

Pioneer Club December 2016

Season's greetings from Oakland University! The University will be closed December 23rd - January 2nd for holiday recess. OU will reopen on January 3rd and winter 2017 classes will begin on January 4th. We wish you a happy and healthy New Year! Please take a few minutes to peruse the latest [campus news](#) and [calendar of events](#)!

Group Lunches

The Pioneer Club meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 1:00 p.m. at Nick's Country Oven in Rochester (Adams and Silverbell). These lunches are very casual, so please stop by when your schedule permits.

Golden Opportunity

Do you have a great idea for a future Pioneer Club event? The planning committee needs your help! The group meets on a monthly basis to discuss campus happenings as well as organize activities for Pioneer Club members. If you are interested in joining the planning committee or would like more information, email oupioneerclub@oakland.edu or call (248) 370-4325.

Pioneer Club Event: OU Horizon League Men's Basketball Game

Keep an eye out for an invite coming to your email after the holiday break! More details to come!
Sunday, January 29th, noon, Athletics Center O'Rena
[Click here to RSVP!](#)

2016 Year in Review

[Click here](#) to watch an inspiring video showcasing individual achievement and collaboration across the OU community during the past year, including a holiday greeting by President George Hynd.

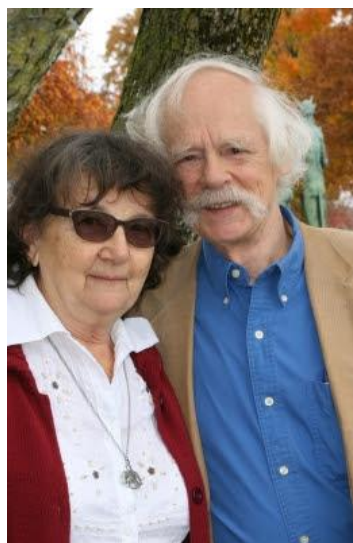
Newsworthy

Many of you may remember Professor Emeritus of finance Sid Mitra, Ph.D., CFP. In addition to teaching courses in the School of Business Administration for many years, Dr. Mitra dedicated himself to helping students reach their full potential. He and his late wife, Bani, established an endowed scholarship for Oakland business students majoring in economics, which was created during the All-University Fund Drive. To read more about Dr. Mitra's distinguished career, [click here](#).

OU's Model United Nations team recently won 1st place at the Lake Erie International Model UN Conference. For the third time in four years, the team has been the top overall winner at this event. [Click here](#) to read the full story about this impressive group of students.

Pioneer Profile: Donald E. Morse

By Gerry Coon



Csilla Bertha & Donald Morse

Professor Donald E. Morse took an early retirement from Oakland University in order to embark on a second career in Hungary, along with his wife, Csilla Bertha, as a writer and lecturer on American and British literature. Donald and Csilla are also internationally known for their work on Irish studies. Though they declare their real home to be in Csilla's homeland of Hungary, they maintain a *pied-à-terre* in Royal Oak and travel back and forth frequently to maintain their contacts in both countries.

Morse began his career at Oakland in 1967. His teaching experiences included classes in British literature, satire, world literature and writing, while initiating courses in Irish literature, modern drama and the fantastic. He was chairman of Rhetoric Communications and Journalism for six years, doing research and writing on composition and faculty development. For many years he conducted monthly seminars and workshops in management skills as Oakland's Head Management Trainer. When he, Carole Royer and Carol Swift formed a company to teach intelligence using methods developed by the Israeli psychologist, Ruvien Fierstein, they had several secondary schools and community colleges as clients.

President Donald O'Dowd recruited Donald Morse and Lew Pino to begin a Faculty-Staff Fund in 1975. That first year they raised around \$16,500. The Faculty-Staff Fund over the years became the All-University Fund Drive that has a goal this year of \$475,000 from employees and retirees. Another high point in his Oakland University career was the opportunity to give the Martin Luther King Day lecture. For several years he was the host of WQRS-FM's *The Folk Show*.

Since his retirement from OU, Donald Morse and Csilla have published numerous books and articles. They have also traveled the world together, giving lectures and conducting seminars. In 1989 and again in 2003, for example, they organized the international conference at the University of Debrecen for the International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures (IASIL). For over 30 years Morse has produced and chaired the International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts in Florida each March. The conference runs from Wednesday afternoon to 1:00 a.m. Sunday, and he is MC for the entire event. Each June for the past 25 years he has hosted the annual Bloom's Day celebration of the works of James Joyce at the Gaelic League in Cork Town. Jimmy Perkins provides the music and Donald Morse provides most of the stories!

Donald and Csilla have both been honored by a Festschrift in recognition of their contribution to Irish Studies internationally. *The Binding Strength of Irish Studies* was published in Debrecen in their honor. It is a collection of essays dedicated to them by scholars from around the world including from New Zealand, the Netherlands, Sweden, Italy, Czechoslovakia, the United States, Ireland and beyond. Donald has also received a Festschrift for his work in American Studies in Hungary. He has been editor of *The Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies* for ten years. Dr. Morse also received the Országh Medal in recognition of his service to Hungarian higher education as well as of his life work in English and American Studies, including his major book, *Kurt Vonnegut: Imagining Being an American* (2003). He is the only non-Hungarian to receive this honor. Donald and Csilla both express surprise and humility at being given so much international recognition. "It's amazing how grateful the people are," commented Donald.

Morse was four times Senior Fulbright Lecturer (1987-89, 1990-92) at Lajos Kossuth University (now the University of Debrecen). "I was able to use my experiences at Oakland University to help me facilitate the development of two Ph.D. programs and direct dissertations in both," he says. He is currently a University Professor at the University of Debrecen and was twice honored as the Soros Professor there. He also received an honorary doctorate in recognition of his international scholarship and service to Hungarian international education exchange.

When Communism in Hungary imploded in 1989-90, Donald was asked by U.S. State Department officials to serve on a bi-lateral commission to establish a Hungarian-American Fulbright Commission. He helped draw up the treaty between the two countries and was then elected the first Chairman of the Board of the newly formed Hungarian-American Fulbright Commission. At the time it was the second largest Fulbright program in Europe. He served on the commission for many years, chairing it three times.

Apart from their main work as scholars and teachers of Irish, American and British literature, the couple embarked on literary translation in 1986. Living on separate continents at the time, they used the only communication service available—air mail. Sometimes the letters took two weeks to arrive, and collaborating was somewhat frustrating. The final products, a book titled, *Silenced Voices: Hungarian Plays from Transylvania* (2008), and a few other plays, are, in Csilla's words, "...an effort to translate and preserve the culture and literature of Hungarian writers now living outside the borders of historical Hungary (not by choice but due to the truncation of Hungary after WW1), who were persecuted and silenced by the police state of Romania especially in the 1970s and 80s. We are giving them a voice." One of the authors, for instance, spent 6 years in a forced labor camp at the Danube estuary, another lost an eye when a Romanian mob attacked him. One of the five plays included in the anthology was written in 1970, smuggled into Hungary in 1980, and finally had its premiere in their English translation in Florida in 1990.

Reporting on his family, Donald speaks of son Sean who graduated from OU and then from the Police Academy to become a sworn officer in Troy. Sean and his wife, Jessica, have two children, Christopher, nine years old, and Catherine, age seven. His second son, Chris, left OU to attend Kendall Culinary College in Chicago and become one of Chicago's international-medal-winning chefs. Unfortunately, cancer took his life in 2010. Donald's advice to retirees: "Live frugally and spend your money on computers and airline tickets."

Gerry Palmer Coon served as administrative assistant and adjunct faculty member in the School of Education and Human Services from 1971 to 1991. She retired after eleven years as co-editor of Rochester OPC's (Older Persons' Commission) quarterly publication, Vintage Views, and is a member of the Pioneer Club.

Pioneer Profile is a feature that appears monthly in the Pioneer Club eNewsletter. If you are interested in being profiled or sharing suggestions on fellow retirees to showcase, please provide your contact information and details to us at oupioneerclub@oakland.edu.

Upcoming Events

OU Horizon League Men's Basketball Game: Pioneer Club gathering

Sunday, January 29th, noon

Athletics Center O'Rena

More details to come after holiday break!

[Click here to RSVP!](#)

Holiday Walk Tours

Now through December 22nd

Meadow Brook Hall

[Click here for more info!](#)

A Christmas Carol

Now through December 23rd

Meadow Brook Theatre

[Click here for more info!](#)

Richard J. Burke Lecture

"The Ethics of Compassion - Expanding Access to Unapproved Drugs for the Terminally Ill" by Dr. Arthur Leonard Caplan

Thursday, January 5th, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Banquet Rooms A & B, Oakland Center

Admission is free, but reservations are requested

To reserve your space, call Ann Zimmerman at (248) 370-3390 or email zimmerm2@oakland.edu

[Click here for more info!](#)

The Magic Flute

Saturday, January 14th, 7:30 - 10:30 p.m.

Varner Recital Hall

Tickets \$20

[Click here for more info!](#)

2017 Keeper of the Dream Scholarship Awards Celebration

Keynote address by Holly Robinson Peete

Monday, January 16th, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Banquet Rooms, Oakland Center

Free admission

Seating on first-come basis/doors open at 10:30 a.m.

[Click here for more info!](#)

History Comes Alive Lecture Series

"A Tyranny of Development: Terra Nullius and the Political Ecology of Large-Scale Land Transfers in Ethiopia" by Getnet Bekele

Wednesday, January 18th, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Gold Rooms B & C, Oakland Center

Admission is free, but reservations are requested

To reserve your space, call (248) 370-3511 or email jkessler@oakland.edu

[Click here for more info!](#)

The DDA Concert: Detroit Dance Artists Showcase
Saturday, January 21th, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Varner Lab Theatre
All seats \$8
[Click here for more info!](#)

Christopher O'Riley, piano ~ Chamber Music Society of Detroit at OU
Sunday, January 22nd, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Varner Recital Hall
Tickets \$30
[Click here for more info!](#)

Jazz Double Bass Concert featuring Miles Brown and Jeff Pedraz
Monday, January 23rd, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.
Varner Recital Hall
Free Admission
[Click here for more info!](#)

Oakland University Brass Band
Wednesday, January 25th, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.
Varner Recital Hall
All seats \$8
[Click here for more info!](#)

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About the Pioneer Club

The purpose of the Oakland University Pioneer Club is to provide social and educational opportunities to OU retirees and their spouses. It is our hope that this group will serve as a way for you to reconnect with former colleagues as well as maintain a relationship with OU. As a retiree, you remain a valued member of the University community.

SAVVY LIVING



How to Create a Safe 'Aging-in-Place' Home

My husband and I are thinking about making some modifications to our home so we can remain living there for as long as possible. Can you recommend some good resources that can help us with aging-in-place ideas? [Read More](#)

