

The Old Apple Tree



*East Ohio Conference Retirees Association
Winter 2024*

2023 Retiree Gathering

A big THANK YOU to all the retirees, spouses, and surviving spouses who attended the 2023 Retiree Gathering and Annual Meeting at Ashland University on October 5. 125 persons made reservations and enjoyed a wonderful meal, great fellowship, and a musical program provided by “Old Enough to Know Better”. During the business meeting it was decided to donate funds collected from the reservations and any other donations to assist with the rebuilding of the Lahaina UMC in Maui, Hawaii. The total amount donated was \$755. Officers elected for the 2023-24 year are President – Paul White; Vice President – Pam Monteith; Secretary – Mary Platt; and Treasurer – David Mansperger.

Letter of Information from East Ohio Benefits Officer

Hi EOC Retirees!!

I hope your 2023 was a good and healthy one! Can you believe it’s 2024? Wow – where does the time go? I wanted to share with you some small design changes as well as some additional benefits Medicare does not cover, but UHC will in the new year.

Plan Design Updates:

There will be an increase in the Generic (Tier 1) Rx copay from \$5 to \$10. There will be an increase in the Rx Deductible from \$100 to \$150. These are the only changes in your UHC Advantage Plan for 2024. All other costs will remain the same. Also – if you are a 65 + year old retiree, your premium will not change in 2024; however, for those retirees who are still on HealthFlex, there will be an increase in premiums. If you need to know what that deduction will be at the end of each month, please give me a call at 330-499-3972, Ext. 151.

Additional Benefits for 2024:

Healthy at Home – a post discharge support program which will provide a combination of Meal Delivery, Transportation, and In-Home Personal care benefits to members.

HouseCalls – provides eligible members’ a yearly visit with a healthcare practitioner right in the privacy of your home!

Renew Active – UHC’s fitness benefit which provides a free gym membership at participating Renew Active locations.

Member Rewards and Incentives – Members can receive rewards for completing health-related activities, such as getting your annual physical or wellness visit or accepting a UnitedHealthcare HouseCalls visit in your home.

Virtual Medical and Behavioral Health Visits – UnitedHealthcare will continue to promote Virtual Visits to improve accessibility for members, which includes greater access to behavioral health specialists, and following up with members after medical events such as an emergency department visit or virtual house calls when an in-person visit is not appropriate.

Personal Emergency Response System (PERS) – Help is a button push away! The PERS device provides quick access to help in any emergency 24 hours a day. The PERS benefit provides member confidence and independence, while providing peace of mind to family members, friends & caregivers.

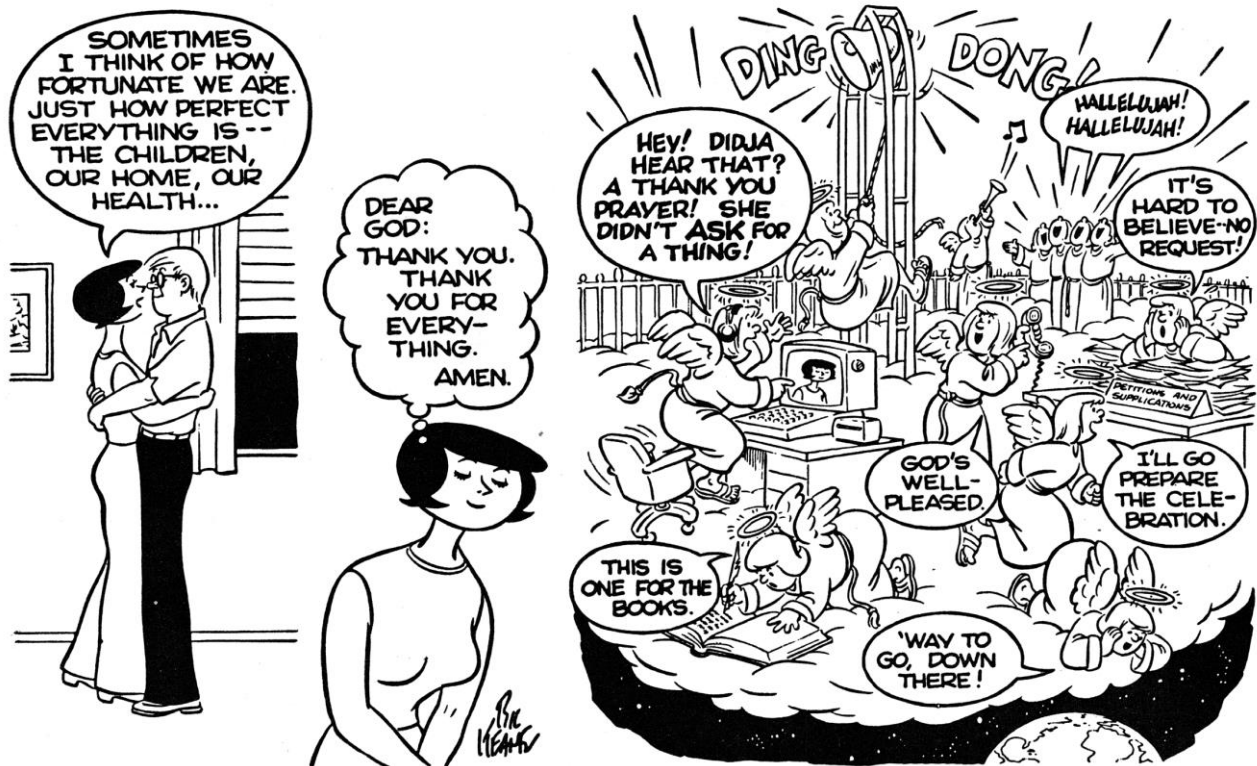
If you haven't already done so, please go to retiree.uhc.com and create an account to access all the wonderful benefits UHC has to offer.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!! Please give me a call anytime with any questions you may have! God Bless You All!

Robin Whitacre, Benefits Manager
330-499-3972, Ext. 151

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil and Jeff Keane



from JoyfulNoiseletter.com ©Bil & Jeff Keane Reprinted with permission

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

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Stan & Carol Wallace welcomed their son Scott and grand twins Jackson and Sarah Wallace for their annual trip from Seattle to Ohio in July. Highlight for the time is always 2 days at Cedar Point. The predicted weather held off until on the way home. Time also included lots of swimming, miniature golf, corn hole in the front yard and meals out and in. After granddaughter Chloe graduated from Parsons School of Design, she was waiting to hear if the designer that she had worked for part-time would hire her full-time. She didn't and there were no job offers, so she took a 6-week job teaching English in Madrid, Spain. Unfortunately, her smart phone was stolen and then her iPad and money were taken before she could get off the bus and claim them from under the bus. Upon returning home, jobs were more available, and she got a

job at HIS International as a Children's Clothing Production Associate Manager. She still lives in Brooklyn, but her mother, Beth Wade, moved to the Upper West Side of Manhattan, just a block from Central Park. In August, both Stan and Carol had high school class reunions. Stan's was more exciting with an Elvis impersonator. With kids on the coasts on Thanksgiving, they took their annual trip to the Galaxy Restaurant for their full course (to say the least) dinner which was good as always. Decorating for Christmas, 25 Santa Clauses decorate the house. They used to have as many as 69 angels put up in our 3-bedroom ranch, but one year Stan was returning them to the basement in a big tub and fell down the stairs. He was all right but not the ceramic angels. Thus, the change to Santa Clauses.

Don and Ruthie Trigg are both now retired although Don preaches at Seville on Sundays. October found them enjoying a week at Carolina Beach. Then Don's stepdad, Elwood (Woody) Albaugh of

South Bellaire UMC, now South Bellaire MC, passed away November 14th, and Don's mom, Elaine has moved in with them following his services so they can care for her. Ruthie says their dog loves this new arrangement because Elaine, who doesn't get around much, provides a constant lap for him.

Martha Baillis writes that Ken and I both retired in June of 2008. Ken from Hope UMC in Kenmore and I from Coventry Schools and moved to Rittman where our son and wife and grandsons lived. Ken had served Rittman UMC and when we moved on, our daughter was in college in Chicago and our son stayed on in Rittman and went to Wayne College. Ken had talked about moving to West Ohio since Andrew was still in Rittman working for the city and Ellen was married with 3 children and teaching in southeastern IL. Dayton area, we thought would be about halfway between, but the kids told us "NO! If either of you gets sick and needs us, we both have to travel to help you." We found

our house and bought it the year before we retired and spent our time off painting and buying some new furnishings and mowing grass and moving out season things from the parsonage to storage at our new house. In the fall of 2008 Ken and I started coming to District retiree meetings at the Waterloo and when the TOAT reporter wanted to give up the job, Ken volunteered me. It has been almost 15 years since I've had this job. The last few years have been hard because we lost our meeting room when the Waterloo was remodeled before reopening after COVID closed it. We haven't been able to find a place since to take its place. With the change in January to only four districts that are so widespread I know I won't be able to travel the district and I've been retired long enough that I don't know many of the new retirees making it hard to get much news from them. I told Paul White I didn't think I could keep doing this. But I know I won't be pestering all of you to let me know what's up even though I've enjoyed it. Thanks for your news and friendship. God bless!

Firelands Cluster

By Clark & Pat Hogue

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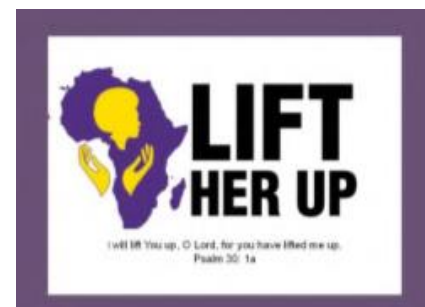
Bruce & Peg Kent: celebrated their 1st Anniversary on

Sept 11. They continue to live at Nugents Canal near Port Clinton. They traveled back to Pennsylvania last June to visit Peg's family. They both were inducted into the Ottawa County Senior Hall of Fame for the volunteer work with the Port Clinton Senior Center. Peg helps serving meals and Bruce offers a Bible Study at the Port Clinton Senior Center every Thursday and is President of the Site Council. They continue to serve as a pastoral couple at the LaPointe UMC, Maumee River District of the West Ohio Conference. The Congregation celebrated its 55th Anniversary in September. LaPointe is a great mission church having raised over \$3500 for missions above its apportionments in 2023. Our Congregation is truly a cross section of denominations: Methodist, Catholic, Baptist, Lutherans, and independents. We intentionally have evangelized retirees. We call our Church Family a Precious Metal Family: we are all in our Golden years, Silver Hair, and titanium parts. Bruce and Peg have been on a keto diet for the last 8 months. Together they have lost over 80 pounds. They plan to visit Bruce's family out west in 2024. Bruce maintains loyalty to the UMC and so the LaPointe Church family. Bruce came to Jesus in a UMC and sees no reason

to change. Blessings to all our friends across EOC.

Clarke & Pat Hogue report they were exposed to Covid at Henrietta's Christmas supper/program so we're mostly staying home until we see what "develops"; hopefully we won't miss out on many special holiday events!!

Bill McFadden traveled to New Rochelle, New York in September to officiate at his grandson's wedding. The new dorm for women at Africa University received students in January. Now that the dorm has been completed there are people still interested in supporting Africa University. Bill has initiated a program to raise money to bring 4 women from a refugee camp to enroll at Africa University. The program is called Lift Her Up. Online donations made be made to fund 9168 on the East Ohio Conference website or checks can be sent to the Conference marked fund 9168. Gifts of any size are appreciated. Contact Bill if you want more information.



Mid Ohio Cluster

By David Mansperger
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Blake & Gere Wagner have enjoyed five years in their Condo at Wedgewood Estates in Mansfield. Their neighbors include Rev. Jeannie and Carl Beighley; Rev. Gloria Loughman and Terry; Beverly Rose, surviving spouse of Rev. Alan Rose. Of course, we would include Dr. David and Betty Clymer. Blake and Gere celebrated twice two days apart in November. Brenton, a Certified Nurse Practitioner in Cleveland completed Graduate Study to become a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse and CNP. The next day his brother Brandon was awarded the advanced degree of Nurse Anesthesiologist at Lourdes University, Toledo. He will be working at Ohio Health Mansfield Hospital.

Three Rivers Cluster

By Martha Stuller
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Our group met in November at a Mexican Restaurant in Coshocton for lunch and then in December at the Thompson 99 restaurant, also in Coshocton.

It was good to have **Gary & Joy Campbell** in attendance as Gary has been recovering

from a fall and hospitalization with a brain injury. Joy is doing well after her knee surgery.

Dick Hoover recently gave a program at Windsorwood assisted living in Coshocton on the history of bells and then shared about 25 bells from his collection. **Alice** closed the program with the story of "Why the Chimes Rang", a wonderful Christmas story written by Raymond MacDonald Alden in 1909. Dick also composed the narrative for the annual Coshocton Choir Christmas concert. Alice recently portrayed Ruth, at the Walnut Hills Nursing Home. In the first chapter of Matthew, we have Jesus's genealogy. There are 14 generations from Abraham to King David. Ruth and Boaz were the great grandparents of King David. There were 14 more generations to Joseph, husband of Mary, parents of Jesus.

Jim & Bonnie Magaw have celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. They were married on Thanksgiving Day in their home church, the Stockade Methodist Church. Jim had about another month of classes to complete his college degree at Rio Grande College before Christmas, so they took a three-day Thanksgiving break to get married. He says they are doing well in assisted living in Yellow Springs, OH. Jim says

they still give thanks for so many of their ministerial colleagues throughout the years.

Dairel & Cindy Kaiser celebrated their 49th anniversary December 20th and **Dale & Becky Sutton** celebrated 44 years on New Years Eve.

Bill McCartney has recovered from his knee surgery.

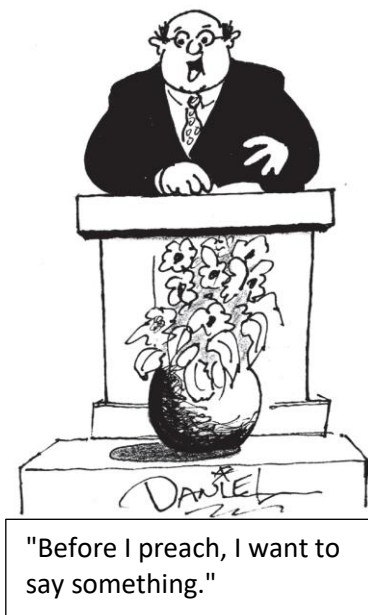
Bob Stull continues to volunteer in the grade school where he attended growing up. He is also involved in a prison ministry.

Gary & Lorraine George traveled to Houston TX for Christmas, to be with their youngest son and their 8 and 7 year-old grandchildren. Gary has recovered very well from his knee surgery.

Martha Stuller traveled to Toms River in November to attend the Eagle Scout ceremony for her grandson James.

In news from **Bill & Ginny Norman**, they miss the retirees group. They have been at 514 Hamlin Court, White Rock NM 87547 for 10 years to be near their only child Ben, scientist at a national lab there, and their granddaughter Grace who is in 7th grade. They are active in their White Rock UMC, especially their outreach committee. Ginny sings

in the choir. Bill has turned 80, Ginny has had a knee replacement, and he says they have slowed down a bit. They spent six weeks in Florida earlier this fall helping Ginny's younger sister who has had serious health issues. They hope to visit Ohio later next year.



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Copeland Oaks
By Beth McGuire
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Beth McGuire reports she visited both **Miriam Moore** and **David Bloor** on the Copeland Oaks campus.

Miriam thought her tray table was a washing machine, so I was not sure if everything else she told me was accurate. She

reports she has four adult children and named them. She did remember Jinny Schreckengost and Trudi & Geroge Lee. Good visit, ending in prayer.

Rev. Dr. David Bloor served 1st UMC in Salem, retired from Avon and served a Methodist (not "united") in New Zealand for 6 months. His beloved wife, Margaret, died in May this year and he wrote a small essay, which he gave permission to share.

The Heavy Heart of Life

Dear Friends,
Some of us, or perhaps many of us have entered the place of living in the realm of the heavy hearts. Questions of course come quickly, and answers do not come easily.

Earlier in life, before I had any kind of heavy heart, I did not know these issues to control me. But at the present, these things generally are vividly wife Margaret.

Now I have concluded life for me is purely and simply ultimately not in my hands, but in the hand of Almighty God and God alone. He is the power who opens the wonderful gates of Heaven to my loved ones, and to me. When God is ready, his invitation will invite me to be his guest, and so I must await that time with patience and love.

Until that time, I must live with a heavy heart. God and God alone opens the gates of Heaven to us. God's plans come first, not yours and not mine. But God; redemption comes first. If we grieve, then can we make our grief productive?

I wish I could say more. But I must learn to live with a heavy heart, realizing this is the cost of love. Let us help someone else each day or more often. If we wait on the will of God to call for us, then he will call for us.

For now, we thank Almighty God for the blessings and may the heavy heart we have make us even stronger as we focus on loving Almighty God. Living with a heavy heart only makes us stronger persons of faith.

God bless you one and all. My God gives us strength to live with the heavy heart of life.

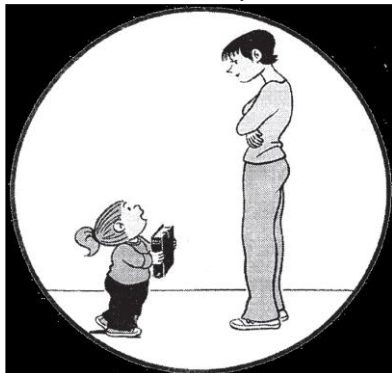
-A short thesis for those of us who have lived with the heavy heart of life with the victory living.

August 14, 2023 –
Dr. David W. Bloor

Liz Spiker reports she has moved! Certainly not from Copeland Oaks, but from my Villa, where we lived for almost 15 years, to a lovely apartment in the Beeghly building. Now I don't have to go outside anymore, unless I

choose to! And when the weather gets ugly, I don't! I stay snug at home and read books! My address now is 7218, instead of 1811.

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil and Jeff Keane



"Did God write the Bible Himself? Or did He have some Holy Ghost writers?"

from *JoyfulNoiseletter.com*

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Living Out of State

By Paul White

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O. French Ball: writes I'm living in Nashville, Tennessee. I moved here in 2016 because I have family here. So far, it's working out. I've been worshipping at Christ Church Cathedral (Episcopal) — although I have maintained my membership in the East Ohio Conference. Health-wise, I'm doing ok. I was diagnosed with cancer about a year ago, but thanks to quick intervention by my team of specialists, the cancer appears to be in

remission. I miss my colleagues and friends in East Ohio and pray for you daily — especially in these times of disaffiliation.

Galen Black reports on September 4, I moved into a rented condo. My new address is: Galen Black, 14 LeForge Ct, Chesterbrook, PA 19087-1221. On that same day I had a traumatic fall that shattered the socket which holds the ball of my left shoulder. The men of Wayne UMC in Wayne, PA, where I am active, moved my possessions over the next 25 days and all I could do was point at things that needed to be moved. The women of the church delivered dinner to me 3 times a week because I could not lift anything. My church family is amazing. Two of my children in Ohio came here to help me too. I will complete my third week of Physical Therapy on December 1. I am getting a better range of motion and strengthening muscles that I could not use for two months. I am healing slowly. I started driving again two days before Thanksgiving. My first trip was to my Physical Therapy site, just one mile from where I live. I am now able to take care of myself, which is so important since I have been living alone since April 1, 2020. I can now drive to church and get groceries and go grocery shopping and run other errands. For nearly three

months my friends at church had to pick me up and drive me to do these things. Spiritually, I learned to completely trust God to provide for me. I praise God for providing for me through my church family here and my biological family in Ohio. I am glad for my connection to EOCUMC through The Old Apple Tree. I send my greetings to my friends and acquaintances and wish you a Joyful Christmas!

Charles (Chuck) & Kendra McNatt reside in Vero Beach, Fl with our 70 lb. pup, Sadie who came to us from the Humane Society during the pandemic. We really enjoy the ability to be outside any day, any time, rain, or shine, except when a hurricane approaches! I am able to go out every morning for a 4-mile walk or a 15-mile bike ride. I volunteer teaching English to Spanish speakers who need English to survive and prosper. Kendra is a Big Brothers and Sisters volunteer working in the public schools to help children who struggle with reading and helping teachers as needed. I preach very occasionally, but often play guitar or ukulele with a ukulele group for the church and other venues. I don't miss the cold, snow, and cloudy skies, but we do miss family and friends.

Don & Bonnie Cummings moved to Lexington, KY from

Colorado in 2020. They enjoy their two grandchildren in Lexington and often visit their six other grandchildren in Glenview and Barrington IL. Don teaches an adult Sunday School class at First UMC in Lexington and serves on the HOA Board of their condominium community. Having met as students at Asbury College they are enjoying reconnecting with former classmates who are still in the Lexington area.

Gary Brown says he is not sure I have much of anything to include in the TOAT - though I do read it and enjoy it a great deal. I served in the Conference from 1977 till I left in January of 1984 to go on active duty as an Army Chaplain. Retired 30 years later in 2014 to PA (my wife is from here) and shortly thereafter retired from being an Elder. So, other than one or two people that I've stayed in contact with, I'm pretty much a stranger in my Conference. When I was in the process of retiring, I told everybody and anybody that I was done with the ministry, period. I retired 1 February 2014. April 2014 I was doing pulpit supply - three Sundays a month - in a small Missionary and Alliance church that couldn't afford to pay a pastor. Did that for 2 ½ years till I found out they had over \$100K in the bank. Told them I thought they could afford to

pay a pastor. Told everybody I was done with the ministry again. Famous last words. Make a short story long, through a friend, in 2021 I wound up preaching in a local Presbyterian Church (they could afford to pay a pastor) that was looking for a full-time pastor. So, I did pulpit supply for them till January 2023 when they got a pastor. In April this year, the executive presbyter (like a DS) for this area called me and asked me if I'd be interested in another pulpit supply mission. So, starting in August, I'm now preaching two services a Sunday, three Sundays a month, for two local Presbyterian churches. I haven't preached in a Methodist Church since 1999. Go figure. Had to laugh because I was a circuit rider for my 6 ½ years in the ministry in East Ohio and now I've come full circle and am doing it again. God does indeed have a sense of humor.

Nancy Manner remains active in my golden years. I enjoy this nice Virginia winter weather because I'm able to take my dog on long walks without freezing my toes or fingers. I'm also very active at a historic urban UMC in the Manchester neighborhood of Richmond. I chair the simplified accountability leadership team at Central UMC which also includes the duty -

chair of Trustees. I film our live worship service via Facebook every Sunday, and I take my turn leading worship and counting the morning offering. I've been instrumental in helping Central achieve a new vision to become a mission outpost to partner with other non-profit agencies to reach those struggling with substance abuse. Over the course of the last two years, I helped Central sell an underused Annex in need of dire repair. I also spearheaded a campaign to replace radiant heat with a much more efficient HVAC system that provides both heating and cooling to make the main building more appealing to tenants. We've been at work purging very old furniture, we sold what we could and donated some of the furniture no one claimed. The main building is now getting a make-over now that an agency has signed a five-year lease. Currently, we are accepting bids to create additional restrooms that will be handicapped accessible. We still have much to do with limited workers. Thankfully, God has blessed me with good health and the strength to do a lot of grunt work for Central to achieve her potential.

Russ & Ellen Martin celebrated their eighth anniversary as residents of Twin Lakes Community, a 218-acre CCRC in Elon, North Carolina

(in the backyard of Elon University just east of Greensboro). Living half-way between the Smokey Mountains and the east coast beaches, they usually spend two weeks each year at each of the settings. Topsail Island is a favorite beach setting though the Outer Banks, Oak Island, Myrtle Beach, Charlestown, and Savannah are also beautiful locations. In the mountains, Asheville has a delightful River Arts District and Hendersonville is a charming southern town and a favorite retirement setting for northerners. Lake Junaluska, home of the World Methodist Council is like our Lakeside used to be to the two North Carolina Conferences. We have many Duke Divinity School grad friends who live there. We also visit some of the mountain folk festivals along the Blue Ridge Parkway each year. At Twin Lakes, Ellen has been active in the handbell choir, the Swans Nest (a gift and convenience store on campus and The Residents Council. She also chairs the Prayer Shawl Ministry at Elon Community Church as well as playing in the handbell choir. For two years she has chaired the Hospitality Committee, winning the gratitude of the entire 500+ congregation. Russ has served as a chair of the semi-annual Estate Sale at Twin Lakes which raises about \$38K per year for scholarships given to employees' children

as well as projects on campus. He has played in the harmonica choir, engaged in a three-year writing project of an Oral History of Twin Lakes Community, and served as representative on the TLC Auxiliary and The Residents Association. He takes full advantage of the wellness program, working out in two to three exercise classes per day. He also has sown a 260 sq. ft. garden for seven years from which Ellen is able to freeze items to last all year long. At the Church, where Russ is an Associate Member, he served two two-year terms as Chair of the Board of Deacons, acted as a liturgist, and helped as a communion steward. Our children: Sarah is a hospice nurse in the Burlington-Greensboro area. Since coming to NC in 2015, she has earned her MSN and is currently enrolled in a Nurse Practitioner program for Family Nurse Practitioners at UNC-Greensboro. She lives with our teenage granddaughter, Carmen (15-1/2), just five miles from our villa. Carmen has developed a beautiful soprano voice and is auditioning to enter the University of North Carolina School of the Arts in her junior and senior years of high school. The school is a arts-oriented school for high school, undergraduate and graduate level students. She will reside on the campus in Winston-Salem if accepted.

Steve and his wife Trinity have twin 9-year-old daughters (Gwen and Evelyn) and a soon to be 8 year-old daughter, Harper. All three girls are in a Spanish emersion program in elementary school and are fluent in Spanish (as are Steve and Trinity). They live near Charlotte where Steve works as chief legal counsel for a major healthcare firm and Trinity teaches music in the elementary school where the girls attend. She also directs a Music Ministry in a local UMC consisting of vocal, instrumental and handbell choirs for adults, youth, and children. They are a very busy family. We have been fortunate to find such a full and joyful retirement life in North Carolina and with only a few exceptions – NO SNOW!

Jay & Carol Althouse moved from Chicago to Westminster, CO (suburb of Denver on northwest edge) 5 1/2 years ago and really like it. I miss seeing Ohio friends, but we wanted to be in a retirement community! We have 4 daughters - Kay in Tallmage, OH; Dee in Havre, MT; Joy in Minneapolis; and Karlynn in Lakewood CO (30 min from us!). All their families are healthy and doing well. We have 9 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren (born in last 9 months - Kay/Scott's family). We live at Covenant Living of Colorado (1 of 14

Covenant Living communities scattered around the country!!) We can see the mountains - drive there in 30-45 minutes. No, we're not skiers but enjoy walking them!! We're part of Arvada UMC - a very active Progressive/Open Reconciling church. Has so many music programs - we sing in one of the main choirs. They have many outreach programs going on most all the time!! Here in our community, Carol is chair of the Art Guild (they host some rather nifty shows and classes! I am co-chair of the Sustainability committee - which has some "challenges" in a community of "older persons?!?" Carol plays piano for Vespers on Sunday evening once every 2-3 months and we've have sung duets a few times!! We are fortunate to be able to enjoy good health. One of our favorite things to do is to host family as they visit or to travel to be with them!! I do attempt to keep in touch with what's happening in East Ohio UMC and Carol does the same in her home conference of Northern Illinois.

Roger & Jacquie Talbott now live in Jackson Heights in NY City's borough of Queens. The neighborhood may be the most diverse place on the planet in terms of the number of languages spoken and ethnicities represented. We

live seven blocks from our son, daughter-in-law, and their two children. Our daughter-in-law, a Reform rabbi, has begun a new Jewish spiritual community in western Queens. We often attend services there as well as at St. Bart's Episcopal Church (Jacquie is an Episcopalian). Community United Methodist is within walking distance of our apartment. Fun fact: it is not only one of the most diverse UM congregations I have ever seen, but the game Scrabble was invented in its basement (hence the local nickname "Scrabble UMC.") We miss our friends in East Ohio, but we are having a blast in NYC!

Johnnie Swan writes I would like to report that I am now "semi-retired". I am serving a two-point charge in the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church at quarter time. I was pleased that I was able to assist the conference during this time of disaffiliation.

Ken Ehrman reports **Sally Dyck** and I moved to our home on Ermine Street in Napa, California in 2020. (That's Ehrman on Ermine.) Sally has been serving as the Ecumenical Officer for The United Methodist Church and will be completing that role at the end of August 2024. She serves on the Executive Committee of the Central

Committee of the World Council of Churches. The Council of Bishops voted her to be the interim bishop of the California-Nevada Conference where she served for about 18 months beginning in March 2022. After retiring from the East Ohio Conference in 2012, I worked for Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, retiring for a second time in 2020 as Director of Field Education and Assistant Professor. We are active in Napa First United Methodist Church - a vibrant, progressive congregation - where we have met great people and formed strong friendships.

Phil & Karen Gibson write this year - August 25 - was our 50th anniversary. We celebrated it with Karen's family, relatives, and friends in Leavittsville, Ohio, on June 17. It took place at the Leavittsville UMC annex which is a historic one room School House. We celebrated the day with two of Karen's sisters also celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversaries. And the second celebration was held in the Old School House in Battlement Mesa, CO, on September 2. Several family members, other relatives, and friends gathered to celebrate with us. We originally moved to Colorado in 1977. I was employed as a Federal Coal Mine in Ohio from June 1972 until August

1977 when we were transferred to Glenwood Springs, CO. Karen and I served as Licensed Local Pastors in Craig, CO. Karen's first appointment was in Oak Creek, CO for seven years, and then at Craig for eight years. I served Craig for 22 years. In 2014 we moved to Conesville, OH, where Karen was appointed as Pastor, and I served as Pastor at New Moscow along with Tiverton from 2017-2018. We served those churches until 2018 when we moved back to Colorado. I served two churches 2018 - 2019 - in southeast Colorado. I retired and moved back to Craig to be with my wife, Karen.

Erma Yaussy reports she has done some traveling - one trip to Ohio where I got to drive a huge combine so different than my days on the farm in the 40's but most interesting.



And oh yes, I visited my sister in Bucyrus; it is her daughter and family who have the farm and were most gracious in showing their Aunt Erma a fun farm reminder. Another trip to WV (closer to Pittsburgh) for a grandson's wedding in October and then again for

Thanksgiving. As the Matriarch I am allowed to just absorb all the love - no preparation of food. But I did drive the farthest distance!!! With three one-year-olds, plus two older ones, there was a lot of sound, chaos, tears, chuckles, cuddles, and a pit fire with color. Then the drive back to Charleston at night with Christmas music selected on her phone by my daughter-in-law. A different era. For clarification I drove to Charleston, WV and then David drove to Morgantown and back to Charleston. In October I drove to Bucyrus after the wedding and then back to Charleston and NC. I made a ball light at a workshop, and someone was kind enough to put it up in my tree. Looks pretty good at night. Two concerts in early December - the local Choral group and the trans-Siberian orchestra in Charlotte. I don't drive there, just hop on the bus from here.

Pat Edington sends greetings from sunny Arizona to the now-gone Firelands District and the Local Pastors Class of 2008. Dick and I are enjoying retirement living six months in West Des Moines, Iowa and the other 6 months here in Black Canyon City, AZ. Before leaving the great state of Ohio, we worshipped at Leroy UMC where I was blessed to be active in ministry. Now in AZ, I am

involved with starting a new ministry of worship in our little community. God is good! Our family has scattered to Illinois, California, North Dakota, and Iowa, but we manage to see them all when traveling. Wishing my best to all the great pastors who have endured Covid and it's restrictions and the break-up of our beloved United Methodist Church. Blessings upon all.

Lynn & Jane Snider will celebrate their tenth anniversary of living in their home in Canton, MI on June 10. They love being 2 miles from their daughter and son-in-law and watching their two grandsons grow. They all traveled to Texas in November to spend Thanksgiving with their son's family. Lynn worked as Visitation Pastor of Newburgh UMC for seven years up to June of 2021 and now they both enjoy their only jobs being to play "Nana and Papa".

Yvonne Connor says it's such a joy to continue witnessing God's movement among us, even when years and miles separate our physical presence. God invented social media for times such as these (smile)! Since relocating to Georgia during the summer of 2019, it's taken until the latter part of 2023 to start learning to lean into "let go" and "let

God." Relocating and retirement have required a steady shift to a mindset of service that's both inspiring and energizing as I lead a team that represents Douglasville First UMC (DFUMC) at a Douglas County Senior Center and a memory care facility, The Harbor. We provide Bible discussions twice a month at the Senior Center and a brief worship service at The Harbor twice monthly, also. The Harbor is located next door to DFUMC, so getting to Sunday school and worship on time isn't much of a challenge; especially on the first Sundays when I'm scheduled to lead our "Lively Sunday School Class." The class gets its name from a previous pastor, and most of the 25 members are now over the age of 70 and continue all the jovial aspects of the meaning of the word, lively, in the wholesomeness of service. My Mississippi, Georgia, and Illinois families are doing well. The Grands (5, 6, and 18 yrs. old) continue to make us proud. God's loving care for each of us is manifested in numerous ways throughout our daily interactions. The non-Hodgkins lymphoma remains in remission as I make every effort to stay on schedule with doctor visits, medication, minimal stress, and prayers of gratefulness. I wish each of you and your families a bountiful overflowing of God's touch and clarity of

purpose in 2024. Peace, joy, and love in Christ.

Dave & Candy McKinnon live in Auburn Hills MI. We moved here in August 2022 to be closer to our daughters (Katy and Sara), sons-in-law (Paul and Mike) and granddaughters (Juni-turning 3 on Christmas, and Lily-7 months old).

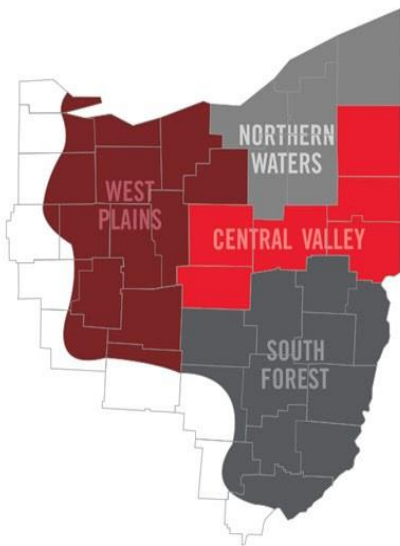
Al Herzog reports he is doing well after surgery on his neck to decompress and fuse 4 vertebrae, The surgery lasted over eight hours. After nine days in the hospital and three weeks in rehab, he's walking better although he still uses a rollator to be safe.

Bev & Jerry Hall write 2023 has been a difficult year for us. Bev was working on an academic paper to deliver at Asbury Theological School in March when she fell over a loose floor grate at church and broke her right shoulder. Then things went from bad to worse as she managed to land in the hospital with a tumor in her colon. She had surgery to remove a large portion of her colon and then began chemotherapy. Right after starting oral chemo, she got COVID and was very sick – ending up spending her 70th birthday in the hospital. She reports it's not a good sign when those working in ER and the hospital know you by name. Bev continues to be involved in her little local

church by leading Children's Chat and helping to coordinate children's programs. She has been given the opportunity to write an academic paper for The Wesleyan Theological Society's meeting to be held in Nashville, TN this coming March. Jerry now has 16 novels out on Amazon and is working on 3 more. He really enjoys writing and the extra income helps tremendously. His last book, *The President's Little Demon*, has been very successful. Jerry and Bev celebrated their 29th wedding anniversary in August.

Carol Topping reports she is enjoying living in Denver though I loved Copeland Oaks too, but so much snowy bad weather! It's into the 50s and 60s here until Christmas Day. A dream come true! I live in a beautiful facility, with physical therapy, great staff, and more activities than you can do in a day! Good friends and Sunday worship right here! I miss all of you! I had surgery in August for a sick gall bladder. All went well and I had a steady recovery. Feeling good now! I'm planning to start an art class after the holidays! Just like Copeland Oaks.... I also hope to lead a class in prayer in the spring. My son Brian lives in nearby Aurora. And Mark and Motoko and kids are returning to the US after 6 years in Japan! Here's the great news...my grand-

daughter Noe is a sophomore at Yale, and last week my grandson Ren received his letter of acceptance to Yale! He wants to be a writer! The family is thrilled! Sending love and prayers to you all! Blessings and love to all!



Beginning January 1 East Ohio Conference will be

moving from the current 10 districts to 4 districts. With this change the Retiree Association needed to make some changes to the make-up of its Board. At the Annual Meeting in October at Ashland University it was approved the Retiree Association Board will now include: Chairperson; Vice Chairperson; Secretary; Treasurer (with two names; Chairperson & Treasurer; to be on all accounts for access); One Representative from each of the 4 Districts; Six Additional Representatives (with attention given to diversity and inclusion) nominated by a Nominating Committee of one or two present board members and two or three other retirees they will recruit. Bill McCartney and Pam Monteith are the Board members chairing the Nominating Committee. Names of those to serve on the new Board will be announced by the Spring 2024 issue of The Old Apple Tree.

This change will also necessitate a change in how we have collected information for The Old Apple Tree. As president of the Board, Paul White will be working with our conference office and the Board to determine the best way to collect information in the future. Of course, you don't need to wait for an invitation to submit information. You can send information at any time to Paul at paulw2800@gmail.com.

The deadline for submitting materials to be included in the 2024 Spring Issue of TOAT is April 15, 2024. Submit materials to your cluster correspondent or to paulw2800@gmail.com

THE OLD APPLE TREE

**Compiled by reporters
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Association**

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Please keep in prayer the families of the following retirees who have entered the church triumphant since our last reporting September 1, 2023:

Calvin R. Meyers, Sr., *retired Elder*, died August 29.

William Maynard French, *retired Elder*, died August 31.

James Stafford, *retired Local Pastor*, died September 20.

Charles S. Fast, *spouse of retired Rev. Joyce Fast*, died September 23.

John P. Reiter, *spouse of retired Rev. Patricia Reiter*, died October 30.

Joyce V. McCleery, *spouse of retired Rev. Jonathan McCleery*, died November 18.

Kathryn Buchanan, *spouse of retired Rev. John Buchanan*, died November 21.

James Edward Cake, *retired Elder*, died November 24.

Thomas McFarren, *retired Elder*, died December 1.

Sturman Moore, *retired Local Pastor*, died December 3.

Evelyn Ferrell, *spouse of retired Rev. Richard H. Ferrell*, died December 5.

(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).