

**The Susan B. and William K Wasch Center for Retired Faculty  
Wesleyan University  
A Report for 2009-2010**

**Introduction**

The Wasch Center completed its fifth year of full operation in 2009-2010

The major development within the Wasch Center this year has been the establishment of a program of short courses under the auspices of the Wesleyan Institute for Lifelong Learning. Six courses and a full-day program on Middletown history will be presenting in the coming Fall semester. For the rest, programs at the Center have continued to be active and successful. We have increased our number of residents by one, in order to accommodate increasing demand—so that currently we have 12 residents with offices in the house, in addition to the Director. The level of activity at the Center continues to be vigorous.

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**

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. Don Moon, has completed his term as Dean of Division II, and will be replaced as an ex-officio member of the Board by a member yet to be named by the new Interim Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Rob Rosenthal. Also, Lew Lukens has resigned his position as a member of the Board. Jason Wolfe has been named as a new member of the Board, to begin his service in this coming year.

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

**Administrative Assistant and Student Help**

Ann Gertz has completed her third 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. She has also taken on the additional responsibility of helping to organize and coordinate the courses to be offered in the WILL program.

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 this year.

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.

Bill Wasch and Karl Scheibe have been engaged in continual planning for the October conference, aided by Gloria Gdovin, a retired Wesleyan staff member, who has been hired on funds provided by AROHE to manage details for planning and organization for the conference.

### **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 Joe Reed, Jerome Long, Gene Klaaren, Yoshiko Samuel, Vera Grant, Joyce Lowrie. Richard Buel has been granted a two-year contract on space he is to share with Paula Paige and Gertrude Hughes.

The Advisory Board had several discussions of our principles and policies regarding the awarding of office space to retired faculty members. As a consequence of these discussions, the following policy statement was finally adopted by the Board as an Addendum to the By-Laws of the Center. It is meant to address the question of requests for renewal of office space.

*Office space for retired faculty members is awarded at the discretion of the Director and the Advisory Board for a period of two years. For the two-year period, those seeking space must complete an application and supply a statement of their prospective scholarly activities, including teaching, research and other professional duties.*

*Before the end of the initial two-year period, office occupants will be asked by the Director if they wish to renew for an additional two years. A new statement of prospective scholarly activities is required to support requests for renewal. A similar procedure will be followed before the end of the second two-year term.*

*In order to make space available for new applicants, a six-year period of occupancy will normally be considered the limit. Faculty members who have occupied an office for three consecutive two-year periods might apply for an extension, but ceteris paribus, preference will be extended to new applicants in awarding office space.*

Copies of this policy will be distributed to all office residents.

### **The Wesleyan Institute for Lifelong Learning**

WILL is a new program established by the university to present brief, non-credit courses intended for adults in the Middletown and Central Connecticut communities. Most of the instructors for the courses will be retired Wesleyan faculty members and others with similar qualifications. Courses will be made available at a modest cost and will generally meet for two to six ninety-minute periods.

In this coming fall, six courses will be offered, plus a one-day special program on the history of Middletown. The scheduled courses are:

“The Home Front in Revolutionary Connecticut” Professor of History, Emeritus,  
Richard Buel

“Geology and Art: The Connecticut Valley in Art and in View” Professor of Earth and  
Environmental Science, Emeritus, Jelle DeBoer

“Food, Culture and Identity” Professor of Government, John Finn

“The Infectious Microbe” Professor of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, Emeritus,  
William Firshein

“Deciphering Gauguin” Adjunct Professor of Art, University of Hartford, Rhea Padis  
Higgins

“Hamlet’s Soliloquies: Method & Madness” Professor of Theater, Emeritus, Gay Smith

In addition, the Institute will present on September 11, 2010, an all-day program on the history of Middletown. The program will include four presentations, a walking tour of central Middletown, a luncheon, and a panel discussion at the conclusion of the day. The presenters are

Richard Buel, Professor of History Emeritus  
Dione Longley, former Director of the Middletown Historical Society  
Dianna Ross McCain, Head, Research Center, Connecticut Historical Society  
Elizabeth Warner, Teacher, Independent Day School

### **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:

September 16: Peter Frenzel, "Spells, Curses and Heroic Deaths in Old Germanic Tongues: A Dramatic Reading."

September 23: Peter Mark, "Being Jewish, Being Black, Being White -- Two Early 17th Century Sephardic Trading Communities in Senegal"

October 7: Suzanne O'Connell, "Under the Ice: Discovering Antarctica"

October 21: Jason Wolfe, "Graying Hair, Stem Cells, and the Process of Aging"

November 4: Bill Blakemore "The Many Psychologies of Global Warming, Given the Hard Realities We Face." (A discussion of the talk given on Tuesday, November 3.)

November 18: Libby Van Cleve, oboe, and Peter Standaart, flute. "Backstage with Libby and Peter: An Insider's Look at Preparation"

December 2: Gay Smith, "Playing for Revolutionaries: America's 1776 Lady Macbeth,"

January 27: Ernest Lowrie: "The Search for the Historical Origins of the Word Civilization."

February 10: Chris Parslow: "Reconstructing a Shrine to Isis in the *Praedia* (Properties) of Julis Felix in Pompeii"

February 24: Tony Infante: "Action of Iron in Health and Disease: A Delicate Balance."

March 3: John Meerts: "Wesleyan's Financial Situation: An Update"

March 24: Patrick Henry: "Why We Should Study and Teach the Rescuers of Jews During the Holocaust"

April 7: Carolyn Sorkin: "Study Abroad Matters"

April 21: David Schorr: "Goods: The Past Recaptured"

This series of talks has continued to be a central attractive feature of the Wasch Center for the community of retired faculty members and others. Programs were well attended and conversations later are animated and engaging. Mary Klaaren has written

an article of appreciation about the program series to be published in the forthcoming issue of the Wasch Center Newsletter.

Three members of the faculty retired in the past year: Marilyn Katz of the Classics Department, Philip Pomper of the History Department, and Jeremy Zwelling of the Religious Studies Department. We did not hold a special celebration of new retirements this year because of the small number retiring. They were all presented with a Wesleyan Chair in honor of their retirement.

To continue our custom of providing information for faculty members considering retirement, we scheduled 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. We also presented a panel discussion in the spring semester conducted by Bill Firshein, Joyce Lowrie and Mike Lovell for the benefit of senior faculty members who are considering retirement. Both of these occasions were well attended.

### **Movie Series**

This was the fourth year for our movie series, designed and presented by Joe Reed, Professor Emeritus of English. We presented movies on several 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.

**Ann—Can you list here the movies shown during the year. I have misplaced my program.**

### **Mentoring Program**

In collaboration with Sean McCann and the Center for Faculty Career development, we conducted the third 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, 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.

### **Newsletter**

In order to enrich the information about members of Wesleyan's community of retired faculty members, we inaugurated this year a newsletter. Two issues were published, one at the beginning of each semester. The third issue will be distributed early in the first semester of the next year.

The newsletter has been 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. We are searching for a more singular and striking title than "The Newsletter of the Wasch Center for Retired Faculty." But even with this title, everyone seems to agree that the newsletter is most worthwhile.

### **The Wesleyan Institute for Lifelong Learning**

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### **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.

Following is a list of activities and programs scheduled at the Wasch Center throughout the 2009-2010 academic year:

Ann—

Can you provide the listing we need here? Use last year's listing as a guide.

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### **Summary**

The Wasch Center continues to increase the range and scope of its activities each year. The major innovation in the past year is The Wesleyan Institute for Lifelong Learning. It remains to be seen how successful this program is in practice. Initial indications of interest the courses presented is encouraging, but we cannot tell at this point how many actual enrollments will be registered.

One concern is that our support staff, particularly Ann Gertz, is being stretched to the limit in order to keep up with the demands of our programs and activities. If the WILL program becomes established at the level we envisage, it will certainly be necessary to make arrangements for additional staff support for this operation.

Once again, it is important to acknowledge the support and encouragement of Susan and Bill Wasch in the activities of the Center. Without them, of course, there would be no Wasch Center. But they are a constant and supportive presence—both for our Advisory Board as well as for all of the other programs and activities of the Center.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Karl E. Scheibe  
 Director

August 11, 2009