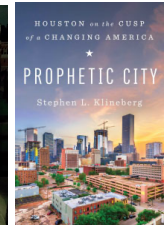




ARRUF

The Association of Retired
Rice University Faculty

ANNUAL REPORT
2022-2023



ARRUF 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Summary

Formation of the Association of Retired Rice University Faculty (ARRUF) was officially announced in May 2017, a year after Provost Marie Lynn Miranda challenged a steering committee to create an organization suited to retired Rice faculty. The committee investigated organizations at other universities but found only a few plausible models, one being Emory University's Emeritus College, which remains attractive. The committee recommended as ARRUF's immediate principal goal that it "transform traditional academic retirement through innovation and collaboration."

Accordingly, ARRUF sought to raise members' awareness of factors that will soon affect retirement, especially rapidly increasing longevity. To this end, it collaborated with the Jones Graduate School of Business to offer a half-day (in-person) conference in March 2019 on Purposeful Aging and the Longevity Economy. The keynote speaker was Paul Irving, then Chairman of the Milken Institute's Center for the Future of Aging. Subsequent programs focused on major health problems that can significantly impact aging communities. When the pandemic occurred, dictating the use of virtual conferences, ARRUF organized half-day webinars in 2021 on two such problems: hearing impairment and loss of cognitive abilities, including dementia. Speakers included faculty from Rice and other universities and, in the hearing webinar, a representative of the National Institutes of Health.

Activities for the 2022-2023 Year. During 2022-2023 ARRUF began to emphasize aging in Houston, especially how aging will affect the area's four major cultural groups, which will soon have comparable size, and their interactions. One possibility for ARRUF: a coordinating role, helping local personnel (including those at Rice) promote cooperation among the four groups in addressing issues associated with aging. As discussed in the report of the Activities Committee below, ARRUF field trips (planned by ARRUF members working with the respective groups or institutions) were organized to visit sites providing experience with the history and culture of Black, Asian, and Hispanic groups. Growing scholarship suggests that important cultural sites such as museums, gardens, celebrations, and related food practices foster familiarity and identification in visitors. These humble but significant bonds decrease feelings of difference between groups and foster acceptance and trust vital to cooperation. The accompanying list of all activities provides specific details and some photos of these guided tours and other field trips, all associated with nature in some ways, such as those to the Houston Botanic Garden and to a large park in West Houston for a bird walk. However, these are also sites shaped by

cultural values and designs. The list also describes ARRUF Zoom or hybrid meetings, some featuring distinguished Rice personnel such as Undergraduate Dean Bridget Gorman, Civil and Environmental Engineering Professor Jim Blackburn, and Paula DesRoches. These meetings are accessible to retired faculty living outside of Houston or otherwise unable to come to the Rice campus at designated times. Also included are in-person activities to encourage collegiality such as the holiday party, shared lunches at the Faculty Club and meals on field trips, and the reception in April to welcome newly retired faculty members.

Membership, Budget, and Communication. The Membership Committee continues to update member information and make communication with members more efficient. It is now using electronic group greeting card methods to send condolences to the families of members who pass away and to those who have lost spouses or partners. Individual members can add their own condolences to the card.

The Budget Committee estimates that ARRUF's account will have a balance of approximately \$16,000 on June 30, 2023, based on actual and estimated future expenses of \$9600 for this fiscal year's activities. Had not member Karin Broker offered her studio for the holiday party and provided much of the food, expenses could have reached ARRUF's allotment of \$10,000.

Depending on the results of the ongoing strategic planning process, ARRUF will continue to need the Provost's staff's assistance in administering its affairs, especially help with communication and the design of the ARRUF website. Timely information about activities and communication with members drastically affect ARRUF's abilities to implement plans and attract members to programs. The advice and skill of Ms. Lena McCarver and Dr. Devon Jones were crucial during the pandemic and as we returned to full activity in 2022-2023. We compliment them and thank them for their assistance.

Next Year. ARRUF expects to streamline and focus its programs to take advantage of in-person meetings and more frequent events for the informal interest groups on Travel, Nature, and Culture. Some activities will be offered on ZOOM to engage distant members. We expect that speakers who can address the effects of an aging population on Houston's communities will be included. ARRUF directors intend to urge members to participate in the provost's strategic planning survey and to offer suggestions on Houston's future as a desirable location for older adults of various cultural groups. Interaction with the Faculty Senate and Human Resources will resume. Planning also will begin for additional communication activities and for a security solution to allow Members more convenient access to ARRUF's room 412 in Fondren Library.

Activities Committee Report 2022-2023

Co-Chairs: Clarence Miller and Linda Driskill

Members: Victoria Arbizu-Sabater, Alfonso DuLuc, John Olson, Hiroko Sato

Some of ARRUF's activities in 2022-2023 were specially chosen to increase members' familiarity with cultures of Houston's major racial/ethnic communities: Black, Asian, Hispanic, and Anglo. These four communities will soon have comparable size, a situation likely to develop in other US cities, as discussed by ARRUF member Steve Klineberg in *Prophetic City: Houston on the Cusp of a Changing America*. Future increases in numbers and percentages of older adults in these Houston communities and their interactions will strongly affect Houston's success in being a longevity magnet. ARRUF intends to increase public awareness of these coming changes and perhaps play a role in designing the response.

Because most current Rice retired faculty are Anglo, ARRUF activities featured the other three communities: guided tours of the Houston Buffalo Soldiers Museum, the Japanese Garden in Hermann Park, and the exhibit "Golden Worlds: The Portable Universe of Indigenous Colombia" at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston. Moreover, the Houston Farmers' Market visited on the October fieldtrip is located in a Hispanic neighborhood, and most of the vendors are Hispanic. (See descriptions in the activities list.)

Several other activities in Zoom or hybrid format benefitted retired faculty not living in the Houston area or those not able to come to the Rice campus at the designated times. Three of these featured important Rice figures: Civil and Environmental Engineering's Jim Blackburn and Dean of Undergraduates Bridget Gorman in the fall and Paula DesRoches in the spring. Dean Gorman's talk complemented last year's talk on international undergraduate and graduate students at Rice by Associate Vice Provost for International Education Dr. Adria Baker.

Other in-person activities encouraged collegiality among members, another important ARRUF objective. Most newly retired faculty do not know well many of their colleagues from other fields. The pandemic also hindered development of collegiality. A few activities were purely social in nature, such as the holiday party and ARRUF lunches at the Faculty Club, and most visits to cultural sites included lunch.

Nature and the arts, topics of two of ARRUF's special-interest groups, were central to several activities. The February bird walk led by ARRUF member Mark Kulstad and the tours of the Houston Botanic Garden and the Japanese Garden in Hermann Park emphasized both nature and culture's effects, as did the visit to the Museum of Fine Arts and attendance at ARRUF member Karin Broker's solo art exhibition "My Circus." A Zoom presentation on Galveston Bay's birds featured Professor Jim Blackburn's poetry and Isabelle Chapman's paintings. Blackburn also talked briefly about a proposal on comprehensive coastal sustainability.

Finally, in April President DesRoches and Provost Dittmar honored each retiring faculty member, and a conversation with former Presidential Science Adviser and ARRUF member Neal Lane preceded a lively reception at Rice's Welcome Center.

August 2022 – on ZOOM SUMMER POETRY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING: Creative, Intellectual Connections

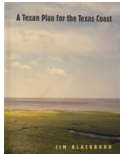


Creativity can untangle the toughest knots.

Members were advised to lean back as if in a kayak to catch the vibes of a coastal summer day. Sensory immersion, our speakers contended, leads to creative aesthetic, philosophic/spiritual, and engineering insights. First, from *BIRDS: A Collection of Verse and Vision*, Isabelle Chapman's charming, whimsical birds will ignite a connection in your spirit. Professor Jim Blackburn's poetry will deepen your empathy with them.



On the other hand, the logic of *A Texan Plan for the Texas Coast* offered a powerful and ingenious market solution to serious threats: Surprising ways the free market can restore protective grasses and benefit everyone and everything.



New voluntary connections between political and economic systems, ecology, and agribusiness with sustainability payoffs. Both speakers and books were inspiring.

September 2022 – on ZOOM

The Rice Undergraduate Experience



ARRUF members met on ZOOM to hear **Dr. Bridget Gorman, the Dean of Undergraduates**, discuss how the undergraduate experience at Rice has been

reshaped by the pandemic, the opening of new college facilities, and a new business major. However, the eager enthusiasm of first-year students continues to well up and is met with the leadership and energy of upper-class college members.

Bridget Gorman, Dean of Undergraduates and Professor of Sociology at Rice, has held a variety of leadership positions at Rice, including Department of Sociology Chair (2014-2018), Magister of Will Rice College (2011-2018), and Resident Associate of Jones College (2004-2008). She has served as Dean of Undergraduates since July of 2018.

September 2022 – Field Trip HOUSTON FARMERS' MARKET TOUR



Members toured the many market stands and explored the stunning variety of foods that are the basis of Houston taste specialties featured on *No Passport Required* and other TV shows. Displays emphasized abundance, garden sourcing, and affordability; Hispanic medicinal herbs were featured. The menu at the market's "burger joint," illustrated sustainability and convenience.



Karin Broker's Exhibition: My Circus



ARRUF Members attended Karin Broker's 7th solo exhibition. Although known for her inspirational teaching and the Rice Print Gallery, Broker's

exhibition assembled a group of "found object collages," figures that expressed complex relationships between individuals and their social and political context.

Although some figures signaled the woman's helplessness or lack of agency, others showed how the figure was implicated in a military, colonial, or repressive culture. The ability of artists to convey both intentionally laudatory and critical perspectives deterred members from quick reactions.

Members returned to the Faculty Club for lunch and discussion. The fall field trips elicited reflections on the ways that intention may be misunderstood because of differences in cultural backgrounds and combinations of features from multiple cultures.

Hypothesis: Experiencing another group's sensory and aesthetic standards desensitizes one to feelings of difference.

November 2022

Lecture and Tour of “Golden Worlds: The Portable Universe of Indigenous Colombia”



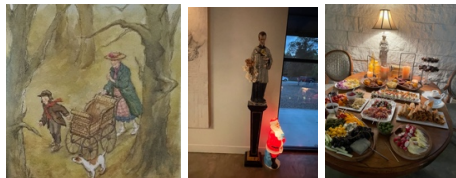
The Museum of Fine Arts Houston

ARRUF continued to explore Houston’s remarkable ethnic diversity as a context for longevity. Members were guided through the exhibition by the curator, followed by lunch at the museum’s *Cafe Leonelli*.

The webtext explained: “*Golden Worlds: The Portable Universe of Indigenous Colombia*” showcases the diversity and brilliance of ancient Colombian cultures. The exhibition reframes the approach to ancient Colombian art and invites visitors into a cultural dialogue that spans both space and time.

With the European conquest, Indigenous cultures and knowledge—based on millennia of intellectual efforts—were largely cast aside. By drawing heavily on the involvement of contemporary Indigenous collaborators, *Golden Worlds* infuses these stunning works with life, meaning, and relevance for today and the future.”

December 2022



Truman Capote’s *A Christmas Memory*; Also, a Party at Karin Broker’s Studio

Reading Magic: Capote’s tender memoir is a tribute to FRIENDSHIP and the ways it bolsters us forever, wherever life takes us. The lines came alive in our colleagues’ voices.

Art Party: Hosted by new member Karin Broker at her gloriously renovated STUDIO. The event included light bites, music, and fun (and Karin has a fabulous tree that inspires carols). This is a setting we’ve never seen before—worth a trip! Moreover, Karin’s re-design of this studio won a design award!

January 2023 – on ZOOM

The Role of Occupational Health in Mitigating Risk during Communicable Disease Outbreaks



The speaker, **Paula Gilmer DesRoches**, is a leader in occupational health. Often referred to as “employee health,” occupational health plays an essential role in mitigating the risk of infectious and communicable diseases to employees, patients and to the organization, particularly in healthcare environments.

The Occupational Health response was tested and demonstrated during the COVID pandemic in 2020 and the Ebola outbreak in 2014. The Houston Methodist COVID pandemic response, including the roll out of the COVID vaccination program and mandate, was highlighted in this presentation. Research techniques used in occupational health are now bolstering other group techniques to better understand patient compliance in ethnic and industrial communities.

Lunch at the faculty club followed the presentation.

February 2023

Field Trip to the Houston Buffalo Soldiers Museum



Black Americans have fought in all U.S. wars, including the Revolutionary War, but they also have been active leaders, inventors, and performers in other roles and occupations. Houston’s Buffalo Soldiers’ Museum has documented many of these celebrated contributions, which are on display in the museum’s exhibits. As programs such as “Finding Your Roots” (TV series) demonstrate, Americans’ racial history is fascinating, complex, and harrowing. The Buffalo Soldiers Museum is an example of a civic institution whose existence was spearheaded by one man, and it provides Black citizens with evidence of accomplishments and previously unknown history.

The image above, "Redoubtable.jpg," is in the collection of the University of Central Florida. Permission requested.

The Nature Group's February Bird Walk



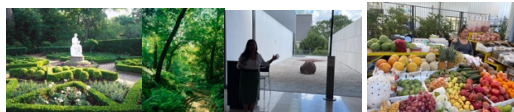
The Nature Group, led by Professor Emeritus Mark Kulstad, traded photo tips for recording some of the most impressive water birds (and other kinds of birds) present in the Greater Houston Area, and they photographed migrating birds resting at Bishop Fiorenza Park, a flood-control water site, gracefully landscaped. The brisk weather lured many birds to shelter in the small islands' thickets. (Members coped with hot cider and cookies.)

March 2023

Lecture, Tour of the Houston Botanic Garden

Houston now has its own botanic garden, where exploration, fun, and learning take place simultaneously. HBG offers an exciting, art-enhanced replication of many botanic settings. The lecture on the botanic garden's collections and its incorporation of large-scale sculpture made this lecture and tour appealing to both those interested in nature and those interested in art.

In the past several months, ARRUF has visited sites and gardens that reflect different cultural visions. The types of plants available foster different aesthetic uses and settings.



- √ Bayou Bend Gardens' classic azaleas and statuary
- √ The Asia Society Center's raked gravel garden and horizon pool
- √ Distinctive foods at the Houston Farmers' Market

The March 22nd ZOOM lecture on the Houston Botanic Garden helped members prepare for the March 29th tour; a box lunch picnic followed.

Members' photos from the visit:



April 2023

Reception for New Members



Rice University's president, provost, and associate provost addressed ARRUF's new members and welcomed them to their new university status. Neal Lane gave a "Fireside Chat" about his time at Rice, his retirement, and remaining a "civic scientist." The Welcome Center was the site for the introduction of new retirees and the lively reception that followed.

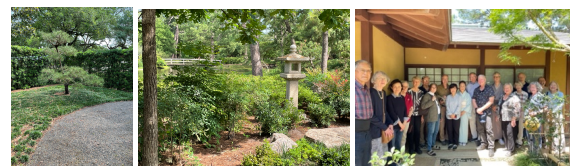
ARRUF members are finding several ways that participation enhances this new relationship to the university. Having the opportunity to get to know well outstanding scholars and researchers who were outside of one's department or school enriches life with new friendships. Conversations over lunch, discussions, and joint projects can do even more: they stimulate multidisciplinary thinking, seeing a topic or event from a somewhat different viewpoint, perhaps historical, statistical, industrial, or cultural.

In those more complex perspectives, new solutions and possibilities emerge. As Jim Blackburn and Isabelle Chapman had urged in their summer presentation on "A Texan Plan for the Texas Coast," it is possible to link free market mechanisms, profits, sustainability, bird habitats, and aesthetic harmony. Can we be equally creative with cultures and aging?

May 2023

Japanese Garden Tour and Tea Ceremony

The final trip, arranged by the Houston Parks Department, took members to the Japanese Garden in Hermann Park. Led by a horticulturist, the tranquil walk was enhanced with a tea ceremony demonstration by the Japan America Society of Houston. Both the garden tour and ceremony emphasized the philosophical principles of intentional looking, experiencing, and appreciating transient beauty.



Membership Committee Report 2022-2023

Chair: Thad Logan

This year Thad Logan again chaired the membership committee. Our primary responsibilities are to maintain an accurate database of contact information for officially designated Rice retirees, who are automatically members of ARRUF upon their retirement, and to be sure that retirees are informed about the existence, goals and activities of ARRUF.

We maintain a membership roster in the form of an Excel file, including the most recent contact information available for our members. Each year we add those who officially retire in December or in June, based on information we receive from the university. We also maintain and update a list of members in a MailChimp account. This ensures that we can quickly and efficiently communicate with all those who want to receive our messages. The past year has brought us more familiarity with the system so we can best adapt it to our specific purposes.

Letters regarding membership go out several times a year through MailChimp. In the fall we welcome everyone to the new academic year at Rice and remind them that ARRUF exists to provide useful information to the newly retired, to foster continuing collegiality across academic disciplines, and to offer both online and in-person opportunities to gather for presentations, discussions, and explorations of the Houston scene. As new retirees join us, we contact them and ask their permission to add them to our mailing list. Emails go out again in the spring from the membership committee, reminding members to update their contact information. This year, we are adding a dedicated list of spouses and partners to the email system so that they can individually receive invitations to and information about ARRUF events.

We have gained experience using Group Greeting in synch with MailChimp to send condolences to the family of members who pass away, or to those who have lost spouses or partners. The system allows for former friends and colleagues to add their names or a personal message to the card simply by clicking a link in an email message. This is one more way that we seek to further and sustain connections among our members, and to honor those who have served the Rice community.

ARRUF is grateful for the commitment of time and staff on the part of the Office of the Provost and Vice Provost for Academic Affairs: Celeste Boudreaux, Lena McCarver, and Devon Jones supply the expertise that we need to do the best possible job of managing our database and our communications with ARRUF members.

Budget Committee Report 2022-2023

Chair: Bart Sinclair

ARRUF began FY2023 with a balance of nearly \$14,000, with about \$2,000 in expenses charged in FY2022 still to be paid. Expenses incurred and estimated for FY2023 are below initial expectations. This situation is due in part to a significantly smaller expense for the 2022 holiday party. Also, we had plans to hire a student to assist the Communications Director in website design and implementation but decided to put this hiring on hold, after a review of the qualifications of the initial applicants for the position. We expect to make employing a website designer a priority in FY2024.

Starting balance	\$13,862.06
Income	
Annual support from Provost	\$10,000.00
Supplement for FY22 reception	\$2,000.00
Expenses as of 3/31/23*	\$3,793.58
Expenses for 4/1/23-6/31/23	
Reception for new members**	\$5,381.36
Japanese Garden Tour and Tea Ceremony**	\$400.00
Projected ending balance	\$16,287.12

* \$1,950 in expenses incurred in FY22 but not paid until July 2022.

** Estimated

Expenses for the holiday party in December 2022 at Karin Broker's house/studio were much less than for previous holiday socials because she generously donated the use of her space and prepared the food for the event. The expenses for the reception for new members should be accurate, except setup & cleanup charges and floral arrangements costs, which are still estimates.