

**JUNE 2025**



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## ***President's Message***

The June Monday Night Dinner was the trifecta of perfection: Great attendance, a wonderful meal, and a very informative program given by Dr. Chris Francisco, who serves as the Senior Vice Provost in the Division of Academic Affairs at OSU. Additionally, he is a professor of Mathematics. The program emphasized some new changes concerning the General Education components of the OSU undergraduate degree plans.

The major change Dr. Francisco discussed is that new options, called "trails," can voluntarily be obtained to fulfill the General Education requirements of the undergraduate degree. Trails are comprised of general education courses from all the colleges but have a specific theme, such as food insecurity or critical thinking. Currently, there are about 8 different trails with more being developed. For example, for food insecurity, one might take a basic nutrition course from the College of Education and Human Sciences and then a food and insect course from the Ferguson College of Agriculture, along with a course from the Spears School of Business. The innovative plan offers students a wider picture of how the world operates and the connection between the various courses.

Having been an academic advisor in the College of Arts & Sciences in a "former life," I was thrilled to see these changes being made. Students can receive a trails certificate designation on their transcript. I think we should be very proud that OSU is on the cutting edge of preparing its students for the changing world.

During the months of July and August, we will again be having social meetings at the Hideaway. No business, no speakers, purely social. Additional information about these two events follows on the next page.

We will continue to assist with hospitality this fall at the Alumni Center during home football games. We generally need two persons during each game, and there is a reserved parking space for us. If you are interested in helping, please contact Joyce Sherrer at [joyce.sherrer@okstate.edu](mailto:joyce.sherrer@okstate.edu).

Best and Go Pokes!

Carolyn

## ***Content Added to Emeriti Web Page Since Last Newsletter***

Marlene Walker [Obituary](#)

## Committees and Groups

### Ambassadors

Joyce Sherrer

### Archives/Historian

Barbara Miller

### Benefits

Jim Houston

### Catering and

#### Reservations

Bob LeValley

### Communications

Zane Quible

### Directory

Zane Quible

### Faculty Council

Tom Royer

### Finance

Liz Tarbutton and

Carolyn Gang

### Investment Club

Ron Elliott and

Ray Huhnke

### Meet and Greet

Joe Williams

Sue Williams

### Membership

Mike Lorenz

### Name Tags

Mike Lorenz

### Newsletter

Zane Quible

### Nominations

Mike Woods and

Carolyn Gang

### Tours and Travel

Cathy Shuffield

### Web Site

Zane Quible

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The Emeriti Association was founded in 1988 by the following individuals:

Robert Hendrickson

Jean Agnew

Dick Jungers

Kenneth McCollom

## ***Emeriti Association's Upcoming Programs***

Gary Clark, Vice President--Activities, has confirmed several programs for the remainder of 2025, including the following:

September 8 Prof. Jamey Jacob—*From Sand to Stars, the Present and Future of Drones in Warfare, Commerce, and Exploration*

October 6 Tracy Caine—*OSU's Oral History Program*

November 3 Dr. Robert Graalman—*OSU's Role in the World War II Japanese Language School; ROTC Cadets—Experiences as an ROTC Cadet*

December 1 Stillwater High School Choir—*Holiday Program*

## ***Upcoming Emeriti Association Summer Gatherings***

Once again, the Emeriti Association is hosting summer gatherings on Monday, July 7 and on Monday, August 4.

Following is the pertinent information:

6:00 pm at Hideaway Pizza

(There is no planned program--just Good Food and Relaxing Conversation)

Menu: Salad, Multiple Topping Pizza Buffet and Drinks.  
Gluten-free pizzas can be available. Please indicate preferred pizza topping.

**Watch your email for information regarding RSVP dates. Reservations will be required as always in order for Hideaway to plan the buffet!**

Cost of the dinner: \$11.20 (pay at Hideaway)

## ***Meet the Emeriti Association's Vice President—Activities, Gary Clark***

Gary Clark was born in a shotgun house on the banks of Crooked Creek near Flippin, AR. As an 18-month-old child, he moved with his mother to Okmulgee, OK. Although they did not have much, she always made sure he had enough to eat and clothes to wear even when that meant having him live with her sister and her family until he started grade school.

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Gary's mother remarried when he was seven, and they moved to Morris, OK, where Gary would graduate as co-valedictorian of a class of 20 (barely finishing in the top ten percent). In high school, Gary was active in all sports (they needed the bodies), but the life-changer was becoming involved with FFA. His Vo Ag instructor, Bill Bearden, Sr., motivated him to really apply himself in something other than sports. He had been coasting. Mr. Bearden took students in his own car around the state to land judging, public speaking, parliamentary procedure, or farm shop contests. Along with the other students, Gary learned many new skills preparing to compete successfully.

Hoping to have the impact on young students that his Ag teacher had on him, Gary enrolled at OSU, majoring in Agriculture Education. He worked as a manager of the football team for two years. Joining Alpha Gamma Rho as a sophomore was another life-altering experience for him. After graduating as a Top Ten Senior in 1969, Gary took the ag teaching job in Laverne, OK. While there, he convinced Jane Wilder, a Tulsa native he met at OSU, to marry him and move to a small town about the same size as her high school.

Shortly thereafter, Gary was drafted into the Army. Instead of Viet Nam, Gary was stationed in Germany where Jane was able to join him. They travelled some 20,000 miles throughout most of Western Europe sleeping in pup tents, their small car, or rented rooms in homes along the way. It was literally "Europe on \$5 a Day".

Upon being discharged from the Army, Gary returned to OSU to finish his master's degree. He then attended the University of Texas Law School; and after graduation with honors in 1975, he began a 30-year legal career in private practice in Tulsa, OK. Most importantly, not long thereafter Gary and Jane welcomed their son, Ross, and daughter, Lauren, who have made them very proud. In 1993, Gary was fortunate to be appointed as a Regent for OSU and the A&M colleges. In 2002, he served as President of the Oklahoma Bar Association.

In 2004, Gary was recruited to become the first in-house general counsel for the Oklahoma State University Foundation. As Vice President and General Counsel, Gary was able to use his general legal experience as well as his specific background in estate planning to deal with a variety of legal questions and assist donors with planned gifts for the benefit of OSU.

In 2005, the university determined that it should acquire approximately 80 acres of land on the north side of campus to be used for the creation of an Athletic Village, a variety of athletic venues. A firm that was accustomed to acquiring rights of way was brought in to accomplish the task. Unfortunately, their approach created a great deal of animosity toward the university. To get a fresh start, a decision was made to have Gary take over the project. Over the next year and a half, Gary worked many 10-to-14-hour days negotiating with 175 different owners to acquire approximately 275 parcels of land. Ultimately, he was able to acquire all of the properties through mutually acceptable agreements, except one that required an eminent domain proceeding.

After Burns Hargis was selected to become the next President of Oklahoma State University in December 2008, he recruited Gary to work with him in the president's office. Gary has nothing but fond memories of working with Burns, who was as intelligent, witty,

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and ethical behind the scenes as he was in public. Gary 's responsibilities were a combination of legal advisor, chief of staff, and troubleshooter. He looked forward to going to work every morning (well, almost every morning).

Gary retired in July 2021, as Senior Vice President and General Counsel for OSU. Jane would say that Gary has not really retired since he is involved in several community activities. He serves as a member of the Board of Trustees of Stillwater Medical Center Authority, the committee working to build a new YMCA in Stillwater, the Stillwater transportation tax advisory committee, the Washington School Advisory Committee, and the Council of the Emeriti Association.

He enjoys time with family and friends, OSU sports, and fishing.



