



Emeritus and Retired Faculty Newsletter

SPRING 2021

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Letter from the Chair

Dear emeritus, retired, and ABE friends:

We are excited to release the second annual issue of the ABE emeritus and retired newsletter. We received many positive responses from the first edition, and we hope to keep up the enthusiasm! If you have ideas or suggestions for future newsletters, please send to Shannon Noble (Shannon.noble@ufl.edu) or Kati Migliaccio (klwhite@ufl.edu). Our goal is to also host an in person event for our emeritus and retired friends later this year – so please watch for an email about this event next fall.

As department chair, I have learned and experienced different parts of departmental life than I did as a faculty member. One thing that has made a significant impression on me is the sense of community and family amongst our founding members and alumni. The support system and network that built our department helped to create the culture we have today, one of caring for our students, nurturing faculty development, and striving for excellence.

An example of this can be seen in the passing of one of our first six faculty, Professor Rush Choate. Prof. Choate was a member of our faculty for 39 years, the first professional licensed Agricultural Engineer in Florida, and a Fellow of ASAE. His son, Allan Choate, reached out to the department when he passed, and we shared the news. The response of positive memories and old stories was inspirational.

Prof. Choate was a strong supporter of the discipline and the department. In an article published in 1993 by our Professional Society ASAE (now ASABE) he wrote “Agricultural engineering – an inclusive term with emphasis on the professional area – has a longstanding identification with the most basic of human needs, food. Delivery of engineering services, positively impacting the quality of life in the areas of food, water, energy and environmental quality, is an established characteristic of the agricultural engineering profession.” – Viable Destiny, Agricultural engineering as a profession will endure, Agricultural Engineering, May 1993

This excerpt speaks to his passion for the discipline and his commitment to service of the profession. His contributions and others are still felt in how we operate today – in the UF ABE department and the ASABE society.

As a faculty member running around and trying to get the to-do list done, we often lose sight of the bigger picture and how our actions will create policy, culture, and scholarship that will be the foundation for the next generation. I am so thankful for those who came before me, as our foundation is very strong and we owe that to our predecessors, including Prof. Choate.

I hope you enjoy this issue of our newsletter.

Best regards,
Kati Migliaccio

C. Direlle Baird

Professor Emeritus

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Family Update

Our daughter, Sally and her husband Steve both work with the VA hospital in Gainesville. We miss our daughter, Julie, who we lost to breast cancer four years ago. Her husband, Bill is an anesthesiologist in Tallahassee. Our oldest granddaughter Sydney and her husband, Kyle Koehne (former Gator football player) live in Indianapolis, where Sydney is an Administrative Assistant and Kyle is a football coach. Skylar, our younger granddaughter recently got a new job in the office of the Florida Attorney General. Grandsons, Nick and Matt with degrees from Florida State University are searching for career opportunities. Skylar and Matt are enrolled in advanced on-line courses at UF.

Career Update

After I retired in 2002, I worked as a mechanical engineer for Fluor Engineering on FEMA projects during national emergencies. My last project was assessing the damages (\$140 million) to the Freedom Tower in New York caused by Hurricane Sandy. FEMA does not seem to be hiring many civilian contractors in recent years.

Other Updates

We are continuing our normal schedule of calling Gainesville our home and spending the summer and most of the fall in Tennessee near The Smoky Mountains. Judy and I have no major health problems and are able to continue their normal activities of cheering for the Gators and enjoying the Smoky Mountains and the Shows in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee.



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2

Photo Captions

1. Baird Family
2. View of Smoky Mountains from Baird Cabin

R. Bruce Curry

Visiting Professor

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Family Update

Roberta and I have lived at The North Florida Retirement Village in Gainesville for 17+ years. Our son Rob passed away two years ago. Prior to his death he was a professor at the Haskell Indian Nations University in Kansas. Our son's widow and their two children live in the Kansas City area. Our daughter, R. Elaine Turner lives in Gainesville and is Dean of UF College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. Her husband, Allen, will retire in May from UF Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. Our daughter has two sons. One lives in Cleveland, Ohio, and works for an Electrical Engineering company. The other son lives in San Francisco, California, and works for Google.

Career Update

In 1955, after receiving my bachelor's degree at Kansas State and my master's degree at Colorado State, I arrived at the University of Missouri to teach and work on a Ph.D. It was there that I met Roberta who was on the Home Economics faculty. When I received my degree we moved to Wooster, Ohio, where I accepted a position at the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. After 27 years I was offered a chance to take early retirement, it was at this point that Bob Peart called me and suggested that I come to Florida and help him with some of his projects for six months. We came in November and enjoyed the winter here so much that some 30+ years later we are still in Gainesville. I enjoyed working with the UF faculty many who were old friends from up north and some were new friends that I became acquainted with here. Most of our work was on modeling the effect of Climate Change on US Crop Production.



Photo Caption

Old Folks at Home

Other Updates

Moving to The Village in 2003 opened up a whole new world for us, the world of senior living. When you have dining facilities, housekeeping, lawn and home maintenance and the availability of health care it frees up time to do other things, in our case we chose to help our fellow residents by serving on the Resident Council (we both served as president) and when asked have both served on The Village Corporate Advisory Board. In addition I edited The Cottage Courier, a monthly newsletter for the Cottages where we live, and still serve on the Foundation Board and the Scholarship Committee. Roberta was Chairman of the Dining Services Committee for many years (have you ever tried to please 500+ seniors from all over the country and the world). She still serves on that committee as well as the Activities and Performing Arts Committee. In addition she is participating in a Mask Making project that has made over 800 masks for residents and associates. We are happy to say we are still volunteering at 90+.

Richard C. Fluck

Professor Emeritus

Family Update

Our two married grandchildren are settling into their own homes in Fuquay-Varina, North Carolina, and Atlanta, Georgia.

Other Update

Life is beginning to return to a new normal; we are leaving Zoom and GoToMeeting behind for in-person worship, Sunday School and small group meetings. A recent entertainment feature was grocery shopping at Publix!

Photo Captions

1. Our North Carolina farm
2. Seven grandchildren and two spouses



Jerry Gaffney

USDA Adjunct Faculty

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Family Update

Jerry is still working, getting older and wiser, and having fun doing it. Evelyn fell and broke her arm in December 2019 and again in January 2021 but she is recovering fine now.

Career Update

I retired from USDA/UF Agricultural Engineering in January 1991 and began my new career by starting my own company, Gaffney Engineering. Currently I am designing and selling ultra accurate temperature measurement instrumentation under the name GEC Instruments. Last year was my biggest year ever in terms of sales. My customers include NASA and a worldwide company that makes robots for surgery.

Gerald W. Isaacs

Professor Emeritus

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Family Update

Phyllis passed away on December 10, 2020 due to a stroke just nine days from her 92nd birthday. We have been living in one of 45 cottages at the Village of Gainesville for the past five years.

Our family is still growing with our 12th great-grandchild expected in March. We have really enjoyed watching our kids be grandparents.

Career Update

I haven't attended a live ASABE meeting for about five years, but I am enjoying the virtual meetings for ASABE, the Retired University Faculty Gainesville Rotary, and the ABE seminars.

James W. (Jim) Jones

Distinguished Professor Emeritus

Family Update

Jean and I are still not traveling and going anywhere except grocery store, pharmacy, and doctors. We are happy that on Saturday, we will have the last COVID vaccination, and we are planning a few trips by car this summer and fall. Our hope that life will get back to (almost) normal by summer, when we will feel a bit more confident in going places, but still being cautious about where and how we will go.

Career Update

I am still mostly retired, which means that I am working about 40 h per week now, still working on several projects that support the ABE department and UF. I am working with Gerrit Hoogenboom, Melanie Correll, Ken Boote, and Eduardo Vallejos (Horticulture) on incorporating genetic data into dynamic crop models, exploring new ways for using "big data" to parameterize model responses to genes and environmental conditions. More broadly, I am working with Kati Migliaccio and ASABE leadership to support the new ASABE initiative on use of circularity principles to transform food and agricultural systems to be more sustainable and efficient across the production through use of food and other products. Part of this effort includes working with the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine to advance systems approaches and interdisciplinary teams to address food and agricultural system challenges. This keeps me busy, which is good due to constraints imposed by COVID.

Donald Price

Vice President for Research and Professor Emeritus

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Family Update

Joyce and I continue to struggle with health issues. Perils of reaching 80's. Like everyone, we are anxious for the virus to go away so we can hug our children and grandchildren. Most of our excursions are to Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, which is our favorite getaway place. We have 10 grands scattered from Alaska, Montana, and Florida. We have 4 great grands and expecting 5th in April. All of or greats are residing in Anchorage, Alaska.

Career Update

I am mostly completely retired. I am finishing up my work for National Science Foundation (NSF). I have one NSF Research Center that I work with and that will conclude this year. Fortunately most of the effort is through virtual meetings and many Zoom conferences.

Other Update

Like so many, I grieved the loss of my mentor and Ph.D. major professor, Dr. Bob Peart. Also the loss of Dr. Issacs' beloved wife was a sad time. My relationship with the Issacs goes back to 1957 when I started my college days at Purdue.

Photo Captions

1. We still Vacation at Sanibel three weeks in July.
2. We continue to adopt foreign student at UF for time they are here.
3. Enjoyed many farewell parties with NFS Research Centers.



Lawrance Shaw

Professor Emeritus

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Family Update

Elizabeth and I will celebrate our 55th Wedding Anniversary this summer, and we hope to be able to go to Easton, Maine, where we were married and where there will be an all-class reunion of Easton High School that was canceled last year. Held every five years, it attracts alumni from near and far. Five years ago we celebrated our 50th anniversary here in Gainesville with our 50th edition of the Ford Thunderbird on display at a local car show.

Career Update

I am keeping my credentials current with the renewal of my P.E. license this year.

Other Update

When the dealership for International Harvester in Ocala closed, I bought the 1913 auto wagon (antique truck) that they had on display. It had been used in a pine plantation in the panhandle. The engine block had been frozen at least three times and welded up for a repair. Irek Debicki, one of my former students, did a computer-aided drawing of the two cylinders and sent them to a foundry in South Dakota where new cylinders were cast. They were shipped back to me and I have been doing the machining.

Photo Captions

1. Elizabeth and I celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary with our 50th anniversary edition of the Ford Thunderbird.
2. A 1913 International Harvester autowagon, similar to the one that I am still working on.
3. One of the engine cylinders that I had recast in South Dakota and then I finished machining it on the lathe.



Glen Smerage

Associate Professor Emeritus

Life Update

I retired April 30, 2004. Over the next two years, I closed out my musical and other activities in Gainesville and prepared our house for sale. Barbara and I returned to the West in mid-2006, to Santa Fe, New Mexico, it has been an excellent move. Santa Fe is the right place for our last one to two chapters. Although a bit smaller than Gainesville, it is a significant center for the arts—visual, performing, literary, culinary; that is what drew us.

We spend a lot of time in galleries, museums, concert halls & theaters, and eating a lot of food, emphasis on chile and margarita. New Mexico is semi-arid desert, with mountains for hiking and skiing and much natural beauty. At 7,000 feet, Santa Fe has four full seasons. Our house has beautiful views of open space and two mountain ranges and access to walking trails.

In coming to Santa Fe, I intended to become very active in its music scene, but that was not long to be. In 2008, my left hand began getting weak and less dexterous, and my last performance was August 15, 2010. I have not touched piano since. I always enjoyed performing, but now I can only grudgingly observe other people perform.

Musically, Santa Fe offers much: a famous, two-month opera season, a six-week chamber music festival, and a one-month choral festival, all in summer; a symphony, a chamber music ensemble, flamenco, mariachi, and a significant music association for outside performers complete each year. There also is much music in Albuquerque. We attend very often. Santa Fe also has several big, annual festivals we enjoy, e.g., Indian Market, Hispanic Market, Fiesta de Santa Fe.

We have a rear patio and ramada designed for large events, usually four per summer, each involving food and music: arias and pizza, flamenco and lasagna, mariachi and something, and New England clambake. During cold months, we continue with indoor events. We were active with many people in Gainesville but I believe we are acquainted and active with even more people in Santa Fe.

We continue to do extensive road travel about the U.S., and, in 2008, we began international travel: China, Australia, New Zealand, Ecuador and Galapagos, several European countries, and Russia. We have visited several cities on primarily musical trips: New York City, Chicago, San Francisco, London, Berlin, Prague, and Vienna.

You may get the idea that we are very busy here; we are, with great enjoyment, but the pandemic has put a wrench in our gears—no travel, no live performances, no restaurants, no events at our home, and no skiing this winter. We have been happily busy at home but we are ready to attend concerts and travel again.

Department News and Announcements

UPCOMING SEMINARS

GLOBAL AND COMBINATORIAL OPTIMIZATION

April 9, 2021 | 10 a.m.

Presented By Dr. Panagote Pardalos

Paul and Heidi Brown Preeminent Professor in the University of Florida Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering

UI CENTER FOR DIGITAL AGRICULTURE AND AI INSTITUTE

May 13, 2021

Presented by Dr. Vikram S. Adve

Donald B. Gillies Professor of Computer Science University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Director, AIFARMS National AI Institute; Co-Director, Center for Digital Agriculture

Register for Department Seminars at abe.ufl.edu/seminars

BIOCOMPLEXITY ENGINEERING SEMINARS

Every Tuesday at 1 p.m.

All seminars in the Spring Schedule will be hosted virtually on [Zoom](https://zoom.us).

Register for the Biocomplexity Engineering Seminars at abe.ufl.edu/faculty/carpa/seminars

IN-PERSON EVENT

AN EVENT FOR EMERITUS AND RETIRED FACULTY AND STAFF

Fall 2021

Watch your email for an invitation and more information.

100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The UF/IFAS Agricultural and Biological Engineering department will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2023. We look forward to celebrating with all of you.

EMERITUS/RETIRED OFFICE SPACE

Frazier Rogers Room 169 is currently being updated and designed to be a collaborative work space for Emeritus and Retired Faculty. If you have any ideas and input for this office space, please let us know. Opening in 2021.

ABE'S NEW TEACHING BUILDING

Innovative teaching space is a critical component of our success. As we prepare our students with the best education and ensure they have access to premier programs and equipment, we need to provide the space needed for their growth as successful professionals. While we recruit and retain the most qualified students, we must have the top facilities to compete with our peer institutions. Specifically, state-of-the-art resources with ample space to work.

ABE seeks private funding in the amount of \$2M, from a single source or multiple entities, to build a new AOM teaching space and create a new Biological Engineering teaching classroom on campus.

The proposed teaching building- positioned just north of the current Agricultural Operations Management (AOM) teaching building on the corner of Museum and Hull Roads- would consist of two hands-on, experiential learning environments. One classroom would replace the AOM hands-on construction classroom, while the second classroom would provide a much-needed design space for Biological Engineering. The proposed new building would not only address the basic functionality described, but it would also provide the best teaching equipment to ensure students are prepared to compete and excel in the workforce.



For more information about our new Teaching Building project, visit abe.ufl.edu/abe-teaching-building

END