

**The Susan B. and William K Wasch Center for Retired Faculty
Wesleyan University
A Report for 2012-2013**

Introduction

The Wasch Center has completed its eighth year of operation in 2012-2013.

Our residency at the Center continues to be at capacity. We have 12 residents with offices in the house, not including the Director. Two residents moved out in June and two new residents will take the vacated spaces on or about July 1st. Several requests for extensions to current stays have been received and accepted. The Director and Advisory Board are closely attentive to questions of fairness and equity in the awarding of space at the Center.

The level of activity at the Center continues to be vigorous. Our series of Wednesday programs remain popular—the centerpiece of our community activity. We hosted seven programs in the fall semester, including a musical performance. We also hosted a catered holiday party, complete with carol singing. In the spring term, we hosted eight regular programs, again including a musical hour. All of our programs were well attended—usually at the capacity of the Butterfield Room—which holds about 35 people. About 2/3 of our afternoon programs consisted of presentations by retired faculty members. The remaining 1/3 were programs given by others in the community or by currently active faculty members at Wesleyan.

We held a reception in collaboration with University Relations for newly retiring faculty members this year, coinciding with Commencement Weekend. While the weather did not cooperate, the reception was lovely. The three faculty members who retired in 2012 were also invited to participate in the festivities as a reception was not held last year. Tributes were offered to the seven retiring faculty members who attended—and the house was full to overflowing.

The Wesleyan Institute for Lifelong Learning (WILL) has completed its third full year of operation under the auspices of the Wasch Center. We presented seven successful short courses in the fall. In the spring we offered five short courses and a full-day program. The Saturday Institute was entitled “Middletown’s Architectural Heritage,” and consisted of three morning lectures followed by a walking tour and then a bus tour. It had the largest enrollment to-date for any WILL course, with 44 participants. We cancelled two short classes due to unforeseen circumstances for their instructors. Enrollments have increased from last year and the program is prospering. A separate report has been prepared to describe the details of WILL in its second year of operation. For the year, our surplus of income over expenses was about \$1,500.

Advisory Board

The Advisory 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. The current members of the Advisory Board are: Andrew Szegedy-Maszak, Jason Wolfe, Paula Paige, Peter Frenzel, Herbert Arnold, Gene Klaaren and *ex officio* members, Susan Wasch, William Wasch, Sean McCann, Gary Shaw and Karl Scheibe. Sean McCann and Gary Shaw will be leaving the Advisory Board because the former will no longer be directing the Center for Faculty Career Development, and the latter has completed his term as Dean of Division II. Both will be replaced by new appointments.

Administrative Assistant and Student Help

Liz Dagnall resigned as our Administrative Assistant after completing a year of service. She resigned in order to take a full-time position in the Physics Department. She was an integral and much admired part of the Wasch Center for all of her tenure and will be missed.

We were fortunate in being able to recruit Amy Bello to serve as our new Administrative Assistant. 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 has the responsibility of administering all of the small research funds and travel grants awarded to retired faculty members by the Office of Academic Affairs. She is responsible for maintaining our websites. She serves as scribe and liaison with the Advisory Board. She has also taken on the responsibility of helping to organize and coordinate the courses offered in the WILL program, including the updating of its website and the operation of our online payment service.

Amy supervises a group of work-study students as well as the summer student, 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.

Informational Meetings

We continued our custom of providing information for faculty members considering retirement. The centerpiece of this effort was a meeting in the spring semester with representatives of the Office of Human Resources, TIAA-CREF 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. In addition, the Director has conferred often with senior members of the faculty who are considering retirement or who have recently retired.

Movie Series

This was the seventh year for our movie series, designed and presented by Joe Reed, Professor Emeritus of English. We presented movies once a month on Tuesday afternoons throughout both the fall and spring semesters. Joe Reed is an excellent host for these occasions.

Mentoring Program

The mentoring program for new junior faculty members did not function this year, due in part to the increasing responsibilities of the Director for Faculty Career Development as Chair of his Department. Several previously assigned pairings of retired faculty members and junior faculty did continue to meet during the year. We expect to resume this as an active program in the coming year.

Newsletter

In order to enrich the availability of information about members of Wesleyan's community of retired faculty members, we established a newsletter in 2009-2010. Issues have been published each semester for the past three years. The same schedule of publication is planned for the coming year.

The newsletter is edited by Peter Frenzel, who has the support of an Editorial Board consisting of Gene Klaaren, Paula Paige, Jerome Long, Jerry Wensinger, and Karl Scheibe. Both issues of our newsletter for this past year were popular and well received. We expect to continue and even expand this publication.

Oral History Project

Wesleyan has over 85 living, retired faculty members. The idea emerged at one of the discussions of the Wasch Center Advisory Board in 2010 to begin a program of systematic interviews of individuals in this body about their Wesleyan careers. With the collaboration of Anne Greene, Suzy Taraba, and Sean McCann, we established a program in which five students conducted extensive interviews with five retired faculty members in the 2011-2012 year. These interviews were recorded and transcribed, and will be a permanent part of the Wesleyan Archives, as well as being available online through WesScholar. Interviews were not conducted this year—due to time limitations of the above-mentioned leaders of this effort. We hope and expect to continue this program in the next year.

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 Butterfield Room 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. The building had over 200 bookings for activities outside of our programs or the WILL program during the past academic year

Fund Raising

We have continued to encourage retired faculty members, alumni and others to make contributions to the endowment fund of the Wasch Center. Income realized from our endowment fund can be used support research and travel for retired faculty members, and also to provide support for computer acquisition and repair. A number of such gifts have been received in the past academic year. A notice in the Newsletter reminds people of this gifting opportunity.

We have for the first time made available to retired faculty members small supplemental grants for their professional activities. The Advisory Board authorized the distribution of ten grants of \$250 each to retired faculty members who apply for them. The funds for these grants are drawn from the Lemert portion of our endowment fund.

In the spring of this year, we attempted to clarify with the administration the status of our endowment fund and income from it. Wesleyan has previously made a commitment to support the operating expenses of the Wasch Center, about \$40,000 per year since our inception. We have asked the Office of Academic Affairs to provide us with a reaffirmation of this support, so that income from the endowment might be used for support of retired faculty members and not as a part of our operating budget. The Director has been assured that this reaffirmation will be forthcoming.

Support Issues

Over the past several years, the amount of support for retired faculty members for research and travel to learned society meetings has been reduced. The Vice-President for Academic Affairs is highly aware of this problem and has promised to do what he can to improve the situation. An additional issue has to do with the availability of funds to support computer acquisition and maintenance for retired faculty members, since they are no longer on departmental lists for such eligibility. These are issues that we will again be addressing with the Office of Academic Affairs in the coming year.

The Director and the Question of Succession

The Director of the Wasch Center has been reappointed for a three-year term beginning on July 1, 2013. He has announced his intention that this be his last term of service in this office. Accordingly, we have initiated conversations within the Advisory Board and with the Office of Academic Affairs about finding a new person for this role.

The Director expresses the hope that a modest level of compensation, on the order of \$25,000 per year, might be found—perhaps from our endowment income, as incentive for the new Director.

Summary

The Wasch Center continues to increase the range and scope of its activities each year. The major achievements of the past year include the further development and success of the WILL program. It is clear that WILL fits in well with the overall mission of the retirement center. Most of the instructors for the WILL program are drawn from the ranks of retired faculty members. Also, retired faculty members are conspicuous among the students enrolling in WILL courses. WILL also succeeds in drawing many people from the surrounding community to Wesleyan and has become a conspicuous means of cementing good relations between Wesleyan and the wider community.

An ongoing concern is that our Administrative Assistant has a growing list of responsibilities—a list that has grown enormously over the past eight years, even as the position has not enjoyed any increase at all in terms of supported time. If the WILL program continues to grow at the levels we envisage, it will certainly be necessary to make arrangements for additional staff support for this operation.

Susan and Bill Wasch have continued to be indefatigable and indispensable for the success of our Center. Both Susan and Bill have faithfully attended our monthly Board meetings and have participated fully in our programs. Their vision for service to the community of people who retire at Wesleyan continues to unfold into reality. For this the entire body of retired Wesleyan faculty members is grateful.

Respectfully submitted,
Karl E. Scheibe
Director

June 17, 2013