

**The Susan B. and William K. Wasch Center for Retired Faculty  
Wesleyan University  
A Report for 2008-2009**

**Introduction**

The Wasch Center completed its fourth year of full operation in 2008-2009.

The level of activity at the Center continues to be vigorous. Our eleven residents are making full use of our facilities. We have continued a strong program of invited speakers for our Wednesday afternoon series. We continue to develop existing programs, such as mentoring of junior faculty members and to imagine new ones, such as the establishment of a Wesleyan Institute for Lifelong Learning.

The level of use of our building at 51 Lawn Avenue continues to increase--by retired faculty members, by departments and programs within Wesleyan, and by outside groups as well.

**Advisory Board**

We are fortunate in having had no turnover in our Advisory Board for the past year. The Board has met faithfully for monthly meetings throughout the academic year and has been an invaluable source of new ideas and a resource for the development of existing programs.

We noted with great sadness the death of Ellen D'Oench, who was a member of our original Advisory Board and a strong contributor of ideas and support for our beginnings.

The current members of the Advisory Board are: Andrew Szegedy-Maszak, Lewis Lukens, Paula Paige, Peter Frenzel, Herbert Arnold, Susan Berry, and *ex officio* members, Susan Wasch, William Wasch, Donald Moon, Sean McCann, and Karl Scheibe.

**Administrative Assistant and Student Help**

Ann Gertz has completed her second full year of service as our Administrative Assistant, having joined us in the middle of the 2006-2007 academic year. She works half-time during the academic year and one day per week during the summers. She has performed her job with constant good will and high competence. She has been a constant and friendly support for all of our residents. She continues with the responsibility of administering all of the small research and travel grants for retired faculty members, awarded by the Office of Academic Affairs.

Ann has recruited and supervised a group of work-study students, who served at the reception desk at times she was not present. They performed countless errands and tasks for residents of the building and others during the course of the academic year.

### **Association for Retirement Organizations in Higher Education (AROHE)**

Wesleyan has agreed to host the 2010 meeting of AROHE, to take place in October of that year. The 2008 meeting took place this past October at the University of Southern California. Bill Wasch and Karl Scheibe made a presentation at that meeting describing the growth and development of our retirement center at Wesleyan. The presentation was well received.

Hosting the 2010 meeting is a major responsibility. The Office of Academic Affairs has been informed of this initiative and will lend assistance to our efforts. We expect representatives from 80-100 retirement organizations throughout the United States and Canada. Space has been reserved at the Usdan Center for this event, with accommodations to be arranged at the Inn at Middletown and at the Marriott in Rocky Hill.

The Executive Director of AROHE, Janette Brown, and the President, Barry Culhane, have visited Wesleyan and met with Bill Wasch and Karl Scheibe in early July to advance the planning for the 2010 meetings.

### **Use of Offices**

All of the residents previously awarded space in our building will continue into next year, with two-year contracts recently renewed for Gertrude Hughes, Paula Paige, and Bill Firshein. We received one new application for space from Gay Smith, just retired from the Theater Department. She has been assigned the one remaining open space in our Center.

The list of residents for this coming year is as follows:  
Karl Scheibe, Jerome Long, William Firshein, Herbert Arnold, Joe Reed, Eugene Klaaren, Joyce Lowrie, Gertrude Hughes, Yoshiko Samuel, Gay Smith, Paula Paige, and Vera Grant.

### **Program Series**

The program of speakers we inaugurated in our first year has proved to be popular and successful. In the last academic year, we scheduled and presented seven such programs in the fall semester and seven in the spring. The presenters and titles are given below:

**Suzanna Tamminen: “Academic Book Publishing and its Discontents”**

**Carver Blanchard: “Lute Unleashed”**

**Karl Scheibe and Bill Wasch: “The formation and Development of our Center: Retrospect and Prospect.”**

**Wistar Comfort: “A Peculiar People: A smattering of Quakerly beliefs and history”**

**Charles W. Smith: “Wesleyan University: the Ideal Flagship Institution for True Life-Long Learning”**

**Douglas and Midge Bennet: “Behind the Scenes”**

**Suzy Taraba: “The Book Artist as Social Critic”**

**Michael Fossil: "Aging: Ubiquitous, Constant, and Inescapable (or, none of the above?)”**

**Sonia Man  
engagement: Connecting the Ivy Tower with Urban Communities”**

jon: Art as a ca

**Karl M. Furstenberg “Forty Years at Wesleyan: As Student, Administrator, Alumnus, and Trustee”**

**Allan Berlind: "My Genes Made Me Do It": Brain scans, genes, behavior and the law**

**Al Turco: “Nobody’s Perfect”—GBS as Wagnerite”**

**Herb Arnold: "Humane Evacuation or Ethnic Cleansing? Eastern and Central Europe, post 1945"**

**Richard Vann: “Herstoriography”**

This program has become a central attractive feature of the Wasch Center for the community of retired faculty members and others. All of the presentations had capacity audiences in the Butterfield Room, and several were overflow affairs, leading some to consider possible ways of expanding the space of the Butterfield Room in order to accommodate larger audiences.

Most of the presenters were retired faculty members, some of them traveling considerable distances in order to be here. The positive and generous responses of these

people offer encouragement and support for the proposition that retired faculty members still have something to say and welcome the opportunity to say it.

In the fall semester, we scheduled a session to celebrate the retirement of Jason Wolfe, Richie Slotkin, Vera Grant, and Gayle Pemberton, since it was not possible to have such an event in connection with graduation in the spring of 2008. President Roth and Vice-President Bruno were featured in the program.

We scheduled a meeting in the fall semester with representatives of the Office of Human Resources and the Office of Academic Affairs to present information and answer questions about financial benefits, insurance programs, and ongoing support for research and professional activities for retired faculty members. We also presented a panel discussion in the spring semester conducted by Wis Comfort, Paula Paige, and Donald Moon for the benefit of senior faculty members who are considering retirement. Both of these occasions were well attended.

### **Movie Series**

This was the third year for our movie series, designed and presented by Joe Reed, Professor Emeritus of English. We presented movies on seven Tuesday afternoons throughout the year. This program proved to be increasingly popular as the series progressed. While the expense associated with gaining exhibition permission for such a series is nontrivial, the Advisory Board decided to continue the program for the next year, given the evidence of growing enthusiasm and participation. Joe Reed proved to be an excellent host for these occasions.

The following movies were shown during the year:

*NASHVILLE,*  
*NOW, VOYAGER*  
*HERE COMES MISTER JORDAN,*  
*THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD,*  
*THE COURT JESTER,*  
*DERSU UZALA,*  
*SOME LIKE IT HOT,*

### **Mentoring Program**

In collaboration with Sean McCann and the Center for Faculty Career development, we conducted the second year of our mentoring program. Late in the summer, new faculty members who indicated an interest in participating in the program were matched with retired faculty members. With the support of the Office of Academic Affairs, over 20 lunches were sponsored at the Usdan Center with members of pairs formed in this way. The testimony from all sides is that this program is valuable. We will continue it in the next year.

### **A Proposed “Wesleyan Institute for Lifelong Learning”**

During the spring semester the Advisory Board of the Wasch Center had discussions at its meetings about the possibility of establishing at Wesleyan a program for the provision of non-credit courses, designed primarily for adults in the Wesleyan and Middletown communities, including but not limited to Wesleyan alumni. Such courses would be brief—ranging from 3 to 12 classroom hours. The topical range would be broad—ranging from arts and humanities to social studies and science, including environmental studies. The common descriptive feature would be that the courses are intellectually stimulating—engaging the active interests of our adult community at a high level of quality.

In June, the Board voted to have this program established and operated by the Wasch Center, subject to approval and authorization by the Wesleyan Administration. This request has now been approved by the Wesleyan Administration. A charter statement has been issued. Meetings of a new Advisory Board for the Institute will take place in the forthcoming semester.

We have taken as a premise that such a program must run at no net cost to the Wesleyan budget—that it would make use of existing personnel and facilities. We envision charging modest fees for students—something like \$25 per classroom hour. This would allow us to pay our teachers a modest stipend, approximately \$100 per classroom hour, and to cover administrative, materials, and program costs as well.

The group of retired faculty members living in the Middletown area would comprise the core of our teaching staff. This group might be augmented by active faculty members and others who wish to participate in the program and are qualified to do so.

### **Reception Honoring Retiring Faculty Members**

We resumed this year the custom of having a reception during commencement weekend in the back lawn of the Wasch Center to honor faculty members who are newly retiring. This event is planned jointly with the Wasch Center and the Office of University Relations, with support as well from the President’s Office and the Office of Academic Affairs. Eight faculty members retired in this year. They are Tony Infante, Gay Smith, Al Turco, Peter Kilby, Akos Ostor, Lin Keiser, John Paoletti and Robert Rollefson.

### **Other Activities and Uses of the Center**

The Wasch Center was used for many other occasions during the course of the year. The Physics Department used the building for its regular Thursday luncheon meetings. The Quaker Meeting used the building every Sunday morning. (The Quaker Group has made a contribution to the Wasch Center in consideration of its use privilege.)

In addition, the Wasch Center was the site of several Friday cocktail hours sponsored by the Office of Academic Affairs and planned by an ad hoc committee of the faculty.

We were asked by Sherman Hawkins, Professor Emeritus of English, if he and his wife, Anne, might use the Wasch Center for a dinner they wished to give for their former colleagues and friends in Middletown. This event was scheduled for May 6 and was attended by about 25 enthusiastic guests. The following is a compilation of the events, classes, etc which were held in the Wasch Center for the 08/08 academic year:

- 17 Wasch center Programs
- 7 movies
- 15 other Wasch Center events
- 32 meeting for Jerome Long's church group
- 1 meeting of Karl Scheibe's church group
- 9 Biology Department luncheons
- 4 social gatherings for the Biology Department
- 7 Upward Bound meetings
- 17 tutoring classes taught by Vera Grant
- 7 AAUW events
- 5 Radical Teachers meetings
- 1 MYOE meeting
- 48 Quaker meetings, including one day long event
- 29 Physics Department lunch meetings
- 6 Faculty Social Hour events
- 1 Psychology Department meeting
- 1 Psychology Department party
- 8 Wasch Center Advisory Board meetings
- 1 Middletown Literary Club event
- 1 AROHE planning meeting
- 1 Commencement Marshals' lunch
- 1 Commencement Reception

### **Fund-raising and Financial Condition**

We have operated throughout the year within the operating budget assigned to us by the Office of Academic Affairs. We have included a request for an appropriation of \$1500 for next year to help support the mentoring program described above.

We have received several additional gifts to the Wasch Center during the course of this year to add to the amount of our endowment. University Relations has provided us with a summary update on the current status our endowment fund.

**Summary**

This past year has proved to be active and varied for the Wasch Center. Our Wednesday afternoon series of talks has proved to be a continuing attraction to members of our retirement community and many others on campus and in Middletown as well. The vision of Susan and Bill Wasch to develop a Center for retired faculty members at Wesleyan continues to be manifestly successful. All of us owe a continue debt of gratitude not only for their initial vision and support, but for their continued participation in our programs and activities.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karl E. Scheibe  
Director

August 17, 2009