

OSURA NEWS & VIEWS

OSURA Member Profile: Carroll DeKock

Editor's note: This edition's OSURA member profile is an excerpt from a memoir written by Carroll DeKock, a 1999 OSU retiree and emeritus professor in Chemistry. He is a former OSURA treasurer and currently serves as chair of the member services committee.



I was a farm kid. I grew up on 160 acres of prime Iowa land near a little town, Prairie City, about 20 miles east of Des Moines Iowa. From 2nd through 4th grade I rode a Shetland pony 1.5 miles to a one-room country school. We had a hand pump for water and the bathroom was a drop toilet. At recess and noon hours we at times would play cowboy and Indians riding our horses around the school yard. During my fourth-grade year I had four different teachers, none of them very good. The result left considerable time for self-study, much of which I spent reading novels from the school library, discretely hidden behind a rather large geography book. My high school chemistry teacher, Mr. Paul DeJong, was good and was probably responsible for the career I chose.

At the end of my senior year in high school I entered a speech contest. I won the local contests and qualified for the international competition which was held in Ontario, Canada. During that summer I worked for my uncle pulling weeds out of soybeans. It was a boring, tedious job. Every day I would practice this speech. Of course, the only audience I had were the soybeans and the occasional weed I may have missed. My parents drove me to the Young Calvinist Convention in Ontario, Canada. When we arrived, I realized that this was a pretty big deal, there were about 3000 attendees. When I got up to give my speech in front of all these people the first two sentences went fine, but then my brain just froze. The funny thing is that my mouth kept going and within a couple of sentences I was on track again, thanks to the bean field. I won the contest. The prize was full tuition for a semester at Calvin College in Michigan. This was far more money than I made working in the bean field that summer.

Enrolling for college was an interesting experience. I did not apply, because I didn't know that I should, so I just showed up along with everyone else. At that time, one's classes were set by sitting down with a professor who would help you set your curriculum for the semester. I remember very well sitting down with



OSURA Mission Statement

The Oregon State University Retirement Association (OSURA) promotes engagement among OSU retirees and between retirees and the University by providing information, programs, scholarships and volunteer service opportunities that contribute to a rewarding retirement and that support the University's mission.

OSURA Member Profile: Carroll DeKock

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Dr. Carl Sinke, who became my math professor, and expecting to be assigned my classes. He is looking through his paperwork and doesn't see my name in his materials. So he said to me, "Did you apply?" Apply? I didn't know I had to apply. He then sent me to the Dean who asked what kind of student I was. I said that I was salutatorian of my class. That was enough to let me in. I always said that was less painful than filling out application forms.



During my freshman year at Calvin I became good friends with a student from California, Howard Van Til, who had come in second in the infamous speech contest. In the summer of 1957 I needed a job, but could not find anything in the College area and I did not want to go back to the bean field in Iowa. Howard encouraged me to come to California with him as we would be sure to find a job. I did so and it changed my life. I spent three summers in Ripon California and fell in love with the West. I met the love of my life there, Gerry Pasma, and we married in the summer between our junior and senior years. We both graduated from Calvin College in 1960.

Gerry and I moved to Ames Iowa in 1960 where I pursued my PhD in physical chemistry from Iowa State and she taught 2nd grade. Our son Bruce was born in 1963 in Ames. We then moved to Downers

Grove Illinois where I had a postdoctoral fellowship at Argonne National Laboratory for two years. Our daughter Danna was born there in 1967. While at Argonne I did research on the spectroscopy of plutonium tetrachloride in the gas phase. Today, plutonium compounds are recognized as incredibly dangerous. We took precautions, did the work safely and published it, but that is research I would not do today.

In 1967 I was fortunate to receive an offer from Oregon State University to teach and do research in inorganic chemistry. Corvallis has been our home since and a great place to raise a family. Chemistry was a very collegial department with spring and fall picnics and morning coffee enjoyed with both the staff and faculty, many now life-long friends. I became chair of the department in 1984 a position I held until 1998. I am most grateful for the tremendous support of both faculty and staff during my tenure as chair. I also served as Faculty Senate President in 1993-94.

I enjoyed teaching, especially freshman chemistry, where I could spice up the lectures with explosions and demonstrations. One of the latter involved surface tension and a duck, floating in a large plastic wading pool I put in the middle of the lecture room. Addition of soap resulted in wetting of the feathers and reduced buoyancy, much to the consternation of the duck and delight of the students. One could not do this experiment today (SPCA) but years later former students said that was the highlight of their chemistry education.

One of the highlights of my tenure as Chair was working with Milton Harris. Milton would come to town and I would drop everything and spend the greater part of two days or so taking him around campus to meet with various people and talking with him about ways we could strengthen the department. Upon his returning home, I could always expect



a substantial check to the department. Today, the department has a very strong Materials Science program thanks in part to the generosity of Milton Harris. The Harris Society in the OSU Foundation is named for Milton Harris. This is a select group of donors, each of whom has given one million dollars or more to OSU.

Living in the West has been very important for me. I had always wanted to learn to ski, but had not had the opportunity to do so living in the Midwest. Al Scott, a colleague in the department, was an avid skier and he would take Joe Nibler and me along on some of his outings to Hoodoo, Mt Hood, and Mt. Bachelor. We were infected and over the years our families would usually spend spring break skiing at Mt. Bachelor or Mt. Whistler in Canada. That interest continued into retirement. Joe Nibler and I formed an informal ski group that grew to 6 and has been going for 19 years. Guys Ski Week has been a highlight of our winter and we have goaded each other into doing black diamond runs all over the West, both in the US and in Canada.

In 1976 my graduate student Jeff Miller introduced me to the joys of Oregon whitewater. My first raft trip on the Rogue river was with Jeff, my son Bruce (age 12) and a friend of his. At that time a ranger checked for a permit at the beginning of the Wild and Scenic section. When we pulled up to the check point the ranger looked at our permit and our gear and said, "Well, I thought I had seen everything but

I have never seen suitcases on the Rogue". For lack of gear (dry bags), we had put our clothes in plastic bags and then put them in old suitcases. Rafting then morphed into a passion for whitewater kayaking. In addition to the Grand Canyon and the Rogue I have boated many other rivers in Oregon as well as rivers in Idaho, Washington, California and British Columbia. Highlights of kayaking were three trips on the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, with the last one at age 70.



Interest in backyard birds led Gerry and I into birding as a hobby. We have done a few international birding trips including South Africa, Kenya and Tanzania, Costa Rica and Brazil. Now that I am in my early 80's life is slowing down. A number of years ago Emery Castle (whom many of you will remember) and I started reading non-fiction books and then discussing them together. That has grown into a full-fledged book club with 6 members. I have also enjoyed volunteering at Finley National Wildlife Refuge. Finally, gardening has always been a passion. If you come by, I will be delighted to take you around the garden, come in spring and enjoy the daffodils and tulips.

Fall Startup

Contributed by Christopher Mathews



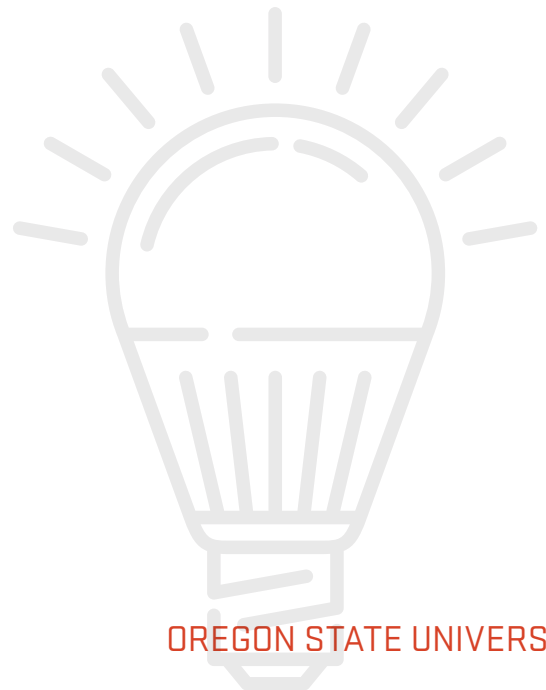
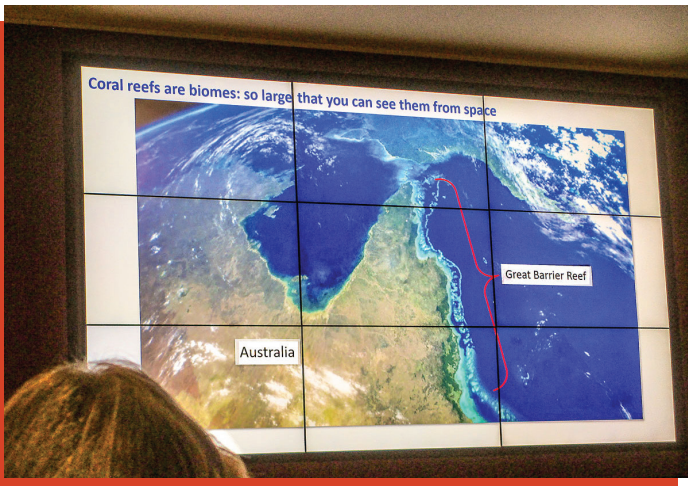
On September 21 OSURA staged its opening event in the 2019-2020 program of activities—the 2019 Fall Startup. This year’s program, held in the MU Horizon Room, featured work being done at OSU to help deal with bleaching of coral reefs worldwide as a consequence of global climate change. The program began with a screening of “Saving Atlantis,” an OSU-produced film on coral bleaching, narrated by Peter Coyote and featuring several OSU faculty members and students. Next the 45 attendees were treated to a delicious dinner, prepared and served by OSU Catering. The after-dinner activity featured a talk by Virginia Weis, Distinguished Professor and Head, OSU Department of Integrative Biology. Virginia. She graduated from Yale University in 1984 and earned her Ph.D. at UCLA in 1990. After postdoctoral fellowships at USC and the Hopkins Marine Laboratory she came to OSU in 1996 as

Assistant Professor of Zoology. She developed an active research program focused on the symbiotic relations between corals and the photosynthetic organisms that give them most of their energy for growth and differentiation. She rose steadily through the ranks at OSU and in 2019 was named Distinguished Professor.

One of the locations highlighted in “Saving Atlantis,” a reef called Varadero off the coast of Colombia, was on the brink of being destroyed to make way for a new shipping channel to serve a busy port. But the film has helped rally opposition to that project, and so far, at least, the reef has been spared.



My review of our records show in 2015 a Fall Startup program featuring the OSU choral program. From chorale to coral in just four years! What will be featured in the 2020 Startup? Stay tuned!



President's Message

By Mike Schuyler, OSURA President



OSU's President Ed Ray is nearing the end of his amazing 17 years of service. Ray is now passing the torch to our newly appointed president, F. King Alexander, who comes to us from Louisiana State University. Ed Ray has been president of OSU for nearly half the time I've been here. He has led campus enrollment to nearly double, from just a little over 16,000 in the early 1990s to 31,700 currently (including OSU-Cascades and Ecampus). Walking around campus you not only see lots of students but also many new and updated buildings. His fundraising has been spectacular.

The OSU president participates daily in the life of the campus, meeting with students, faculty and staff regularly. We see him at athletic events too! I was surprised when he took a seat next to me for two women's basketball games in Gill Coliseum during the NCAA tournament last spring (I guess he couldn't get his regular seat). He was an enthusiastic and LOUD fan for the team. President Ray has been a steady promoter of OSURA from the start. His administration has provided essential staff from the University Events office, financial support, much appreciated discounts on parking, and other perks. We thank you, President Ray, for all you've done! We hope he will join us for future OSURA activities. If the president wasn't already an OSURA member, we'd ask him to take advantage of our free, one-year membership available to newly retired faculty and staff.

OSURA volunteers helped the university this fall at two flu shot clinics and two campus lectures. These activities are fun, and the best part is interacting with former colleagues whom we don't see as often. I hope we might again be asked to help with graduation ceremonies this June, too. When you receive an invitation to volunteer for some activity, please consider accepting.

OSURA is a member of the Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education (AROHE). That organization recently asked us to tell them a bit about our own operations and composition. In the Winter 2019 newsletter, former OSURA President Chris Mathew wrote a brief and scholarly report about how OSURA is somewhat unusual compared to other retirement associations. OSURA boasts membership from retired staff as well as retired faculty. If you haven't read the winter 2019 president's message, I encourage you visit our website to read it.

Another recent article showcased OSURA's six scholarships recipients for 2019-20. The Scholarship committee enjoys reading the applications from students whose studies focus on healthy aging. If you are interested in serving on this rewarding committee, please let me know. Furthermore, other OSURA committees are described on the website. We welcome new participants!

I look forward to meeting more OSURA members this year.

Mike Schuyler
OSURA president 2019-2020

OSURA Visits Stahlbush Island Farm

Contributed by Bobbi Hall

In 1985, almost 35 years ago, Bill and Karla Chambers bought property on Stahlbush Island. This marked the origins of a company that has made history as well as good food. Stahlbush Island Farm has contributed to Oregon communities in many ways that OSURA members learned about in a whirlwind 2-hour tour on October 10, 2019.

OSU graduate and Stahlbush employee Brecklin Milton set up our tour and provided introductions. Karla Chambers, co-founder, her son Carl Chambers, and Lauren Kahle, Bio Plant manager, provided our tour. They showed us fields, explained how crops are chosen and rotated, and took us to the Bio Gas operation that produces electricity and puts crop waste to good use. We saw just the outside: an enormous couple of buildings linked by pipes! Additionally, Carl and Lauren described the farm's business plan and showed that on this farm sustainability means getting value from all parts of a product. Using waste productively, creating a sustainable farm, meeting customers' needs, and staying ahead of the market were lessons taught by this team. In 1997, Stahlbush Island Farm was the first farm ever to be certified as sustainable by the Food Alliance, a national nonprofit that provides third-party certification of sustainable agricultural and food handling practices.

Using corn, Karla gave an example of their sustainable no-waste approach. About one third of their corn crop provides food for sale while stalks and cobs are digested to provide natural gas for heat and for electricity. Excess electricity is sold to the power company while the remaining waste is composted to enrich soils. Stahlbush uses a 7-year rotation plan and grows cover crops to promote soil fertility.

Other business tips include staying ahead of market trends, providing what the customer wants, re-investing in the farm, and managing debt. Using local machinery and hiring local people are essential parts of the business model. Emphasis of this family-based business is on working with local businesses and hiring within the community rather than outsourcing. In what began as an avocation, Karla's art has been shown in art galleries in major cities as well as being used in marketing, in publications aimed at teaching children about nutrition, and on Stahlbush frozen food packages. In addition to her farm-related work, Karla Chambers has served on the Governor's Wildfire Council and in other capacities.



OSURA Visits Stahlbush Island Farm

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Half of the OSURA group in the conference room where Karla Chambers told us the history and practices of the farm.



Several of Karla's pictures displayed in the conference room, with Brecklin at the right.



The Rooster, one of many art objects that make the entire site a pleasure to visit.



Lauren Kahle describing the BioGas operation.



Karla, talking in the conference room, with Brecklin Milton at the left.

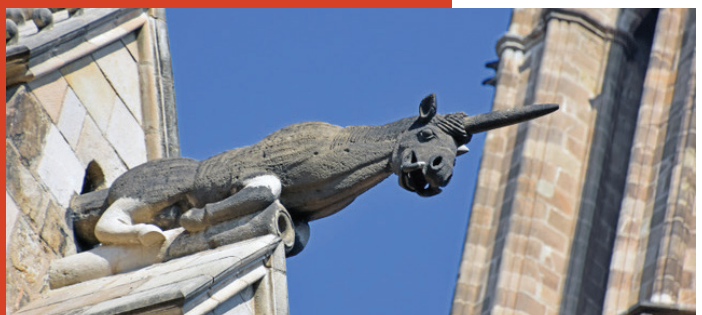


Carl Chambers in the field, describing how customers order crops and how fields are chosen for planting.

OSURA Travelshare: European River Cruising Experiences

Contributed by Tom Savage

Forty members of the Travel Share Interest Group met on November 7th at the OSU Foundation Building. Tom and Sue Savage presented a most enjoyable and informative account contrasting past ocean cruises to their recent river-cruising adventures in Europe (Budapest to Amsterdam in 14 days and Paris to Barcelona in 10 days). The river cruises offered a 'floating 'hotel room with constantly changing views, superb meals with wines, small numbers of fellow travelers, and numerous tours. What a way to see many European countries with their ancient cathedrals, abbeys, medieval cities, and castles along the Danube, Rhine, Main, Rhone rivers. Visiting the many cities situated along the rivers allowed them to appreciate the once vast land holdings, engineering accomplishments, and the economy of ancient Rome as witnessed by the many ruins. With the relaxed pace of a river cruise, there was so much to see and photograph, so plan to bring a large capacity memory card for the camera so you can relive the experiences. Next destination, the Douro River Valley, Portugal. There are several river cruise lines on the navigational rivers of Europe so do your research.



OSURA Hosts Pre-retirement Workshop

Contributed by Carroll DeKock

In November, the Member Services Committee held a workshop for 24 pre-retirees titled “Planning for Retirement: Exploring Opportunities, Surprises and Concerns Beyond Finances.” Dr. Carolyn Aldwin, director for the Center of Healthy Aging at OSU, presented an overview of issues to think about when considering retirement. After her presentation, a panel of retired OSURA members that included Terri Tower, Gordon Reistad, Mary Flahive and Carroll DeKock shared about an activity, plan or hobby that was important to them in their retirement.

Retirement is a major life transition and requires planning for other than just financial matters. This workshop explored these areas and illustrated some aspects of the physical, psychological, and social dimensions of retirement. The overall impression is that the program was well received. Due to high demand, the committee plans to hold another pre-retirement workshop in late spring.

What is the OSURA Scholarship?

The OSU Retirement Association provides scholarship support to undergraduate students at Oregon State University who are pursuing a course of study that may lead to a career promoting healthy aging. That term includes all aspects of “health” — physical, emotional, social or financial.

Currently enrolled OSU undergraduate students who have completed at least one academic year at OSU, have a cumulative GPA of 3.4 or above, and have at least one year of study remaining towards their first bachelor’s (BA or BS) degree, are encouraged to apply.

These scholarships are funded entirely by the generous contributions of OSURA members. Please consider a donation to our OSURA scholarship fund.

The scholarship amount may be up to \$2,000 per person and will be awarded at the OSURA Annual Meeting in May 2020. Funds will be distributed into student accounts for the 2020-2021 academic year.

The deadline for application is **4:30PM on Monday, March 9, 2020.** To apply or for more info, visit osura.oregonstate.edu/osura-scholarship.





What's happening? SAVE THESE DATES!

Wednesday, Feb. 5 from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

"The US and Iran: Misfortune and Missed Opportunities"

by Jonathan Katz, Professor of History

OSU Foundation Boardroom, 4238 SW Research Way, Corvallis, Oregon

Thursday, Feb. 13 from 3 to 4 p.m.

"How Long Do You Want to Live?" by Dr. Robert Poole

OSU Foundation Boardroom, 4238 SW Research Way, Corvallis, Oregon

Friday, Feb. 28

Oregon State University Women's Basketball vs. Washington

4 to 5:30 p.m. Social with Coach Scott Rueck and Dinner, LaSells Stewart Center

6 p.m. Women's Basketball Game, Gill Coliseum

Wednesday, March 11

OSURA Scholarship application deadline

More info at osura.oregonstate.edu/osura-scholarship.

Thursday, March 12 from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

OSURA Travel Share Program

"Travel in Northern Europe by ship, plane, and train"

with Simon and Deb Johnson

OSU Foundation Boardroom, 4238 SW Research Way, Corvallis, Oregon

Spring 2020

Goss Stadium Tour

Thursday, May 7, Time TBD

OSU Historic District Walking Tour with Larry Landis, Director,

Special Collections & Archives Research Center

Tour begins at the Valley Library

Friday, May 15 from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.

OSURA Annual Meeting and Member Social

OSU Foundation Boardroom

4238 SW Research Way, Corvallis, Oregon

Fall 2020

OSURA Fall Start Up

For more information on upcoming OSURA events visit, osura.oregonstate.edu.

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