



May, 2016

We hope you are enjoying the holiday weekend with family and friends! While traditionally seen as the unofficial start of the summer season, Memorial Day is an opportunity for all of us to pause and remember the brave men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country. The entire OU community celebrates these American heroes and honors their legacy. Please take a few minutes to peruse the latest [campus news](#) and [calendar of events](#)!

### **Group Lunches**

The group meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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](mailto:oupioneerclub@oakland.edu) or call (248) 370-4325.

## Campus Update

Judy Didion, Ph.D., R.N., recently accepted the University's invitation to become the next dean of OU's School of Nursing effective July 25<sup>th</sup> pending Board approval. To learn more about Dr. Didion, [click here](#).

## Newsworthy

Chemistry professor Joel Russell, Ph.D., retired last month after serving the University for 50 years! [Click here](#) to read more about his distinguished career and passion for teaching. By the way, new retirees will be honored at a special brunch during Homecoming and Reunion Weekend this fall.

## Pioneer Profile

By Gerry Coon



Jane and Bob Eberwein

"We've totally failed at retirement," quipped Jane Eberwein when we met. "I'm afraid we are both treating it as an extended sabbatical instead." And what sabbaticals they are! Bob Eberwein, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Department of English, has published two books: *Acting for America: Movie Stars of the 1980s* (Rutgers University Press, 2010) and *The Hollywood War Film* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2010). Appearing in June 2016 is his most recent essay, "Hearing the Music in War Films," in which he reports on the introduction of music into silent films during the 1890s.

Jane Eberwein, Distinguished Professor Emerita, Department of English, recently completed work on a collection of documents showing how poet

Emily Dickinson was viewed in her lifetime and a few decades afterward; *Dickinson in Her Own Time* appeared this past winter as part of a University of Iowa Press series detailing lives of American writers. "This was a challenging prospect," says Jane. "Since Dickinson was a recluse, we all feared there would be little to discuss." She and her co-editors, Stephanie Farrar and Cristanne Miller, found out, however, that there was more than enough material. "We had to cut, cut, cut," laughed Jane. Another post-retirement book, *Reading Emily Dickinson's Letters: Critical Essays*, was co-edited with Cindy MacKenzie (University of Massachusetts Press, 2009). That book included Jane's essay on the poet's letters of condolence.

The Eberweins met when they joined the faculty of Oakland University in 1969, after graduating with Ph.D.'s from Brown University (Jane, 1969) and Wayne State University (Bob, 1968). They were immediately drawn into the social life of the burgeoning young English Department, attending dinners, barbecues, picnics, and musical events arranged by their colleagues. "We are both very punctual by nature," says Bob, "and we often arrived at the same time – I in my black Volkswagen and Jane in her white one. People began assuming we were arriving together and viewed us as a couple." Eventually, the "couple" realized that they had more than punctuality in common. Finding themselves with shared interests and values, they courted, and were married in 1971 with their friend and colleague Professor Brian Murphy as Best Man.

Bob's interests led him into the field of film and film criticism, and he served on the Concentration in Film Aesthetics and History Committee. Since his retirement, that program has developed into the Cinema Studies major, housed in the English Department. Bob served as chair of the department for nine years in addition to teaching his popular classes on film and writing four books on that subject. He was awarded the Teaching Excellence Award in 1987.

Jane's passion for American Puritan writers and for Dickinson led her to publish three books, over fifty articles, and 18 reviews and to present papers at more than 30 conferences during her teaching career. *Early American Poetry*, an anthology, was published by the University of Wisconsin Press (1978) and *Dickinson: Strategies of Limitation* by the University of Massachusetts Press (1985). She was invited by Greenwood Press to edit *An Emily Dickinson Encyclopedia* (1998). She received the Research Excellence Award in 1988.

Jane worked with Professor Sheldon Appleton and other colleagues from varied Arts and Sciences departments to establish the American Studies concentration. She was also noted for masterfully fulfilling the job of secretary of the University Senate for twelve years. Her colleagues looked forward to reading her minutes of meetings, as they were both delightful and reliable. As a result, her assistance was frequently requested when reports needed to be written.

Their relationships with their students were such that Bob remarked that Oakland was a gift from God. Jane observed: "Although we have no children of our own, we had the use of other people's children." In fact, many of their students are still friends. Jane has lunch every December with a group of ex-students from the American Studies program and views them as her professional daughters and granddaughters as each pursues her own research passions while educating new generations. Among the many alumni who remain their friends is one who heads the honors program at Indiana University East and another who chairs the film program at Wesleyan University; both have recently published scholarly books. Another, an award-winning poet, heads the Creative Writing Program at West Virginia University. Several have won teaching awards.

Jane continues to lecture on occasion, including a session every six months for SOAR (Society of Active Retirees). They meet to talk about poems and

poets. As Jane says, "We get to share our passions. We feel very lucky." But Bob has so far resisted the retirement lecture circuit.

Asked about travel, Jane responded quickly, "Dickinson is our travel agent now." As a member of the Emily Dickinson International Society, she has participated in conferences all over the world. They will be traveling to Paris in June 2016, for a conference at which Jane will chair a panel, and they have made similar trips to Kyoto, Japan, in 2007 and Oxford, England, in 2010. Bob's film interests took them to a 2015 conference in Montreal. Beyond conference trips they travel to New England at least once a year to visit with friends and family near Boston. In fact, Jane will be attending a high school reunion there in October.

Bob is a native Detroiter, having graduated from Thomas Cooley High School, the University of Michigan, and Wayne State University. They have a large circle of friends from his Wayne State days and their years at Oakland.

It's obvious that the Eberweins are enjoying their retirement that is not retirement at their home in downtown Birmingham. They walk several times a day, are keeping fit and active, and are in good health. As a parting comment Jane said, "You must say that we live with cats. Their names are Cuthbert (named for an Anglo-Saxon saint Jane learned about from teaching a biography course decades ago) and Gabriel," she added.

*Gerry Coon retired from the Reading and Language Arts Department in the School of Education and Human Services. She is a co-editor and writer for the Rochester OPC (Older Persons' Commission) newsletter and 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](mailto:oupioneerclub@oakland.edu).

### **Upcoming Events**

Secret Cinema Series 'Old Hollywood'  
OU Faculty Host: David Shaerf, Ph.D.  
Thursday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7:30 p.m.  
The Maple Theater  
4135 W. Maple Rd. Bloomfield Hills  
Tickets \$6  
[Click here for more info!](#)

Secret Cinema Series 'New Hollywood'  
OU Faculty Host: Kyle Edwards, Ph.D.  
Thursday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m.  
The Maple Theater  
4135 W. Maple Rd. Bloomfield Hills  
Tickets \$6  
[Click here for more info!](#)

Summer Carillon Concert Series  
Fridays at 6 p.m. (July 1<sup>st</sup> - August 5<sup>th</sup>)  
Elliott Tower  
Complimentary  
[Click here for more info!](#)

Jazz in the Garden: Dave Bennett Band  
Thursday, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 -10:00 p.m.  
Meadow Brook Estate  
Tickets \$27/members, \$30/non-members  
[Click here for more info!](#)

### **Save the Date**

Homecoming and Reunion Weekend  
September 23<sup>rd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup>

### **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.