Excel files containing information about our members have been successfully integrated with the MailChimp system. This ensures quick and efficient communication via email with all those who would like to receive our messages. We have the capacity to use features of that system to tailor messages to different segments of our audience, as well as to track how many of our messages are opened and read. The system also allows us to send out attractive and well-designed mailings using built-in formatting tools. The learning curve has been fairly steep, for some of us who are not accustomed to using this kind of program, but there is a substantial long-term payoff.

Sadly, we can expect to lose members to death in the natural course of events. We now have a way to offer individualized condolences to family members using a program called “Group Greeting” that synchronizes with our Mail Chimp account. An E-card is set up and sent to our membership; anyone who wishes to may add a personal note, and at an agreed-upon time these are consolidated by the Group Greeting system and sent to whomever we have designated as the recipient. This is one additional way that we seek to sustain and further connections among our members.

Nothing is more important to the success of ARRUF than knowing who our members are and how to contact them. This year has marked the first time that a protocol has been established for obtaining such information from the Office of the Provost. ARRUF is grateful for the commitment of time and staff that allows for us to have access to lists of new retirees in a timely and efficient way.

Activities Committee

Clarence Miller and Linda Driskill, Co-Chairs

Hiroko Sato, Viqui Arbizu-Sabater, and Alfonso DuLuc served as committee members. For most of the monthly committee Zoom meetings at least one ARRUF Director participated.

Summary

A chief objective of the Activities Committee for the 2021-2022 academic year has been to increase collegiality by adding in-person activities to the all-Zoom activities that have conducted since April 2020 owing to the Covid-19 pandemic. This objective was achieved while retaining the Zoom meetings capability, which allowed both speakers and ARRUF members who live outside the Houston area to participate. One Zoom activity was a two-hour webinar on “Cognitive and Brain Health During Aging,” which featured both Rice and outside speakers discussing this topic of great importance to older adults and to society in general. All three of the interest groups established last year – virtual travel, nature, and the arts -- remained active, organizing both in-person and Zoom activities that were open to all members. A complete list of ARRUF activities during the year may be found at the end of this section of the report.

Calendar of 2021-2022 Events

ARRUF began a gradual return to in-person activities this year, as university policy and public health recommendations responded to the improving pandemic situation. Nine activities were conducted via Zoom; eight were in-person; and one was done in mixed mode.

July 15, 2021 (Zoom)

This meeting focused on *Texas-Size Hurricane Solutions*, while also exploring the larger issue of flooding due to extreme events of all kinds. In

the first half of the meeting, Mallik Putchka and Dennis Webb, retired NASA engineers, shared their thoughts on how to develop an effective approach to organizing protection from inland flooding, due to hurricane or other extreme rain events, in this part of the Gulf Coast should look like. Later, Phil Bedient, current chair of Rice's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Director of the Storm Prediction, Education, and Evacuation from Disaster (SPEED) Center at Rice described how the engineering plans for Galveston Bay Park and the Ike Dike would strengthen hurricane resilience for the Houston area Gulf Coast.

July 21, 2021 (mixed in-person/Zoom)

Viqui Arbizu-Sabater and Alfonso DuLuc led a mixed in-person/Zoom meeting in ARRUF's designated space, Room 412 Fondren Library. Viqui, a retired Rice faculty member and former director of ARRUF, and her husband Alfonso were visiting Houston from their current home in Seville, Spain, and organized this meeting for while they were here. It was whimsically titled "*It goes WHERE?*" "*Mmmm!*" "*THAT'S YOUR MOOSE???*" Each of the participants spent a few minutes sharing some of their most memorable travel moments with the group.

August 19, 2021 (Zoom)

This was a working meeting at which the newly elected ARRUF directors Steve Klineberg, Bart Sinclair, and Meredith Skura, and other interested ARRUF members discussed ideas and preferences for activities in 2021-2022.

September 30, 2021 (Zoom)

ARRUF sponsored a two-hour webinar on "Cognitive and Brain Health During Aging". The prevalence of substantial memory loss and dementia is increasing rapidly due to longer lifespans. Because there is currently no cure for dementia, substantial resources are much needed to provide additional facilities and trained staff to care for affected individuals now and in the future. The webinar program was organized by Dr. Stephanie Leal of Rice's Psychological Sciences Department, who gave the opening presentation on "Memory in Healthy Aging and in Preclinical Alzheimer's Disease". She was followed by Dr. Margaret Beier of the same department speaking on the "Implications of Life-Span Learning and Development". Dr. Luis Medina

of the University of Houston's psychology department spoke on "Health Disparities in Aging and Dementia", and Dr. Joseph Masdeu, Chair of Neurological Sciences at Houston Methodist Hospital, discussed "Alzheimer's: New Treatments for an Old Disease". Dr. Masdeu outlined the results of the clinical trials that led to the recent and controversial approval of a new drug to treat Alzheimer's disease patients, and indicated how he believed the drug could best be used.

The webinar illustrated the continuing interest by ARRUF in providing information to our members, others at Rice, and the general public on health topics of particular importance to older adults. It followed ARRUF's webinar of April 15, 2021, on "Why Hearing Research Matters to Individuals and Communities," which dealt with the personal and community problems caused by hearing loss that often comes with aging. It also reflects ARRUF's continuing interest in interacting with Rice faculty who are conducting research on such topics. The large attendance at the webinar is another indication of the high level of interest in the aging process among ARRUF members and the Rice community in general.

October 8, 2021 (in-person)

ARRUF members had the opportunity to visit the recently-opened Brockman Hall of Opera. In addition to the magnificent Morrison Theater performance venue, the tour included visits to backstage areas, rehearsal spaces, and the set construction studio. Matthew Loden, the Shepherd School of Music's new dean, also addressed the group.

October 19, 2021 (in-person)

The first of two receptions for the year welcoming new faculty retirees to ARRUF was held in the Duncan Recital Hall and Lummis Courtyard of the Alice P. Brown building, followed by a visit to the nearby Turrell Skyspace. It replaced the receptions for retirees from the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years which were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The President and Provost were on hand to recognize the newest members of ARRUF. Afterwards, the attendees enjoyed a concert in the Turrell Skyspace by a string quartet from the Shepherd School.

November 18, 2021 (Zoom)

Dr. Adria Baker, Associate Vice Provost for International Education and Executive Director of the Office of International Students and Scholars, spoke on *The Challenges of Welcoming International Students*. She provided an overview of the makeup of Rice's community of international students and scholars, and spoke about the particular challenges of continuing Rice's international programs during the pandemic.

December 2, 2021 (in-person)

Because of pandemic concerns, the December meeting normally held indoors at Cohen House was transformed into the Carolers' Winter Picnic, an outdoor reception and luncheon in the Faculty Club Garden. A choral group and harpist from the Shepherd School provided festive music to lift spirits for this in-person gathering.

December 5, 2021 (in-person)

The Arts Interest Group organized a group outing at St. Luke's United Methodist Church to see a production of Truman Capote's *A Christmas Memory*.

December 16, 2021 (Zoom)

For the third consecutive year, ARRUF held a reading of Capote's short story, *A Christmas Memory*. Members read aloud in turns from Capote's narrative of events from his childhood in rural Alabama.

January 13, 2022 (Zoom)

As a continuation of ARRUF's Nature Interest Group activities begun in Spring 2021, Mark Kulstad spoke on "Birds of the World" to prepare members for the bird walk that he led two weeks later. The "Birds of the World" presentation featured personal photographs of distinctive world birds from a number of countries, including Spain, France, Hungary, China, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Australia, and New Zealand.

January 29, 2022 (in-person)

Following up on the January 13 presentation, Kulstad led a bird walk at Archbishop Joseph A. Fiorenza (also known as Brays Bayou) Park. The participants spotted around 30 different bird species in this little-known but significant Houston-area nature setting.

February 17, 2022 (Zoom)

In another Zoom meeting, Sandy Havens, long-time Director of Rice Players and an ARRUF member, read excerpts from his memoir, titled “Recollections and Reflections.” This was a fascinating look into the convoluted path that took Havens from a childhood in the oil fields of West Texas to the time he spent in New York working in Broadway productions and then back to Rice.

March 3, 2022 (in-person)

Members of ARRUF met at Bayou Bend to stroll through the gardens just prior to the start of the annual Houston Azalea Trail. This was in part a prelude to the presentation the following week on the life of Ima Hogg, who built Bayou Bend and later donated it to the Houston Museum of Fine Arts.

March 10, 2022 (Zoom)

Annette Mullendore, senior docent at Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens, part of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, spoke on *Ima Hogg, A Great Texan and Collector*. Ms. Hogg was a major force in the development of Houston’s and Texas’ civic society. The presentation highlighted her early years as the daughter of Texas governor James S. Hogg and her work in creating the Houston Symphony Orchestra, her interest in education, and the role she played in establishing the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health at the University of Texas, Austin. This activity, occurring during Women’s History Month, was sponsored by the Arts Interest Group, as was the visit to Bayou Bend that preceded it.

April 6, 2022 (in-person)

Stephen Fox of the Rice University School of Architecture led a bus tour of the Rice campus architecture. He provided both historical and architectural context for many of the iconic structures on the campus.

April 21, 2022 (in-person)

The second reception of the academic year was held for the retirees from 2021-2022 at the Moody Center. The reception began with recognition of the recent and soon-to-be retirees from the current year by President David Leebron and Provost Reggie DesRoches. A reception in the Central Gallery and connecting outdoor Lantern Terrace followed. The Shepherd School Percussion Studio Quartet provided music, appropriately coinciding with the Moody Center's simultaneous exhibit "The Intersection of Art and Music," which was open for view by attendees.

May 19, 2022 (Zoom)

In a Travel Interest Group activity, Peggy Patterson described and illustrated the widely traveled pilgrimage route in northern Spain to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

[Finance and Budget Committee](#)

Bart Sinclair, Chair

The COVID-19 pandemic was not the only challenge facing ARRUF this year. ARRUF has no direct access to the Rice University financial accounting system and must therefore rely on the Office of the Provost for reports on expenses and income. In 2021 the university replaced its internal accounting system with a new system that promised better tracking and projection capabilities. Unfortunately, the transition has not gone smoothly, and this has affected ARRUF's ability to get timely financial reports on a monthly basis. The Provost's Office, and in particular Mauricio Benitez, Assistant Provost, has been able to provide updates on ARRUF's finances from time to time, while dealing the issues resulting from the migration to the new system. We look forward in the near future to being able once again to receive monthly updates.

Beginning balance	\$15,356.21
New funding ¹	\$12,000.00
Fall 2021 new members reception ²	\$3,340.00
Webinar on “Cognition, ...” ³	\$2,000.00
“Carolers Picnic” ⁴	\$2,536.00
Spring 2022 new members reception (est.) ⁵	\$5,700.00
<u>Miscellaneous expenses</u>	<u>\$241.12</u>
Projected year-end balance	\$13,539.09

Major expenses for these items are detailed in the footnotes. The beginning balance was unusually large due to the constraints on the number of in-person events for the past two years, particularly ARRUF’s inability to hold the receptions recognizing the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 retirees. This was partially offset during 2021-2022 because of the Fall 2021 reception for the retirees from those years, in addition to the Spring 2022 reception for the current year’s retiree cohort.

Nominations Committee

Due to the unusual circumstance of three new directors named for the 2021-2022 academic year, no director positions will be open at the beginning of the 2022-2023 year. One director may be stepping down in mid-year; if so, we will be looking for a new director during the coming year.

¹ \$10K annual support from the Office of the Provost, plus \$2K additional contribution from Provost toward Spring 2022 reception

² Catering: \$1,990; musician stipends: \$800

³ Speaker honoraria: \$2,000

⁴ Cohen House catering: \$1,936; harpist, vocalist stipends: \$600

⁵ Moody Center venue: \$2,500; catering: \$2,400; musician stipends \$800