

## In this issue:

- [The President's Letter](#)
- [A Letter from the Incoming President](#)
- [Four RFA Award Recipients](#)
- [New RFA Officers Elected](#)
- [Our April Speaker: Bill Andrews](#)
- [Award Recipient: Tom Clegg](#)
- [Award Recipient: Jack Evans](#)
- [Beth Moracco: Next Chair of Faculty](#)
- [Reports from Faculty Council](#)



## RFA Newsletter

*University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Vol. 16, No. 2, May 2023

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### **The President's Letter**

It has been my great privilege to serve as president of the Retired Faculty Association this past year. It has also been a challenge to follow in Donna Falvo's dedicated footsteps, as we each have worked to bring the RFA back to its role as a vibrant face-to-face community of retired faculty members after the hugely disruptive social and physical distancing restrictions during covid. At our recent annual meeting on April 20, it was a joy to see our attendance once again fill the room, with nearly 50 members present. I hope that that event foretells a vibrant year of continued engagement and interaction under Bob Lauterborn's leadership next year.

The RFA's enduring mission is to foster intellectual and social community among our emeritus and emerita faculty members, to maintain their connections and service to the University community, to maintain the university's access to the wealth of experience and expertise that they represent, and to advocate for their needs and concerns. During the past year it has become clear that the RFA has the outspoken endorsement and encouragement of the Chancellor, the Provost, the Vice Provost for Digital and Lifelong Learning (the renamed Friday Center), and other senior administrators. I hope we will continue to attract more and more active participation by UNC's growing numbers of retired faculty members, and that we may create increasing opportunities for our members to continue to engage in the active life of the University and of the larger community.

As I complete my term as president, I would like to recognize and offer particular thanks to several of our Executive Committee members for their leadership and service to us all.

First of all, I thank the Awards Committee, which was chaired by Jim Peacock and also included Ned Brooks and Catherine Marshall, for documenting and recommending our four outstanding recipients of the 2023 RFA Leadership Award.

Second, I thank the Nominating Committee, led by past president Donna Falvo and including Ned Brooks, Connie Eble, and Bob Lauterborn, which did such an outstanding job of recruiting our next generation of officers.

Finally, I offer special thanks to the members of the Executive Committee who are now completing their terms of service, including Donna Falvo as past president, Thom Ziemecki as Secretary, and George Lensing as one of our two Faculty Council representatives. Each has made invaluable contributions to the work of the RFA over recent years, and we are in their debt. Many thanks to them all for their dedicated service to the RFA.

I look forward to the year ahead as your past president, and to the incoming leadership of the RFA.

– Pete Andrews

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## **A Letter from the Incoming President**



## **Intrepid? Or trepidation?**

More the latter, I think, as I start my year as president of the RFA.

Fortunately, the founders (or some wise folks along the way) created a three-year leadership triumvirate of sorts. I've just completed my president-elect year, learning from the inestimable Pete Andrews, while he moves into the role of past president as a wise advisor. (He's actually agreed to be much more involved than that, for which I'm grateful beyond words.) And your recently chosen president-elect Bobbi Owen has already reminded me several times that I won't be done after this year either!

Meanwhile, what are my hopes for this year?

First, the executive committee and I are going to try to create a strategic plan for the RFA. It seems we've never had one, and I think it would be a good idea to help us to think about, define, and focus on the organization's mission and look for ways we might meet even better the expectations of our members and prospective members.

We're also working with our helpful and supportive friends at the Friday Center to find dates to expand from meeting four times a year to seven. Think about some of the university stars we've learned from this year: people like Vivienne Benesch who taught us about our unique PlayMakers institution; Nick Law, who took us to the stars; and most recently one of our April honorees, Bill Andrews, who unearthed for us a treasure trove of stories that help us understand who we are as a nation and how we got here. The range of their scholarship and the scope of their achievements gives us a taste of what's going on at our wonderful university and awakens an appetite for more.

And that's where I hope you will help as well. Let us know what subjects you'd like to know more about -- such as Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) policies for UNC athletes, ChatGPT, the Ackland Museum, free speech on campus, and others) and whom you'd like to hear speak, on any subject.

Please share your suggestions, thoughts, and insights with me at

[lauter@unc.edu](mailto:lauter@unc.edu) or [lauterprof@aol.com](mailto:lauterprof@aol.com).

Thank you, and here's to a terrific year to come, together!

– Bob Lauterborn

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## Four RFA Leadership Award Recipients Honored at Our April 20 Membership Meeting

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*Jack Evans, Jan Johnson Yopp, Tom Clegg, Bill Andrews*

The RFA Executive Committee is pleased to announce the selection of four outstanding recipients of the 2023 RFA Leadership Award. Originally established to recognize those who provided leadership to the Retired Faculty Association, eligibility was expanded in 2013 to include additional individuals whom the RFA wished to honor for their distinguished service to the university (Bill Friday in 2013, Tom Ross in 2015, Shirley Ort in 2018). The award is given in alternate years.

This year's recipients are Professor Emeritus **William Andrews** (English); Professor Emeritus **Tom Clegg** (Physics and Astronomy); Professor Emeritus

**Jack Evans** (Kenan-Flagler Business School); and Professor Emerita **Jan Yopp** (Hussman School of Media and Journalism). All four were recognized and were presented the award at the RFA general membership meeting on April 20 at the Friday Center.

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### **New RFA Officers Elected**

Following the RFA Annual Meeting on April 20, at which the slate of officers recommended by the Nominating Committee was presented, email ballots were sent to all RFA members, to be returned by April 30. As of April 30, the members elected the following new officers for 2023-2024:

Vice President and President Elect: Bobbi Owen, the Michael R. McVaugh Distinguished Professor Emerita of Dramatic Art.

Secretary: Linda Carl, former Assistant Provost

Member at Large: Connie Eble, Professor Emerita of English and Comparative Literature

Member at Large: Catherine Marshall, Professor Emerita of Leadership and Policy in Education

Our second Faculty Council Representative will be elected in May on a separate ballot by the entire constituency of UNC retired faculty members. The candidates, nominated by the RFA, are Ray Dooley, Professor Emeritus of Dramatic Arts, and James Porto, Clinical Assistant Professor Emeritus of Health Policy and Management. **If you are not already registered as a voting member with the Office of Faculty Governance and wish to vote in this election, please**

register at <https://facultygov.unc.edu/elections/retired-faculty-voter-registration/>.

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**Our April Speaker: Bill Andrews (E. Maynard Adams Professor of English Emeritus), on North American Slave Narratives**

**Who are you? Prove it.**



How often do you get asked for your date of birth, to verify your identity? What if you didn't know it and couldn't even look it up because it had never been recorded anywhere?

That's one of the disturbing realities for the people who are represented in the North American Slave Narratives that prolific scholar Bill Andrews described for us at our recent Retired Faculty Association luncheon meeting. You can access those narratives on the UNC Library's award-winning [North American Slave Narratives](#) website, but beware: there are a lot of disturbing insights there, first-hand experiences written by real people who talk about horrors most of us not only didn't know about, but perhaps didn't really want to know about.

In fact, with that in mind, one of the authors in the collection, Harriet Ann Jacobs, admitted that she soft-pedalled her "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl"

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story, fearing that the depravity of slave sellers and owners might be too incredible for some readers to bear. Even after she was granted her freedom by the wife of her employer, it took her ten years to write the autobiography. It didn't even receive a second printing in its time, but now it's available to us all. In fact, it sells 100,000 copies a year.

That slave narratives are no longer a seriously neglected field of American literature is due in considerable part to the pioneering efforts of Professor Andrews to unearth these histories. To the litany of important contributors of whom we are aware, such as Frederick Douglass (whose first book sold more copies in the first five years of its existence than did *Moby Dick*, *Walden*, and *Leaves of Grass* combined during the first five years of their publication), Ralph Ellison, Ralph Gaines, et cetera, Bill has given us access to many more.

Among the more unfamiliar stories is that of Henry Ossian Flipper (the first Black graduate from West Point) and 300 more on the website.

To understand who we are, perhaps it's necessary for us to know who they were. In his talk, Bill made the point that what he called the four defining institutions of this country -- Marriage, Protestant Christianity, Capitalism, and Representative Democracy -- were and are still impacted by the fifth defining institution: Chattel Slavery. "This institution," he maintains, "profoundly threatened and indeed perverted our nation's dedication to each of the other four."

In recognition of Bill Andrews' enormous contributions, the Modern Language Association of America recognized him with its most prestigious Hubbell Award for Lifetime Achievement in the study of American Literature. He certainly gave us an education, lessons we'll not soon forget.

– Bob Lauterborn

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[Meet one of our Leadership Award Recipients: Tom Clegg](#)

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Tom Clegg is the V. Lee Bounds Distinguished Professor of Physics Emeritus. He joined the UNC faculty in 1968 and began 50+ years of research with students and faculty at the Triangle Universities Nuclear Laboratory located at Duke. There he led multiple teams in designing and building devices used for accelerator-related research into forces that bind atomic nuclei and fuel stellar nucleosynthesis.

Beginning while Tom was chair of UNC's Department of Physics & Astronomy, he led teams of UNC faculty from 1994 until 2010 through early campus land-use planning, and later during several phases of design and construction of UNC's new Science Complex. He served as chair of the Provost's Appointments, Promotion and Tenure Committee, Interim Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and later Interim Senior Associate Dean of Science and Mathematics.

After retiring in 2016, Tom collaborated with the Retired Faculty Association and over 30 faculty retirees, most importantly Barbara Wasik and Marila Cordeiro-Stone, to produce a new *UNC-Chapel Hill Faculty Retirement Planning Guide*. At The Cedars retirement community where he now lives, he currently leads residents' planning to understand and mitigate future campus impacts of global warming.

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**Meet another of our Leadership Award Recipients: Jack Evans**

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Jack Evans is the Phillip Hettleman Professor Emeritus of Business Administration. He boasts skills and achievements ranging from nonlinear programming to governance, and has served in many leadership roles across the University. He was Dean of the Kenan-Flagler Business School from 1979 to 1987, and later served as Executive Director of Carolina North, Interim Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, and Special Assistant to the Chancellor. In 2012 he came out of retirement to serve again as Kenan-Flagler's Interim Dean. For 15 years he also represented UNC's faculty to the Atlantic Coast Conference and the NCAA, and served twice as president of the ACC.

He has been honored with many awards, including UNC's Thomas Jefferson and C. Knox Massey awards, the Distinguished Service Award of the UNC General Alumni Association, and the Roy W. Holsten Distinguished Service Award of the Kenan-Flagler Business School. The Retired Faculty Association is delighted to honor Professor Jack Evans with its Leadership Award for 2023.

*Our other two Leadership Award recipients, Bill Andrews and Jan Johnson Yopp, were profiled in our previous two newsletters.*

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## **Carolina Public Humanities Summer Programs**

Carolina Public Humanities sponsors many stimulating educational programs on timely topics throughout the academic year, and offers a 50% discount to dues-paid members of the Retired Faculty Association for participation in any of its programs except its Great Books conversations (call for discount). Its Summer 2023 brochure is now available at <https://humanities.unc.edu/summer-2023-schedule/>.

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## **In Memoriam**

A link to the 2023 list of UNC faculty members who have died during the past year can be found at <https://facultygov.unc.edu/in-memoriam-2023/>. May they rest in peace, and may their memory be a blessing.

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## **Introducing the next Chair of the Faculty**



Professor Beth Moracco from the Gillings School of Global Public Health has been elected Chair of the Faculty and will take office on July 1. She is succeeding

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Professor Mimi Chapman who has served in the role since 2020. You can learn more about Professor Moracco at [this link](#).

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## Reports from Faculty Council

### March 24, 2023

Professor Mimi Chapman, Chair of the Faculty, reported on a somewhat contentious meeting she had with the Board of Trustees where she discussed the faculty's concerns about the new proposed School of Civic Life and Leadership. The board seems to be conflating the Program for Public Discourse with the School for Civic Life and Leadership. The Program for Public Discourse was implicitly approved by Faculty Council after extensive discussion with faculty. In contrast, the Trustees proposed to accelerate creation of a School of Civic Life and Leadership with no input from faculty. Mimi proposed a separate faculty-wide meeting to discuss these important issues on April 10.

Chancellor Guskiewicz reported on his meeting with the Board of Trustees to discuss faculty research, including research on caring for veterans, the opioid epidemic, and other grand challenges of our time. He emphasized the importance of diversity as a priority at UNC and is responding to a request from the Board of Governors to report on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) trainings at UNC. He said he understood why faculty were upset by the trustees' mention of trying to hire faculty in the future with more conservative views to help balance the liberal politics at UNC, and said that the Provost and Dean White from Arts and Sciences would be having discussions about this issue with faculty members. Finally, the chancellor reminded everyone that Bryan Stevenson, Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative and the author of *Just Mercy*, would be our commencement speaker this Spring.

Provost Chris Clemens reminded everyone of the importance of UNC as one of

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the best universities in the country. He reiterated his support for DEI and also said that Human Resources had developed sample interview questions that would be appropriate to ask candidates without compelling certain answers. He reported that there was a search for a new Vice Chancellor for Research, Dean of the Business School, and Innovate Carolina. Provost Clemens said he had sent out notes to over 200 faculty to help discuss the possibility of a new School of Civic Life and Leadership as well as better differentiate it from the Program for Public Discourse (PPD). Clemens also introduced the two faculty members running for Chair of the Faculty, Professor Thomas Kelly in the Law School and Associate Professor Beth Moracco in Public Health.

A presentation was given by the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC) and the Ombuds Office. Dawn Osborne-Adams as the director of the Ombuds office gave the presentation about the services offered, their code of ethics about confidentiality and their commitment of impartiality and independence from the Chancellor's office. – *Lynne Vernon-Feagans*

### **April 10, 2023 – Special Faculty Discussion on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)**

As a follow-up to the March Faculty Council Meeting, Faculty Chair Mimi Chapman called for an open conversation on the new resolution by the Board of Governors that would prohibit asking questions to applicants for positions at UNC, including faculty, about diversity, equity and inclusion.

A representative from staff at UNC noted that one of the questions that they routinely asked job candidates was eliminated by Human Resources because it would violate the Board of Governors' resolution. The question related to how a candidate might contribute to the inclusive culture in the workplace. The discussion centered around whether to follow this new policy or to possibly avoid problems by asking a similar question that alluded to DEI. For instance, could a candidate be asked how they might contribute to the mission of UNC, since the

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mission statement includes language about DEI? Other suggestions included writing editorials in protest of the Board of Governors' overreach and/or filing a lawsuit after a department or school violates the ban on DEI questions of applicants including faculty and staff and students.

A report by the University of Chicago found that in interviewing students from 240 colleges and universities about diversity issues and freedom to speak out on controversial issues, UNC was near the top of universities with respect to students feeling free to voice their opinions in class without any negative repercussions. Some attendees suggested that the Board of Trustees was given false information about how UNC recruits faculty, staff and students and that more education of the board is needed to help them understand how necessary some questions are in order to recruit a diverse faculty, staff and students at UNC.

In the end most attendees at the meeting felt that First Amendment Rights were likely to be violated by a ban on including DEI questions for recruitment. – *Lynne Vernon-Feagans*

### **April 21, 2023**

The meeting being the final one of the 2022-23 year and the completion of the three-year term of Mimi Chapman as Chair of the Faculty, she opened the meeting with remarks summarizing some of the issues she had faced and thanked the faculty, the Faculty Council, and other individuals. She introduced her successor, Prof. Beth Moracco, School of Public Health, who now begins her three-year term as Chair.

Comments by Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz and Provost Chris Clemens followed. Chancellor Guskiewicz noted that this fall there would be 1,000 transfers from Community College students within the state. Provost Clemens mentioned that the university presently has 4,174 faculty members, with only half tenured. Both attempted to reassure the faculty that their participation would be involved in the final creation of and selection of the 20 new faculty positions for the new

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School of Civic Life and Leadership.

Several questions challenged the chancellor and provost. Who, some wondered, were the faculty whom they are consulting in the wake of the controversy surrounding this new academic school? Faculty members pleaded for transparency. Prof. Harry Watson, Dept. History, pressed both the Chancellor and the Provost in reference to his adopted resolution two meetings back condemning the actions of the Board of Trustees in recommending accelerated creation of a School of Civic Life and Leadership without faculty consultation or participation in the decision-making.

The meeting went into closed session of receive recommendations for honorary degrees for 2024. – George Lensing

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## Updated Faculty Retirement Planning Guide

An updated, downloadable version of the ***UNC Faculty Retirement Planning Guide*** was recently posted on the UNC Human Resources website at [https://hr.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/222/2022/08/OHR21\\_Retirement\\_Guide\\_08.19.22.pdf](https://hr.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/222/2022/08/OHR21_Retirement_Guide_08.19.22.pdf) . Its most extensive new text appears under ***Retired Faculty Privileges***. This reflects a May 2022 UNC Faculty Council Resolution supported by the RFA that clarifies rights and privileges of faculty retirees, especially about how emeritus/emerita status should be granted.



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