



Spring has sprung! As a busy semester comes to a close in a few short weeks, faculty, staff and students are anxiously awaiting the first signs of the new season to appear around campus. Check out the latest [campus news](#) and [calendar of events](#)!

Group Lunches

The group 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.

Newsworthy

The College of Arts and Sciences is hosting a special screening of director Rodrigo Reyes' award-winning documentary, "Purgatorio: A Journey into the Heart of the Border." Following the film, there will be a Q & A session with

Reyes. The free screening will take place from 7:00-9:30 p.m. on Monday, March 27th in Room 156 of North Foundation Hall. To learn more, [click here](#).

Pulitzer Prize-winning author and presidential historian Doris Kearns Goodwin will be speaking at OU's 2017 Varner Vitality Lecture next month. Goodwin will present her talk "How Did We Get Here: The First 100 Days of an Unprecedented Presidency" at 7 p.m. (doors open at 6 p.m.) on Thursday, April 13th in the Athletics Center O'rena. The Varner Vitality Lecture Series is named in honor of Oakland's first chancellor, Durward "Woody" Varner. The series aims to energize and sustain the highest academic and scholarly aspirations of the University community. This event is free and open to the public. Tickets are available at the Center for Student Activities Service Window, located in room 49 on the lower level of the Oakland Center. [Click here](#) for more information.

[Click here](#) to read an interesting article about OU's first female president, Sandra Packard, who succeeded interim president John De Carlo and preceded president Gary Russi. Following her presidency (1992-1995), Packard remained at the University as director of the Higher Education program and a professor of education. Now retired, Packard looks back on her years at OU with great fondness.

GRIZZ Facts

The Office of Institutional Research (OIRA) has taken an in-depth look at the retention and graduation rates of underrepresented minority students. [Click here](#) to view OIRA's special report on this topic.

Pioneer Profile

By Gerry Coon



Suzanne Frankie

Suzanne Frankie, dean of Kresge Library from 1983 until 1998, is definitely an Oakland University Pioneer in every sense of the word. The day she arrived at Oakland in August of 1983, plans were being finalized for the expansion of the library. The wings on each side of the building added another two-thirds to the area of the existing building. Imagine the confusion and need for organization during and after that kind of construction in a building that had to remain open and continue to be a source of information for the entire faculty and student body during the entire expansion period.

Once that giant task was completed, Suzanne and the library faculty and staff went to work on developing an automated system for the antiquated system that was then in place. The card catalog for a time was still maintained (remember author, title and subject 3x5 index cards?), stacks and stacks of books and bound journals took up most of the floor space, manual searching for information with printed indexes was the norm. "The library is now a different world than when I was active," she admits. "There are so many different kinds of information services now."

Suzanne also worked with the Friends of the Library on the yearly Glyndeborne Picnic to raise additional funds needed to keep the library and its resources current. The picnics were elaborate affairs held in the riding arena on campus and raised approximately \$15,000 yearly for library

acquisitions. Sue was sensitive to the needs of the various departments, and library efforts to keep up with their requests for journals and other resources were greatly appreciated by the faculty.

Soon after the library building and automated system were completed, Sue was appointed as the head of the newly formed University Strategic Planning Committee. Committee members were charged with developing a university mission statement, goals and objectives and a working plan for the future development of all university programs and services. They were assisted by a variety of committees and working groups involving several hundred university faculty and staff members. It was a monumental organizational task and Sue considers the successful completion of that major assignment one of her proudest achievements at Oakland.

An active person and concerned citizen, Suzanne added to her work load by volunteering as a reader for Recording for the Blind, and after retirement volunteered in the Pontiac soup kitchen and became very active in the AAUW Birmingham Branch. In AAUW Sue headed the book sale for the AAUW Birmingham Branch and helped raise \$15,000-20,000 yearly for scholarships. One of her favorite charity activities was the AAUW Explorathon, a program designed to interest high school girls in the study of science and math by arranging for female speakers in those fields to speak at Cranbrook and Seaholm and other schools. The format provided for 50 professional women to each provide three 45-minute workshops for 500-800 girls in grades 8 through 12.

Many of these activities had to come to a halt in 2005 when her husband, Richard, had a stroke and she became his 24/7 caregiver. They moved to Toledo in October of 2015 to be near some nieces and nephews. She continues to care for Richard at home and they travel some in a handicap-

equipped van. "Mostly, though, we volunteer and entertain at home," she admits.

With limited time, Suzanne still finds the energy to continue her community service. She has recently donated a room dedicated to her father to the Toledo Ability Center, a non-profit organization. The center provides aids for handicapped people, including the training of assistance dogs to help with daily living activities. She continues to participate in fund-raising activities for this, her former high school, and other community organizations from her home.

Asked about her time at Oakland, Suzanne replied, "I treasure my years at Oakland. It was a wonderful job. I loved the people there and I am so proud of the University and the way it has grown." And the University reciprocates by treasuring the work of Pioneer Suzanne Frankie. Just inside the entrance to the library she helped establish is a brand new coffee shop with her name printed large above the door. It stands as a permanent reminder that no matter how large the University grows, those who pioneered its beginnings will always be remembered and honored.

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

Terrestrial Celestial: Cody VanderKay

Tuesday - Sunday: Noon - 5 p.m., March 3rd - April 9th

OU Art Gallery

Free admission

[Click here for more info!](#)

The Unavoidable Disappearance of Tom Durnin

Select dates and times, March 15th - April 9th

Meadow Brook Theatre

Ticket prices vary

[Click here for more info!](#)

A Chorus Line

Select dates & times, March 23rd - April 2nd

Varner Studio Theatre

Tickets \$20

[Click here for more info!](#)

Saxophone Studio Recital

Monday, March 27th, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Varner Recital Hall

Free admission

[Click here for more info!](#)

Guitar Studio Recital

Tuesday, March 28th, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Varner Recital Hall

Free admission

[Click here for more info!](#)

South American Journey with the OU Percussion Ensemble & World
Percussion Ensemble

Friday, March 31st, 8:00 - 10:00 p.m.

Varner Recital Hall

Free admission

[Click here for more info!](#)

An Evening of Carnatic Music Concert

Saturday, April 1st, pre-concert discussion at 6:00 p.m., concert at 7:00 p.m.

Varner Recital Hall

Tickets \$14

[Click here for more info!](#)

Celino Romero, guitar and friends Chamber Music Society of Detroit at OU

Sunday, April 2nd, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Varner Recital Hall

Tickets \$30

[Click here for more info!](#)

Oakland Symphony Orchestra with the Oakland University Symphony Chorus

Wednesday, April 5th, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Orchestra Hall, Max M. Fisher Music Center

Tickets \$20

[Click here for more info!](#)

Artist's Talk: Cody VanderKay on "Terrestrial Celestial"

Thursday, April 6th, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

OU Art Gallery

Free admission

[Click here for more info!](#)

Children's Concert with Ray Holman

Friday, April 7th, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Varner Recital Hall

All seats \$6, children 2 and under are free

[Click here for more info!](#)

World Music Concert with Ray Holman

Friday, April 7th, 8:00 - 10:00 p.m.

Varner Recital Hall

All seats \$8

[Click here for more info!](#)

Young Choreographers Forum

Saturday, April 8th, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Varner Studio Theatre

Tickets \$14

[Click here for more info!](#)

Oakland University Chamber Ensembles Concert

Sunday, April 9th, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Varner Recital Hall

Free admission

[Click here for more info!](#)

Nightclub Cabarets

Sunday, April 9th, 8:00 - 11:00 p.m.

Orchid Nightclub (141 W. 9 Mile Rd. at Woodward Ave. in Ferndale)

\$10 door charge/cover

[Click here for more info!](#)

Artist & Pilgrim: a travel talk by John Corbin

Tuesday, April 11th, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Room 124, Wilson Hall

Free admission

[Click here for more info!](#)

Wind Symphony & Symphonic Band

Wednesday, April 12th, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Varner Recital Hall

All seats \$8

[Click here for more info!](#)

An Original Work

Thursday, April 13th, 8:00 - 11:00 p.m.

Varner Lab Theatre

Pay what you wish at the door

[Click here for more info!](#)

Discovery & Coffee: *Natchez Country* by OU Professor George Milne

Saturday, April 15th, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Multipurpose Room, Rochester Hills Public Library

Free admission, RHPL card required for registration

[Click here for more info!](#)

Jeffrey Heisler, Faculty Saxophone Recital

Wednesday, April 19th, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Varner Recital Hall

Free admission

[Click here for more info!](#)

Irving Berlin's I Love A Piano

Select dates and times, April 19th - May 14th

Meadow Brook Theatre

Ticket prices vary

[Click here for more info!](#)

Take Root in *Apartment 402*

Friday, April 21st, 8:00 - 10:00 p.m.

Varner Studio Theatre

Tickets \$14

[Click here for more info!](#)

Free Fridays - Meadow Brook Hall House Tour

Friday, April 28th, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

1:00 - 2:00 p.m. ~ Q & A with Curator, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. ~ self-guided House Tour

Meadow Brook Hall

Free admission, reservations not required

[Click here for more info!](#)

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.