

The Association of Retired Faculty and Professional Staff

Emeritus News

Summer 2021

► My Corner

*"If there ever comes a day when we can't be together, keep me in your heart, I'll stay there forever."
- Winnie the Pooh*

By Barbara Mallette



A year has passed since our state was locked down and we were quarantined. With the arrival of spring and greater availability of COVID-19 vaccines, hope glimmers on the horizon. Daffodils brightens many lawns in our area; forsythia bushes offer significant floral competition. And the primroses are magnificent already! Magnolia trees have buds; we await their flowers with great anticipation. Lilac leaves have sprouted and the promise of fragrant blooms will be a reality sometime in early May. Our tulips have flower buds behind plastic fencing to ward off deer. Although they are not fragrant, tulip flowers are nature's evidence that spring has truly arrived in Western New York. Winter has left its mark on our yard but warm weather provides the right conditions for yard work.



In our eagerness to embrace warmer weather, we planted a row of lettuce, arugula and radishes. Folly you think? These plants germinate even if the temperatures drop (and they will in Cassadaga!). Plans for the rest of the garden are in progress as well as plans to divide perennials whose roots holler for more room. We focus on tasks that engage our bodies and mind, and bring us much needed joy.



For as long as I can remember, we were three sisters (until a fourth daughter was born many years later). Our parents often dressed the three of us alike and we played together all day as children. More importantly, we loved being around each other as adults. Losing a sister, especially a younger sister, is hard to fathom. After visiting my sister more than a year ago, my most recent socialization was seeing via her older son's Smartphone as she lay in Hospice; she passed away on my father's birthday in March. But the draw to her spirit and our memories on a daily basis is unbelievable. We will celebrate her life when the three remaining sisters and their families can safely gather. For now, I cherish the time we had together.

All of us have suffered during this past year. We have lost loved ones and some of our favorite restaurants or businesses have closed permanently. But Western New Yorkers are known for their toughness as well as their generosity. There is hope on the horizon for a better time.

Stay safe. Wear a face mask. Get vaccinated!

*"Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come
whispering 'it will be happier.'"
- Alfred Tennyson*

Please email Dawn Hunt at dawn.hunt@fredonia.edu or call 716-673-3456 if you are interested in receiving the Emeritus newsletter by email.

► Save the Date

- **President's Award for Excellence Recognition—Postponed to October 13, 2021**

The annual recognition luncheon has been moved to Wednesday, October 13 at 12:00 PM in the Williams Center, Multipurpose Room. We will communicate more information as we approach the event this fall.

► How can you add to your enjoyment of Spring 2021?

- Take a virtual tour of the United States Botanical Garden.
<https://www.google.com/maps/@38.8878608,-77.0136689,2a,90y,268.21h,68.03t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1sjx2t0ltYScuf3mo0OyZEvG!2e0!7i13312!8i6656>
- *Gardens Illustrated* offers the opportunity to tour 12 incredible gardens virtually.
<https://www.gardensillustrated.com/gardens/gardens-to-visit/virtual-garden-tours-best/>
- The National Parks Foundation provides a number of virtual tours of parks across our country.
<https://www.nationalparks.org/connect/blog/take-virtual-visit-national-park>
- You can visit the RHS Chelsea Flower Show from the comfort of your home without traveling across the pond.
<https://www.360virtualtour.co/portfolio/rhs-chelsea-flower-show/>
- Please visit the events calendar for upcoming public events. <https://events.fredonia.edu/>
- Rockefeller Arts Center, visit the website for up-to-date information.
<https://www.fredonia.edu/about/rockefeller-arts-center>
- Greystone Nature Preserve, <https://www.greystonenaturepreserve.com/>

► Update Your Contact Information

Have you moved, changed your email address or phone number? If so, please let us know so we can update the Emeritus database. Please help us help mailing costs by receiving the newsletter by email. Just email dawn.hunt@fredonia.edu or call 716-673-3456.

Informational Website

Retired Public Employees Association –
<https://rpea.org/> - Sign up for informational emails and RPEA newsletters.

► Updates from President Stephen H. Kolison, Jr.

Distinguished Professor Announcement



I am pleased to announce that Dr. James Davis, Professor of Musicology and Chair of the Music History Area in the Fredonia School of Music has been appointed as a State University of New York Distinguished Professor. An internationally renowned musicologist with an expertise in the music of the American Civil War, Dr. Davis is known for his meticulous on-site archival research and his large body of groundbreaking published work, especially his two books with the University of Nebraska Press, a leading academic press for publications devoted to military history.

The Distinguished Professorship is conferred upon individuals who have achieved national or international prominence and a distinguished reputation within a chosen field. The distinction is attained through significant contributions to the research literature or through artistic performance or achievement. Dr. Davis is the latest example of the tremendous faculty leading our students to academic success at Fredonia. Please join me in extending congratulations to Dr. Davis!

Chancellor's Awards for Excellence

Chancellor Malatras has awarded the following excellence awards to Fredonia employees:

- Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Classified Service - Leah Betts
- Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities - Joe Dan Harper
- Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching - Michael Joseph Igoe
- Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching - David Kaplin
- Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Professional Service - Kevin Lane
- Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Professional Service - Tracy Stenger

I look forward to officially presenting our awardees with their certificates and medallions at the All-Campus Meeting in August.

Commencement

Hundreds of graduates took part in-person in four stage walks this semester. Now, all of us will be able to watch these recorded events as part of the Commencement video celebration, www.fredonia.edu/classof2021.

FREDHeroes

Given the extraordinary nature of this academic year, it is not difficult to imagine the amount of effort it took to conclude this year safely and successfully. I have acknowledged the efforts exerted by all in getting us through this semester. I also recognized our supporters and well-wishers everywhere for the things that they have done to get us here. Among those supporters are donors whose generosity made differences in the lives of our students during this challenging academic year. I am very grateful to all our donors.

Renovation of Houghton Hall

The Departments of Physics, Geology and Computer Science will be moving into their newly assigned and renovated spaces this summer. The final construction phase, which includes the state-of-the-art facilities for the Department of Mathematics and additional classrooms, should be completed in time for Spring 2022 classes. You are going to like what awaits you in Houghton Hall.



Hope for Next Fall

I continue to be encouraged by reports that many individuals are fully vaccinated. I believe this will provide us with the layer of security needed for a more extensive in-person instruction. As I indicated previously, we are planning for in-person classes and extracurricular activities in the fall. At the same time, we will have contingencies in place to allow us to revert to our current modality should there be a need to do so.

► Emeritus Spotlight—Colin Plaister

By Barbara Mallette

*"Earn your success based on service to others, not at the expense of others."
- H. Jackson Brown Jr.*



Although Mr. and Mrs. Mathew Plaister were from Newport Wales, they were living in Bristol England when they welcomed their son, Colin, into the world. They remained in Bristol until Colin was three years old. When opportunity arose for them to join Mr. Plaister's sister's family in Amsterdam, New York, they boarded the Queen Elizabeth for the trip to America. Colin's dad worked for Niagara Mohawk and his mom worked in the meat department of Empire Super Market in Amsterdam. The Plaisters owned a motorcycle with a side car. The family often motored the countryside. Sitting with his mother in the sidecar, Colin's love for motorcycling was born.

Colin completed elementary, middle, and high school in Amsterdam. He recalled with fondness his memory of becoming an American citizen at age 8, wearing a cardigan sweater and button-down shirt to the naturalization ceremony. After graduating from high school in 1968, Colin enrolled in Fulton County Community College; during summers, he worked for Niagara Mohawk. With an associate's degree in hand in Electrical Technology, Colin scouted out potential SUNY schools. After much thought, Fredonia became his first choice, and off he headed to the western border of New York State. Fredonia was a draw because of its country-like setting and its distance from Amsterdam. Colin moved into Igoe Hall, then Schulz Hall, and majored in Elementary Education. His first year meant trekking to classes in Old Main, where the Education Department was housed. He recalled many of his professors with fondness. Colin thrived in the Education Program.

Colin's interest in media began as a work study student. He managed to juggle work study duties with academics. His student teaching assignment in Falconer cemented Colin's love of working with people. Offered a position in grades 5/6 in Ripley after graduation, Colin jumped at the chance for his own classroom. Because the school was in dire need of a women's basketball coach, Colin volunteered even though he knew very little about basketball. He grew fond of the players and the great run they had to the county championship game.

At the end of the school year, Colin made the decision to resign, and with a packed rucksack and a buddy, he traveled to Europe. A Eurail Pass and youth hostel stays allowed him to travel to 17 countries in 4 months including his native England. Colin returned to Amsterdam (NY) after his trek to Europe. Times were tough there; jobs were scarce. With limited choices at home, Colin applied and was accepted into Graduate School at Fredonia. In his "free time," he bartended at the Caboose and worked for the college in the Instructional Resource Center. In 1975, Colin was hired in a provisional one-year appointment. He earned two Master's Degrees: Education Curriculum (1978) and Arts in Special Studies (1981). Instead of the traditional thesis, Colin proposed to reorganize the Teacher Education Materials Center. His proposal was well received by the Deans and Vice Presidents, and the Thompson Hall Media Center was born with Colin as its director.

The Media Center became the point of contact for all things audiovisual on the campus. Resources were added every year, and soon the graphics lab offered poster boards, Ellison die machines, lamination, and binding services to students and area teachers. Many afternoons the lab was bustling with students making presentation boards, student teachers crafting cut-outs for their lessons, and teachers laminating classroom materials. For many years, Colin taught a 3-credit class called "Use of Instructional Media" for the Education Department.

The Media Center was part of the Instructional Resource Center (IRC) that addressed Fredonia's technological needs. He credits the success of the Media Center and IRC to its fantastic staff (too many to mention by name!) and its focus on customer service. Further development occurred when the IRC morphed into Academic Instructional Technology (AIT). Colin also spoke about his work with the Information Technology Advisory Board (ITAB) on the three-year computer laboratory renovations and conversion of classrooms to "Smart Classrooms." His role as Director reaffirmed the importance of IRC/AIT service to the campus. Colin speaks highly of Fredonia faculty, students, and staff with whom he regularly interacted. Did you know that the IRC participated in the Buffalo Bills Summer Camp at Fredonia? All films taken during practice were developed daily so the team could review them in McEwen Hall each night. Clad in a trench coat and Stetson hat, Colin starred in a series of Buffalo Bills "Mission Possible" commercials, aired on Channel 4!

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► Emeritus Spotlight continued—Colin Plaister

We remember the IRC's important function on campus and in the community. Its effort in preparing Steele Hall for commencement and televising the ceremony helped make the day more memorable for our students. The annual *Talk to Santa Program* brought the campus and community together for over 25 years. Children relished the opportunity to call Santa each holiday season.

Colin served as Treasurer of the Alumni Association for many years. He co-advised Fredonia's student-run television station, WNYF. Colin's extraordinary service to the University was recognized with the President's Award for Excellence in Professional Service in 1993 and the Alumni Meritorious Service Award in 2000.



Colin on opening day this year!

A love of skiing got Colin involved in coordinating a PE course, *Beginning Skiing*, held at Cockaigne on Tuesday nights for over a decade. He also served as an advisor for the Fredonia Ski Club for over 25 years. Until last year, students in the club hit Holiday Valley's slopes every Sunday night and enjoyed winter break treks to Killington.

Family plays an important part in Colin's life. Spending time with his wife, Marjorie, and their three sons, Matt, Jeff, and Brendan, is his priority. Highlights include a family trip to Italy and Greece, and visits to 16 Major League Baseball stadiums. With Marjorie's recent retirement from the Career Development Office, Colin hopes they can do more with family and friends, especially when COVID restrictions are eased. Colin regaled his journey from Fredonia work study student to a professional position, and then director. He recalled with great fondness the campus, its faculty and staff. In retirement, Colin continues to ski locally and enjoyed ski trips to New England, Canada and Utah in pre-COVID times, and looks forward to more adventures. He jumped at the chance to crew on a sailboat through the Welland Canal and recalls leaving the harbor when the tall ships were docked in Buffalo. In decent weather, Colin can be seen tooling around the Fredonia area (and beyond) on his motorcycle or in one of his British sports cars.

"Technology is the campfire around which we tell our stories."
- Anthony Robbins

► In Memoriam of Campus Employees

Dr. David F. Evans III passed away on April 5, 2021. Dr. Evans joined the State University of New York at Fredonia in 1976 as an Assistant Professor in the School of Music. Prior to his retirement as Professor in 1999, he served as Chair of Ensembles and Chair of Voice Faculty in the School of Music.

As travel is difficult at this time, there will be no memorial service. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations be sent to either the S.P.C.A. or to the David Evans Voice Performance Scholarship, c/o the Fredonia College Foundation, 272 Central Avenue, Fredonia, NY 14063.

Mr. Daniel O'Rourke passed away on March 15, 2021. Mr. O'Rourke joined the State University of New York at Fredonia in 1974 as the Director of Human Resources and in 1992 was promoted to Assistant Vice President for Human Resources. He was responsible for personnel, union relations, affirmative action and payroll. He retired in 1996.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in Mr. O'Rourke's memory to the Chautauqua County Rural Ministry, Box 682, Dunkirk, NY, 14048.

A memorial mass will be held at Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Dunkirk, on July 24 at 11:00 AM to celebrate his life.

Dr. J. Carter Rowland passed away on January 26, 2021. Dr. Rowland provided many years of extraordinary service to Fredonia—in many roles; as Chairperson and Professor of English from 1967 to 1972 and again in 1988, Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs in 1972, followed by Vice President for Academic Affairs from 1973 to 1977, and again in 1978. Additionally he served twice as SUNY Fredonia's Acting President in 1977 and 1984 and as Acting Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies at SUNY Central Administration from 1989-90. He retired from Fredonia in 1993, but continued to teach as an Adjunct Professor until 1995.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations in his memory to: Your local Special Olympics program or Special Olympics USA

<https://www.specialolympics.org/programs> or Holy Trinity Church, 1032 Central Avenue, Dunkirk, NY 14048, www.holytrinitydunkirk.org.

Online condolences may be made at <https://www.larsontimkofuneralhome.com/>

Dr. Douglas H. Shepard passed away on March 7, 2021. Dr. Shepard was employed at the State University of New York at Fredonia in the English Department from 1962 until his retirement in 1985. During his tenure, Dr. Shepard was an invaluable member of the department as a bibliographer.

The family asks that donations in Dr. Shepard's name be made to the Darwin R. Barker Historical Museum or the Fredonia Opera House.

Online condolences may be made at <https://www.larsontimkofuneralhome.com/>