

The Old Apple Tree



*East Ohio Conference Retirees Association
Winter 2023*

2022 Retiree Gathering



A big THANK YOU to all the retirees, spouses, and surviving spouses who attended the 2022 Retiree Gathering and Annual Meeting at Ashland University on October 6. There were 120 persons in attendance to enjoy a wonderful meal, great fellowship, and a musical program provided by Ryan Shreve and Caroline Grace Williams from Ashland First UMC. During the business meeting it was decided to donate \$1,080 to the Central Conference Pension Fund and \$1,000 to UMCOR for the Ian Hurricane Relief. Officers elected for the 2022-23 year are President – Paul White; Vice President – Pam Monteith; Secretary – Mary Platt; and Treasurer – David Mansperger.



A Note About Disaffiliation

Bishop Malone wishes to remind all churches and clergy they may find information on the process from disaffiliating from The United Methodist Church on the conference website under [View the EOC Disaffiliation Pathway resource](#).

Health Care Information

Just a reminder ... for all our EOC Retirees who are currently on the United Healthcare Medical Advantage Plan through the Conference... you will always be automatically enrolled each year. No need to fill out any paperwork!! Unless you plan to move away from our Retiree Plan, you can throw all those informational pieces for Medicare away. We love providing a friendly transition each year to our wonderful retirees!

In addition, if you are interested in dental coverage, the Benefits Office can provide you with an informational piece for that benefit. It is through MetLife, and you would need to contact them directly to enroll. Let them know you are a member of the East Ohio Conference. The cost would then be between you and MetLife. It will not be included with your regular monthly premium.

If you have any questions or concerns about any of your healthcare benefits, please call Robin Whitacre at (330) 499-3972, Ext. 151.

We hope you all have had a Blessed Christmas Season!

Connections

We tell each other our hobbies, new ventures, and many ways of serving Christ within and beyond “appointment” ministries. We may be retired, but we are still alive in Christ and active in the church and in the world. We also ask for prayer in the challenges of elder years.

Canal Cluster

By Martha Baillis
kmbaillis@outlook.com

Canal District is still looking for a meeting place to call home. For years we met at the Waterloo Restaurant in the south part of Akron for breakfast and visiting. It was easy to get to it from the interstates and freeway but when the pandemic hit, and they were closed for a while. They did some remodeling,

and we lost the "back room" where we met and there was no place we could have our programs and worship time together. So, this is a plea to any retirees in the Canal District – if you know of a restaurant in the Canal District area that would have a place we could meet on a regular basis for breakfast let me know and I'll pass it on to the powers that be. Until then you will have to email me your news since I stick pretty

much close to home. (Email: kmbaillis@outlook.com).

Stan & Carol Wallace have had a wonderful last half of the year. Carol visited their daughter and granddaughter in New York City in the summer. Granddaughter Chloe will graduate this coming Spring from Parson's School of Design and has already sold designs she made at the shop where she works part-time. Later in the summer, son Scott, and his

wife and 6-foot high school twins visited from Seattle. Cedar Point is always a "must" when they come. Stan's sister, Carol and Jim, spent three days with the Wallaces at Thanksgiving. Dinner at the Galaxy meant no cooking, no cleanup and more time to catch up since before the pandemic. Several concerts including a brass band and a Men's and a Women's Barbershop Chorus made a pleasant ending to the holiday season.

Martha Baillis made several trips to Illinois this summer to visit her daughter Ellen's family. Each time she traveled straight thru because her dog, Missy, was with her. Quick restroom breaks, drive-thrus and detours were the name of the game. In June her daughter-in-law, Connie was with her because they were going for Martha's granddaughter's bridal shower. In July it was for the wedding, and she spent extra time with Ellen after the wedding. Ellen's family has enlarged since last year. Last December, just before Christmas break at school, she and Joe became foster parents to an eighth-grade girl. It was to be a temporary thing, but as fate would have it, she is still with them, and she is just one more of my grands. In the spring Ellen became a foster dog mother too. Martha's grand dog, Ruby, is a golden

doodle and needed a temporary home from the kennel where she was bred until it was time for her to have her puppies. The puppies, all seven of them, were born in late August. The puppies have all gone to good homes and Ruby is back with Ellen's family. Ellen and three of her kids came to spend the week before Thanksgiving with Martha, and Andrew and his family spent as much time with them as possible. Joe could not make it because he had to work at the hospital where he has been for about 22 years. Martha is looking forward to having them altogether with her place as grand central between Christmas and New Year's including the newly-weds. When Martha is not traveling she keeps busy as Finance Chair and as a member of SPRC. Then from October – December, she helps with the community Christmas food basket program which is headed by a person from her church and shared by multiple churches. This program has been going on for about 45 to 50 years since the Community Chest disbanded.

Sign outside Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) , Wood-ward, IA:

"I finally got it all together and now I forgot where I put it."

– via Rev. Dale Schoening
Madrid, IA

Firelands Cluster

By Clark & Pat Hogue

Cphogue69@aol.com

Bruce Kent & Peg Finnegan

exchanged vows on September 11 at the LaPointe UMC. Bruce has been serving LaPointe for 4 1/2 years. Later that week they traveled to Spokane, WA, Yakima, WA, and Seaside, OR for a family gathering. Bruce's brother's ashes were scattered on the beach at Seaside. Mark passed on to his glory Dec. 19, 2021. Bruce and Peg are making their home at Nugents Canal near Port Clinton.

Clarke & Pat Hogue - Our only news (besides Clarke's many doctor appts.) is that we couldn't use our "timeshare" at Captiva Island in Florida last month because of Hurricane Ian going through that area in October. We haven't had a vacation or been out of the northern part of Ohio for over a year.

Mahoning Valley Cluster

By Ken Kubichek

kubikasa@live.com

Peggy Ferrell reports our family is doing well. Melissa, Melinda, and Ann were here

from July 1st through Charlie's death on Aug. 11th and stayed a couple of weeks beyond. Ann and Melinda have returned home, so Melissa and I will continue living here together. It brought all of us great satisfaction to have cared for Charlie at home with the help of Hospice since February. Hospice brings in a lot of equipment and supplies. Nurses and Nursing Assistants come briefly once or twice a week to check vitals and give advice, etc. Their experience and whole range of support are most helpful. The 24/7 care was our responsibility. It took all four of us, but we gave him the best care possible, and he did his best, too. This, plus sharing our faith together with his faith, made the experience positive and loving, for him and for us. At age 97+, Charlie's physical body was gradually giving out. His soul (with which I fell in love over 68 years ago) was in excellent shape! He was still writing for some publications at age 90 and at 95 performed his last wedding, here at our house for our granddaughter, Emily and her husband Jonathan, with most attendees watching via Zoom due to Covid. He lived a long life full of serving God and others with his wonderfully loving and caring personality plus many talents. Neither he nor we have any regrets. Charlie's body was donated to the medical school at the University of Arizona.

Fortunately, all three daughters were here when I unexpectedly tripped and fell on July 4th and broke my Femur. It turned out to be a blessing for in doing CT scans in the hospital for that, a lemon size cancerous mass in my colon was discovered, even though I had no symptoms. I had two operations within six days. The good news is the leg/hip are doing well. The removal of 1/3 of my colon also removed all of the stage 2 cancer. The 27 lymph nodes removed in the same operation had no cancer, so I don't need chemo. I returned home from the hospitalization on August 1st, in time to have those last days with Charlie and our girls. Our daughters did a fantastic job of caring for both of us. Now I'm in out-patient physical therapy twice a week and getting better every day. God has once again given Charlie, the girls, and me all that we needed. Amazing!

Ken Kubichek reports he and his wife, **Jean**, grew up in Lakewood across the street from the parsonage when Charlie and Peggy Ferrell were at the Detroit Avenue Church and Charlie Ferrell united us together in marriage in 1970.

Our Mahoning Valley group of retirees and spouses got together for breakfast in August, September and October with six to eight

present each time. Attending one or more of these gatherings were **Dick Smith, John Wolfe, Curt & Carol Miller, James Greenawalt, Tom & Jean McFarren, George & Trudy Lee, David Hill**, and **Ken Kubichek**. We talked about how the church is different after the pandemic. One person noted that the term "social distancing" was a poor choice, because we are still social creatures; the term "physical distancing" would have been more accurate. We talked about the pros and cons of having worship services on Facebook and how some people are afraid of talking to other people now.

In September, the New Hope UMC in Niles had a fund raiser for Ukraine. **Russ Adams** led a nice service in memory of **Kay Dunlap** on September 26 at Church Hill UMC. **George Lee** spent three days in the hospital in October with COVID 19, even though he was fully vaccinated.

Three Rivers Cluster

By Martha Stuller
mlstuller@gmail.com

The Three Rivers group has been meeting monthly, and at our December meeting it was discovered that several couples are celebrating anni-

versaries during the holiday season and January.

Tom & Donna Orr celebrated 59 years of marriage at the end of November. They are living in Ashtabula, so they are with us in spirit only. We miss them.

We also miss **Jim & Bonnie Magaw** who live in Yellow Springs. They have celebrated Jim's 90th birthday and their granddaughter's marriage to Sam Reich. and they have grieved the loss of Jim's brother, Don, and Bonnie's oldest brother, Ken.

Bonnie and Jim have been re-reading some of Robert Fulghum's books and have just completed his popular *All I Really Need to Know, I Learned in Kindergarten*. His book closes with a Mother Teresa story. He was present in Oslo during Advent of 1980 when she received the Nobel peace prize. A King gave her this award in the presence of some of the world's great scholars and "important" people in formal dress. She was but a plain person in simple dress, tending to the sick and dying in India.

Fulghum closes his book with this: "Peace is not something you *wish* for; it's something you *make*, something you do, something you *are*, and something you *give away*."

Mother Teresa--a woman who changed the world by single-mindedly being who she was. May we be blessed to walk in her footsteps.

Paul & Dolores Gerycz are celebrating their 65th wedding anniversary on January 26. Paul and Dolores grew up in Glover, Pennsylvania – a small mining town. When Paul, age 12, went to a ball game in Jr. High and saw cheer leader, Dolores, age 11, he knew he wanted to marry her.

Dale & Becky Sutton are celebrating their 43rd anniversary New Year's Eve. They continue to enjoy their retirement at Apple Valley and now able to travel, which has included a wonderful week on Emerald Isle, North Carolina at the end of the summer with 17 members of their immediate family. They plan to travel south at the end of January but no definite plans yet. In addition to travels and helping out with grandkids, Dale has filled the pulpit on various occasions.

Dairel & Cindy Kaiser celebrated their 48th anniversary on Dec. 20. Dairel is finishing a co-interim pastorate with Rev. Carl Shaefer at the Conesville/New Moscow charge. It has been filled with many joys and sorrows for the church family.

Several couples shared heart felt stories of meeting and falling in love with their spouses.

In other news, **Bob Alexander** has been pastoring the South Vernon UMC and is retiring (again) at the end of the 2022 year.

Dick Hoover's museum, A Century of Toys 1860 to 1960 in Roscoe Village is still open on Saturday, noon to 3:30, and by appointment. This museum represents Dick's collection over 50 years. It is a place that is well worth visiting. **Alice Hoover**, who researches and portrays historic women will appear in January at the Windsorwood Retirement Center in Coshocton as Lydia Brown. Lydia was the wife of an Old Roscoe brick maker and also a founder of the Roscoe UMC.

Gary & Joy Campbell were unable to attend our lunch in December as Joy is recovering from a complicated knee surgery involving revision and the discovery of a tibia fracture. She has had a long and painful recovery and has now completed physical therapy. Gary's grandson Sgt. 1st class Derek Haldeman (also a nephew of Martha Stuller) is a member of the US Army shooting team. In November, the team competed in the XIII CAT Championship in Lima, Peru where they

earned 44 medals and 20 US Olympic quotas for Paris 2024. Derek's specialty is international trap shooting, earning a bronze medal in Men's Trap in Lima.

Bob Stull, serving half time at the Amity UMC, now volunteers four days a week, a couple of hours a day at the Dan Emmett Elementary School in Mount Vernon where he attended as a child. He says he wants to pay them back for his misbehavior while he was there! He also wanted to serve there. The first year was cut short by Covid, but now he is happy to be back. He has a great teacher to work with, loves the kids and does whatever is needed to do. He says he would recommend it to anyone. Bob's wife **Ardyth** teaches in a school in Mansfield.

We always enjoy having **Bill McCartney and Dave & Beth Mansperger** from Mid-Ohio district join us regularly. They live in the Willow Brook at Delaware Run in Delaware. At that retirement community, they share preaching assignments for every 4th Sunday of the month.

Martha Stuller is traveling to her daughter and family in Toms River, NJ over the Christmas holidays.

I Choose the Church Again

Surrounded by darkness,
disaffiliation, and
endless war,
I choose the Church that God
will uphold until the
end of time;
A church that shares light and
love,
that opens doors to receive all
who will come,
and outward so we may go
out to light the world.

Jim Magaw, Sr, Christmas 2022

Copeland Oaks

By Beth McGuire

revbeth.mcquire@gmail.com

Shirley Sackett enjoyed a few days celebrating Thanksgiving with several family members at the home of her daughter, Bonnie, in Sugar creek, Ohio. With Covid restrictions easing up, she is happy to participate in many activities that are offered at Copeland Oaks. She volunteers in the library and the Thrift Shop. Both of these are wonderful places to meet and greet our neighbors from the many different areas on our campus. She plays Bingo and "Hand and Foot" card games, participates in the Book Club and Music Appreciation classes. She especially enjoys communicating on Facebook with

friends and family all over the world, and with many of her former students at Firestone Park Elementary School in Akron. She taught there for 19 years, and it is such fun to see pictures of their families and reminisce with them. Shirley remarks, "Life is good. Every day is a gift, and I'm so thankful to be living now at Copeland Oaks".

Jean Smith had a wonderful Thanksgiving. She was taken by two daughters and a son-in-law to Lakewood where her oldest daughter and son-in-law hosted the entire family. She had not seen her great grandchildren since pre-Covid. It was a wonderful time catching up. One highlight was the discussion of whether Jean's 16-year-old great grandson would be accepting a pro hockey team's bid to move to New England and be housed and schooled by them while playing for them. It has not been decided as of now. He has played hockey since age 3 at a rec. center and really wants to go pro. His sister is also a gymnast, so that family has been a traveling family for quite some time. Jean loves having them send reports and pictures and videos of all they are doing but misses the other greats since they moved to upper New York State a few months ago. Lately their pictures show snow. Glad it's not here. Last but not least is

the great grandchild who is a young musician and fencer in Kansas. His pictures and videos are just as interesting. Jean's youngest daughter and husband will be joining her and daughter Karen at Copeland soon. She can see a corner of their villa from her enclosed back porch so it will be easy to keep in touch. Jean still loves living here after almost 28 years. So much to enjoy.

Pauline Rough: [note from Beth McGuire] Pauline died 5-3-22. Her husband, Rev. Dale died 4-10-20. Pauline was a strong spirited individual who fiercely advocated for her husband. She was a role model for all of us and will be missed. Rest in peace.

Cora Lee Cox writes that despite still missing many aspects of active ministry, I am thoroughly enjoying retirement! Thanks to the saints of Union Avenue UMC, I have a wonderful 4-wheeled scooter that has greatly enhanced my ability to enjoy the Copeland Oaks community. In addition to making wonderful new friends, I am also richly blessed to be on the rotation schedule for teaching Bible Study here and will be leading vespers in January. I was privileged to perform a wedding at "Vermilion-on-the-Lake" on September 2 (a beautiful venue!) and am looking forward to traveling to

Clearwater, Florida to perform the wedding of one of our University of Mount Union alumni. The bride was active in our congregation's Oasis gathering (Union Avenue UMC) throughout her four years at the UMU. I continue to stay in good touch with my family in Minnesota, and overall, life is so very, very good. I am ineffably blessed. Thanks be to God!

Dorrine Burkhead: (With permission Beth McGuire shares Dorrine's update). Dorrine moved from catered living to assisted living due to complications of macular degeneration and a heart attack. She recently received a digital talking book player from the Ohio library for the blind and disabled. She chooses what books she desires, and they mail her a cassette. Her current cassette has eight books on it! When she is finished she mails it back with her next list. The player and cassettes are free. Dorrine's plans for Thanksgiving and Christmas are up in the air, depending on her daughter's health and work schedule. She misses our quarterly luncheons here on campus for all pastors and spouses, which ended due to COVID. While she also misses going to church in-person, she is able to worship with them via radio. Dorrine also takes advantage of Copeland's weekly vesper

services provided on campus both in-person and aired on our in-house TV channel. At the time of this newsletter Dorrine is recovering from a fall at Crandall Medical Center. Prayers for healing and encouragement are welcomed.

Because of healthcare issues **Grace Berlo** has moved from Copeland's Lakeshore apartments to independent catered living in the "Big House" a year ago and is "thriving well." She continues to play bridge weekly with seven other residents. Three years ago, twenty former youth group members and some of her family met at Camp Wanake to celebrate her 80th birthday. Ever since then she has continued to zoom with the youth group monthly. In addition to Ohio, they zoom in from Washington, Oregon, Nebraska, Missouri, and Kentucky. They have become an important part of her support system.

Carol Topping sends her hello to the UMC family! It's been quite a year for me. My dear John passed away from COVID in early December 2020. We had 55 good years together and he supported me in all my ventures! My health has been up and down for years, and this year was no exception. I had a fall in November 2021 and shattered my kneecap. Surgery was

required and I was on limited mobility. I am moving to Denver, Colorado to be closer to my son and his family, about 10 minutes away. I'll be living in a lovely senior community and enjoying meeting new friends and lots of activities. My new address is Parkside Retirement Resort, 1450 East Crestline Drive, Aurora, CO 80015. Beth McGuire reports at the time of this newsletter Carol left on a jet plane, as the song goes. We will miss Carol's many gifts and pray her new friends will benefit from them. Blessings to her and her new community

Sandy McLachlan is pleased that at last, Copeland Oaks is beginning to reopen after the pandemic! For the first time since the fall of 2019, Adventures in Learning was able to meet again. Copeland has a delightful program in conjunction with the University of Mount Union in which we invite a professor from Mount to come to Copeland for a series of 4 lectures. Entirely resident led, the program is self-supporting with participants paying for the lectures and the lecturer being reimbursed with an honorarium. It provides intellectual stimulation and an opportunity for residents to engage with experts in the field about a variety of topics. This year it was "Cold War 2.0: How did we get here?"

with Dr. Michael Grossman, Professor of International Affairs and National Security, sharing with us the background of the years after the fall of the Berlin wall and the end of the cold war and the differences in perspective from Washington and Moscow about how that cold war ended led to today's situation. Putin was the first world leader to contact President Bush after the 9/11 terrorist attack. How different the Russian-US relationship is today! Dr. Grossman concluded the series with the current Ukraine crisis and possible outcomes. We feel very fortunate to have this connection with Mount Union. Continuing to learn is such an important part of our ongoing quality of life! Plans Are underway for our Spring 2023 program.

Beth McGuire reports Iris Andrews, spouse of Rev. Dave, died 9-4-22. Among the many things she did for the Kin-dom, Iris was chair of the prayer chain here at Copeland Oaks. Her passing left a needed ministry unfilled, and I felt called to fill that gap. While it is impossible to fill her shoes, she was a role model on how to maintain a healthy prayer chain. I created guidelines and held a gathering where we used the UM hymnal to study six different prayer types via song (blessing, petition, confession,

thanksgiving, intercession, praise). We have added five more prayer warriors on the chain, bringing the total to 32. Not bad for a bunch of retirees! During the last pre-winter warm spell while I was riding my bike around campus, I felt called to utilize my skills as former Bereavement Director for 16 years at Hospice of Medina County and offer a Holiday Grief Workshop to residents. Nine people signed up and attended. Prayers to all who are actively grieving during this holiday time (and all year) - it can be rough but know you are not alone. Turns out there really is a "free lunch." Because of COVID, veterans and spouses cannot gather for lunch in the formal dining room. Not to be dissuaded, the staff delivered lunches to our door on Veterans Day. Sometimes it's the little things that matter. We were able to hold trick-or-treat for residents and employees' children and grandchildren this year, but it was held outside. The weather cooperated and it was great to have laughing children on campus again. The Villa Association Social Committee held an Oktoberfest complete with bratwurst, sauerkraut, potluck, entertainment, and yes, we even had beer! Maybe that's why it was so well attended and received. After the COVID pause we will finally hold our annual Christmas dinner this year. Cope-

land Oaks, like so many other senior living communities, continues to struggle with lingering COVID-related staff shortages, even though our cases have been low to zero. So, we held our dinner off campus at Almost Home in Sebring. We are already planning next year's social gatherings. Prayers for all who work with retirees and for the organizations who struggle with finding more qualified people to fill needed positions (direct care, dietary, house-keeping, maintenance, finance & activities, administration, etc.) We are looking forward to seeing my two sons, Jeremy and Steven, visiting us for Thanksgiving and Christmas. We will visit Dave's daughter, KayDee and hubby via live stream. They live in California and only come during the summer when it's warmer! She tested positive for COVID even though she is fully vaccinated, boosted and practices extreme caution. COVID doesn't care! Then she had unpleasant side effects from the Paxlovid treatment. All is well now. Son, Steven and girlfriend also contracted a mild case. Please stay safe everyone! And have a blessed holiday and new year.

After rescheduling a couple times due to kidney issues for **Kristin McKinley**, she and I met for our annual summer lunch while she was visiting

Ohio from her home in Arizona. When she returned home she underwent another surgery for her kidney. Then she and Russ contracted COVID. She is looking forward to a new year and relishes your prayers.

Tuscarawas Cluster

By Mel Lindberg
lindbergmw1@sbcglobal.net

Randy & Pam Monteith finally got to check off a special bucket list wish. Randy surprised Pam with their dream trip on Christmas 2019 through a "Wheel of Fortune" crossword letter/word game, played by Pam and adult children Alicia and Jeff, and daughter-in-law, Kim. The words included Paris, Berlin, Amsterdam, and Viking. The bonus question "what are you doing?" The answer: "Going to Oberammergau". Another surprise: Covid arrives, closing down travel! We finally set out in July 2022, traveling to France (yes, we hiked to the top of Mont St. Michel monastery, visited D-Day beaches, Paris, etc.). Then we traveled by train to Amsterdam where we boarded a Viking cruise up the Rhine River ending with the outstanding Passion Play, presented by the people of the village of Oberammergau. WOW!

The deadline for submitting materials to be included in the 2023 Spring Issue of TOAT is April 15, 2023. Submit materials to your cluster correspondent or to paulw2800@gmail.com

THE OLD APPLE TREE

**Compiled by reporters
from the East Ohio
Conference Retirees
Association**

Printed and mailed by the
Communications Department
of the East Ohio Conference of
The UM Church
Bishop Tracy S. Malone

Please send address changes to:
Communications Office
East Ohio Conference UMC
8800 Cleveland Ave. NW
North Canton, OH 44720
800-831-3972

If you are willing to receive future TOAT editions by email please notify paulw2800@gmail.com if you have not already done so.

The Old Apple Tree

East Ohio Conference UMC
PO Box 2800
North Canton, OH 44720



Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Canton, OH
Permit No. 391

Return Service Requested



Please keep in prayer the families of the following retirees who have entered the church triumphant since our last reporting September 1, 2022:

- Mary C. Tolbert**, *surviving spouse of Rev. Dr. Robert J. Tolbert*, died August 29.
- Leah Iris Andrews**, *spouse of Rev. David Andrews*, died September 4.
- Paul E. Froman**, *retired Elder*, died September 17.
- Ernest Edward Gardner**, *retired Associate Member*, died September 21.
- Catherine (Kay) Dunlap**, *retired Diaconal Minister*, died September 26.
- Clara Jackson**, *spouse of the Rev. John Jackson*, died September 30.
- Ruby Cunningham**, *retired Diaconal Minister and surviving spouse of the Rev. Earl Cunningham*, died Oct. 8.
- Joan Neth**, *spouse of retired Rev. Clarence E. Neth, Jr.*, died October 13.
- Glenn A. Taylor**, *retired Local Pastor*, died October 16.
- Donald E. LaFaber**, *retired Elder*, died October 18.
- C. Dwight Hayes**, *retired Elder*, died October 22.
- Roger S. Antolik**, *clergy spouse*, died November 3.
- Larry R. Black**, *retired Elder*, died November 11.
- Ellen Purchase**, *retired Elder*, died November 22.
- Marybelle H. Landrum**, *surviving spouse of the Rev. John H. Landrum*, died November 26.
- Sheryl Seitz**, *Elder*, died December 4.

(Please note that a family member should contact the bishop's office at time of a death. Send notices to Melissa McGee at mmcgee@eocumc.com.)