

**Senior University Georgetown
Annual President's Report
2009**

We started 2009 off with a retreat for the Board members, including those leaving as well as in-coming.

Mission: Senior University Georgetown, a membership organization for people 50 and over in the greater Georgetown community, provides lifelong learning and cultural experiences designed for intellectual stimulation, personal enjoyment, and active discussions of the important issues of the day.

Vision: Senior University Georgetown will be noted for the quality and variety of its programs and cultural events, the caliber of its faculty, the dedication of its volunteers, the quality of its executive leadership and staff, and the excellence of its support systems. It will offer classroom, travel, and other learning opportunities so that seniors can enrich their lives regardless of physical limitations. Senior University's alliances with area institutions of higher learning and public schools will be the source of new subjects to explore, of qualified teachers and lecturers, and of intergenerational learning opportunities. It will set the standard for organizations of its kind offering lifelong learning programs for seniors.

Our Strategic Objectives for 2009 were prioritized in the following order:

- **Maintain and recruit qualified faculty.**
- **Establish a group of volunteers and a staff who are committed to implementing the goals of Senior University.**
- **Secure reliable access to facilities that support staffing and programs.**
- **Establish Senior University Georgetown as a valued asset to the greater Georgetown community.**
- **Expand programs to include senior population outside of Sun City.**

The Board recognized that the goal of developing a stronger partnership with Southwestern University was necessary in order to meet many of our strategic objectives.

We started the 2009 year by offering 34 classes in four different locations: Sun City, First Baptist Church's educational building, Georgetown Public Library and Southwestern University. The enrollment of 549 was down quite a bit from the year before. We decided that this was due to the downturn in the economy amongst other factors.

This is a good time to address the costs of Senior University: some people have indicated that the annual membership fee of \$50 and tuition fees of \$60 is a bit out of line with other organizations in Sun City where the standard club fee seems to be \$20. I've made up a list of annual expenses for Senior University (attached).

So, as you can see, we are a bit unique with a full-time paid administrator, a separate office, and expenses to support approximately 600 members and over 70 faculty members with requirements for power point projectors, microphones, and copies of handouts for their classes.

As an added benefit for our members, we held the First Annual Full Day Symposium in May. Barbara Brightwell, who went off the Board last year formed a committee to put together the symposium. Due to Tom Roger's connection with the Austin Civil War Round Table and his expertise in the field and his very good suggestions, the committee traveled to Navarro College in Corsicana, and met with individuals in the Pearce Civil War Museum. The symposium was finalized with the title, "Ordinary Men and Women in the Civil War." We had about 230 participants and great evaluations. The members were able to attend the symposium for free in spite of the cost of paying the speakers and housing them for one night in Georgetown.

Our “first ever” turned out to be a huge success considering the novices that put it together; so much so that we are in the process of planning for another to be held in April of this year. Dwight Henn has taken over as Chair of the committee and has put in many hours organizing the subject as well as his committee members.

In addition to the symposium, we had a free and open lecture presented by James Haley, who spoke on his book, “A Profile in Courage: Sam Houston and the Texas Secession.” He was a great hit and people have asked for more lectures by him.

Southwestern University contacted our Board of Directors in March of this year and offered a proposal to form a partnership with Senior University.

Southwestern University, under its Strategic Plan for 2010, adopted an initiative to “Develop a variety of local community initiatives to foster better relations with the citizens of Georgetown, including a more dynamic relationship with the residents of Sun City Texas retirement community, for the mutual benefit and enhancement of both communities.”

The conversations, and meetings, have been numerous – our main contact has been Dr. Ron Swain, Senior Advisor to the President for Strategic Planning. The members of the Board on this committee with me are Bob Shaw, our vice-president, Stephen Benold, and Steve Bratton. There is now a proposed memorandum of understanding between the two schools. The contract would run for three years. Nothing has been signed or committed to at the present time. If the Board approves the change of the office to the Southwestern campus, this will take place in March, 2010. The office will be located in the new Center for Lifelong Learning that is presently under construction. That is all that it will entail, the change of location for the office. Classes will remain the same.

The objective is to establish a formal relationship between Senior University Georgetown and Southwestern University. This would be done by building and enhancing community interest and involvement in lifelong learning and to be able to share the availability of

educational and cultural opportunities presented by both organizations.

If we do take advantage of their offer, it will mean a savings of approximately \$7100 per year for Senior University.

I, personally, think it is a great honor to be asked to form a collaboration with the university. It is a great university and I feel our credibility will be enhanced considerably.

Our “first ever” maternity leave proposal was written for our administrator, Kendra Hicks. During her leave period, Carin Eagleston managed the office with the assistance of Kendra, who worked from home on the computer. Isn’t the age of technology great? In my time, you were either in the office or home – no electronic access to files, etc.

Our Fall 2009 semester recovered with an enrollment of 369 – almost 100 more than in the Spring. Thirty-four classes were offered in five different locations. As a side note, the curriculum committee just completed putting together the course offerings for Spring 2010 and 38 classes will be offered. We maxed out the classroom spaces in the Social Center, the Atrium, the First Baptist Church and the library!

In closing, I would like to say that the year of 2009 has been a year of growth and changes for Senior University. I realize that changes are sometimes difficult, but if we don’t change, we stagnate. The lifelong learning classes such as Quest, Odyssey and Sage at the University of Texas have long waiting lists to become members. That is not the case with Senior University Georgetown Yet. Hopefully, it never will be. But, remember, if that does become the case, you are already a member. You always will be a part of the foundation of this great organization. Thank you for your interest, your support and your investment in life long learning. You are what this university is all about.