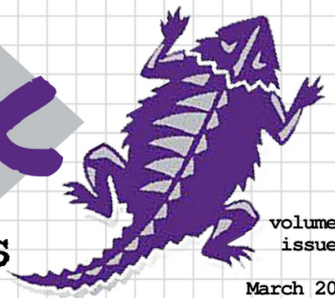


SILVER STREAK

connecting and informing TCU's Silver Frogs



volume 4
issue 5

March 2020
Volunteer

Are You an Instructor at Heart?

by Randy Smith, Curriculum Committee Chair


Quality classes across a wide field of subjects are at the core of the Silver Frogs program, and the key to these classes is instructors willing to volunteer their time and interests to prepare and teach us. We thank each and every past instructor for making Silver Frogs a wonderful experience for us all.

The Curriculum Committee analyzes your feedback from the student critique surveys; in addition to praise for our instructors, the surveys often provide valuable suggestions on how to improve classes. Comments are shared with the instructors, and the committee works to help them implement applicable suggestions.

While we are just starting Session II of our Spring classes, your Curriculum Committee is already planning for Fall 2020. Our goal is to have the fall classes selected, scheduled, and the catalog prepared by the end of the current semester.

We often have fallen short of our goal at the proposal due date, but this spring semester presented a real challenge. At the deadline, we had only 51 proposals (barely half the number of classes we needed to support our membership). Then after a serious call for help went out, we received an additional 88 proposals, which presented a new problem – too many potential classes. We need your help to avoid that pattern for the fall. Please submit your proposals as soon as possible, and no later than **April 1** (no foolin').

In addition to meeting member expectations, we also work to provide our instructors with an enjoyable and satisfying experience. It doesn't seem fair for an instructor to spend time preparing and presenting a class to a mostly-empty classroom. This semester, members were able to sign up for an unlimited number of courses and lectures to fill available seats following course allocation. Even with this change, we have a fair number of historically popular classes with low enrollment. Could it be that we have too many classes? Too few, too many—where is the balance point? The Curriculum Committee will be studying these questions.

To keep things fresh, we encourage everyone—members and non-members—to consider sharing their knowledge with the Silver Frogs. You don't need to have professional or teaching experience to be a Silver Frog instructor; consider your hobbies or special interests as potential topics for an interesting lecture or course. Then [fill out the proposal form](#) and prepare to share! 



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Letter from the Editor


We've heard it a million times: Many hands make light work. And it's so true! Not only is the work lighter, it's more fun when willing volunteers work together, both within Silver Frogs and all around the Fort Worth area.

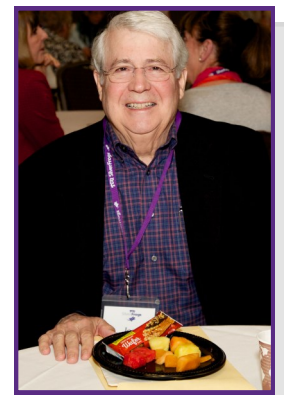
Welcome to our third annual "Volunteer" issue of *Silver Streak*! Because volunteer work is such an enjoyable and rewarding activity in retirement, our Silver Frogs do a lot of it. Read some of their stories inside, and maybe you'll find some ideas for donating your own time and talents. Whether you're new to town, new to retirement, or just interested in trying something different, there's truly no end to the possibilities once you look for them.

—Sharon Harrelson



Meet & Greet Kicks off Spring '20

On January 29, the Spring '20 Silver Frogs semester officially began with the Meet & Greet event in the BLUU. Attendees picked up their packets containing parking hangtags, name badges, maps and other organizational information. They also picked up a light breakfast from the buffet before hearing from speakers Sharon Harrelson (Advisory Board President), Randy Smith (Curriculum Committee Chair) and Julie Lovett (TCU-Silver Frogs Liaison). There was plenty of meeting and greeting as old friends reunited and new ones were made. Welcome back! 



Advisory Board Nominations

If you're interested in participating in the Silver Frogs Advisory Board, nominations are being accepted until **March 20**. Candidates must have at least one semester of membership under their belts. Experience on a committee or as a volunteer is helpful but not required.

Meetings are held monthly throughout the school year.

Contact Nominating Committee Chair [Virginia Dias](#) or any other board member with questions.

[CLICK HERE TO APPLY!](#)

Dallas Holocaust & Human Rights Museum



Friday, February 21, a group of Silver Frogs rode the TRE to Dallas to enjoy lunch at Market Square and to tour the new Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum. A highlight of the museum tour was the exhibit, Dimensions in Testimony, which allowed the visitors to interact with a Holocaust survivor through the use of artificial intelligence.

—Ivette Holaway

Upcoming Events

TCU Athletic Facilities Tour Filled Fast!

The March 11 tour of TCU's athletic facilities "sold out" quickly, a sure indicator that many Silver Frogs want to get behind the scenes and learn more about what's happening on campus. Those who have reserved a space, be sure to alert Extended Ed if your plans change and you cannot attend, as there is a waitlist!

The Golden Age of Musical Theatre

A few seats still remain for the 9am Lecture Recital on April 17 presented by TCU Voice Faculty member Audrey Davis-Stanley. The lecture will include information on the composers involved in contributing significantly to the Golden Age of Musical Theatre from 1943-1959, including (but not limited to) Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, Rodgers & Hammerstein, and Lerner & Lowe. The recital portion will feature a sampling of soprano ingénue songs from popular musicals by these Golden Age composers. In the Secrest-Wible Building's Opera Studio. [Register here.](#)

2nd Annual Cookie Challenge: Are You a Baker or a Taster?

The second Silver Frogs Cookie Challenge is set for **Thursday, May 21 from 2-3:30pm**. It's time to ask yourself: **Am I a baker or a taster?**

- **Bakers** will compete in one of three categories: *Drop Cookies*, *Rolled & Cut Cookies*, and *Bar Cookies*. Celebrity judges will determine a winner in each category, as well as a winner for best overall presentation (so make it pretty, y'all)! Limit one entry per person and 12 entries per category.

- **Tasters** will be treated to cookie samples and a selection of cold beverages, and each will receive a ballot to vote for a favorite entry!

Surely you are one or the other, and you won't want to miss out on the opportunity to either share your baked goodies with an appreciative crowd OR be part of that crowd! You'll see an email when registration opens a few weeks ahead of the event date.



Talking with a Star: Luncheon Lecture with Bobbie Wygant


by Sharon Harrelson

On February 13, the Silver Frogs were treated to a delightful Luncheon Lecture with longtime Channel 5 Entertainment Reporter Bobbie Wygant. And in this case, "longtime" is really an understatement – she's been with the station for over 60 years and is still going strong! She joined just two weeks before the station went on the air in 1948.

She shared so many stories (and many more are detailed in her new book, *Talking to the Stars: Bobbie Wygant's 70 Years in Television*, published by TCU Press). Much of her talk had a TCU connection, including how TCU alum Bob Schieffer got his start in television ("He was a natural!") and the attention Bob Hope paid to reporters from the *TCU Daily Skiff* during one of his visits to Fort Worth.

We also learned about Bobbie's history with early television in North Texas. She and her husband Phil Wygant moved to Fort Worth for his radio job with WBAP. He went from being a radio announcer to working at the brand-new WBAP television station, and she started her career there as a writer in 1948. Because television was so new, there was a lot of experimenting with different kinds of shows, and for a time she said she was "an early Vanna White" for local game shows. She moved on to host *Dateline* in 1960, a daily live fashion and talk show. Celebrities found that television was an excellent way to promote their latest projects; we traveled back in time to hear stories about those interviews with stars such as Robert Goulet, Bette Davis & Olivia de Havilland (together—can you imagine?—for their 1964 movie *Hush, Hush, Sweet Charlotte*) and Bruce Willis.

After graciously answering audience questions, Bobbie moved to the foyer to sign copies of her book and share a few words with everyone who stopped by the table. Seeing her energy and enthusiasm at age 93 was a real inspiration to us all!

Missed the luncheon, or just want to know more? [Visit The Bobbie Wygant Archive online.](#) 



Silver Frogs Board President Sharon Harrelson, featured speaker Bobbie Wygant, and Silver Frogs member and instructor Lee Wimp

NEXT LUNCHEON LECTURE:

Friday, March 20

Yes, Virginia, There is Race in Your Movie with Dr. Frederick Gooding of TCU's Honors College
11:30am – 1:00pm in the Brown-Lupton University Union Ballroom.

Registration deadline: Friday, March 13

[Details and Member Registration](#)

[Guest Registration \(\\$15\)](#)

Partying with Special Interest Groups



Canasta SIG Celebrates

On February 29, members of the Canasta SIG gathered at the home of Joan Baily and Brad Painter for a pot luck celebrating both St. Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day.

We had great food (most of the men were the chefs), wine, wonderful company and a trivia game. Attendees dressed in red or green for the occasion. At the end of the night, all the ladies left with a beautiful red rose in their hands. The trivia winner, Carol Stanford, won a box of chocolates. The Canasta group is becoming a family!

— Virginia Dias



Women & Wine & Paint

Members of the Women & Wine SIG met February 13 at Painting with a Twist for an evening of creativity, painting an art piece called "Wine Glass Women."

— Siân Borne



More SIG Activities

Art SIG Starts the Year Strong

The Art SIG has been a busy bunch so far this semester! Here's where they've been:

Wednesday, January 22 – **Ruckus Rodeo**, Red Groom's immense, walk-through, raucous sculpture depicting rodeo archetypes as seen at the Fort Worth rodeo. Showing January 17 through March 29, 2020 at The Modern, Fort Worth. [More info](#).

Wednesday, February 5 – Arlington Museum of Art, **Albrecht Dürer: Master Prints**, woodblock prints and engravings by the German artist who revolutionized printmaking in the late 15th century. [Learn more](#).

Wednesday, February 19 – **Perilous Texas Adventure: A Mark Dion Project**, an amazing tour led by the Carter's fabulous curator, Maggie Adler, at the Amon Carter Museum. This exhibition runs through May 17, 2020. [Read about it here](#).

– *Siân Borne*



Ruckus Rodeo, at The Modern through March 29

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) allow members to engage with others who share a common interest. SIGs are member-driven and meet at various locations on a regular schedule (such as bi-weekly or monthly), according to what the group members decide. SIGs are open to current Silver Frogs members only; membership or participation in specific events may be limited and a waitlist may be in place. For details about any of these groups, click below to contact the organizers or [click here](#) to see the full descriptions on the Silver Frogs website.

Culture

Art of Fort Worth, [Ann Heinz](#)
 Discussion of Current Societal Issues, [Larry and Elaine Klos](#)
 German Conversation, [Helga Gerlinger](#)
 Spanish Club, [Virginia Dias](#)

Food and Fellowship

Ladies Lunch Out, [Virginia Dias](#)
 Men's Breakfast Group, [Gary Harrell](#) and [Jim Box](#)
 Positive Aging, [Anne Carlson](#)
 Women & Wine, [Siân Borne](#)

Sports and Games

Classic Canasta, [Virginia Dias](#)
 Liverpool Rummy, [Polly Hooper](#)
 Silver Frogs Fly Fishers, [Ken Bowers](#)

Working Together, Developing Skills

American Sign Language, [Lisa Winter](#)
 Contemplative Practices, [Katherine Godby](#)
NEW! Give Me A Break, [Roger Norman](#)
NEW! Knitting, [Terry Marquardt](#)
 No Fears Writers Group, [Judith Soriano](#)

Instructor Spotlight: Virginia Dias by Linda Eastwick

Virginia Dias is a devoted wife of 41 years, a world traveler, and a proud mother and grandmother. She also finds time to serve on the Silver Frogs Advisory Board, run four SIG groups and teach Spanish for the Silver Frogs (when she's not learning Yoga, working on her novel, or welcoming newcomers to Fort Worth).

I caught Virginia just as she was returning from an out-of-town trip and while she was putting the finishing touches on this semester's teaching materials – in between a dinner party and taking care of a house guest.

Yes, of course she had time for a *Silver Streak* interview! Read on to find out the rest of the story!

Silver Streak: Tell us about your growing up years and one or two favorite memories.

Virginia: I was born in Lima, Peru. My parents and grandparents came to South America from Yugoslavia, Italy, Germany, and Spain. Although we can trace my father's roots to the last Moorish King from Granada, Spain, my maternal grandmother had the biggest influence on me. She spoke five languages, assuring me that learning other languages opened doors to other worlds.

One of my favorite memories was my grandmother serving tea and appetizers at 5:00pm to the other ladies in the neighborhood. There was a different crowd every afternoon, and they came wearing nice dresses, with belts that matched their shoes or purse! Sometimes, there was piano playing and singing. Her teas were the talk of my friends.

Every Sunday, my uncles and aunts came to my grandmother's for lunch. She taught me how to drink wine with lots of ice and only on Sunday. I still remember the laughter, music, and loud conversation that would fill the house.

(Silver Streak *aha*: We think there is a special reason why Virginia organized the Ladies Lunch Out SIG!)

Silver Streak: You mentioned in [your December interview](#) that you discovered your passion for teaching at a young age. Tell us more about that.



Virginia and Augusto "Silver Frogging" at Joe T's, 2019

Virginia: I attended an American high school, and in the evenings, I volunteered to teach the maids who had come from the Andes to learn how to read and write. It would fill my heart with indescribable joy when they were finally able to read. I also discovered that I had the patience to teach my friends to do anything I had learned at school.

Silver Streak: We also read that your husband of 41 years is your biggest fan. How did you two meet?

When I still a teen, I went to my cousin's birthday party and I met this kid with huge eyes, very sweet but really smart, who had started college to become an engineer. Talking to him, I discovered he was friends with most of my male cousins, and when we discovered the friendship among our families, it was exhilarating. Augusto Dias and I were girlfriend and boyfriend for five years before getting married on December 7, 1978. And from the start, I had the support and love of my husband and his family.

Silver Streak: You've lived all over the world, and taught ESL classes in Peru, Canada, China, and the U.S. Are there any common traits that you've discovered about your students? Any marked differences?

Virginia: People learn languages for different reasons. Some are vacationing and want to learn the language of the country they travel to. Others

(Continued on page 8)

Instructor Spotlight *continued*

need to learn a new language for work. And still others want to learn a language to challenge their brain. The teaching strategies that work with every single student, however, regardless of their nationality or age, always include music, games, and chocolate!

Silver Streak: Are you still traveling? Do you have any favorite places to visit?

Virginia: Yes, traveling is in my veins. It must be my ancestors' sense of adventure and insatiable need to see the world. My husband has traveled the five continents many times because of his job at Alcon Laboratories, so he travels only when it is necessary. But my daughter and I have a tradition of traveling somewhere together every single year.

We started that tradition in 2001 when she finished high school, and I took her to Great Britain with TCU. We visited several cities in England and Scotland while taking theatre classes and watching many operas and plays. Now it is an annual event. She just got married last September, but she told her husband that she had to continue her annual travel trip with me, and he agreed!

I feel at home when I am in London, although I haven't gone there in a while. I also enjoy visiting family and friends in Spain. I feel more comfortable there than in my own country, which I left 32 years ago. My Lima, is not the Lima I grew up in, but I enjoy the food, the smell of the sea, and visiting family there.

My suitcase is always ready to go anywhere, and I will continue to travel as long as I remember my name, and my legs let me walk!

Silver Streak: One of your SIG groups, and a class you teach, is Classic Canasta. Tell those of us who aren't good at cards how to approach this game.

Virginia: Augusto and I have played Classic Canasta since we were in our late teens. My mom taught us.

Many of the students come to class with preconceived concepts on how to play, but I explain from the start that this Canasta is the momma of all the Canastas that are being played nowadays. Classic Canasta was born in Uruguay and came to the States as Modern Canasta. There are many versions of the game, each with different rules. But Classic Canasta has not changed its rules since 1936. So, the way to approach this game is by being open-minded, without comparing the rules of other Canastas and playing with partners to make it easy and faster. The partnership, nice conversation, and comradeship is the trick to having a great time. Also, practice makes perfect!

We think those last two sentences are words to live by! Thank you, Virginia, for sharing your friendship and love of lifelong learning with your fellow Silver Frogs!



Students in Virginia's **Classic Canasta** class practicing what they've learned



Please, no waste in this can.

Thank You for Your Donations!

This can in the Secret-Wible classroom collects travel-sized toiletries for donation to the Presbyterian Night Shelter and Safe Haven.

To participate, simply place items (such as shampoo, lotion and soap bars) into a zip-lock bag and bring them along when you come to class. Drop your donation in "the can" and I'll be happy to deliver them!

—Kakai Bowers

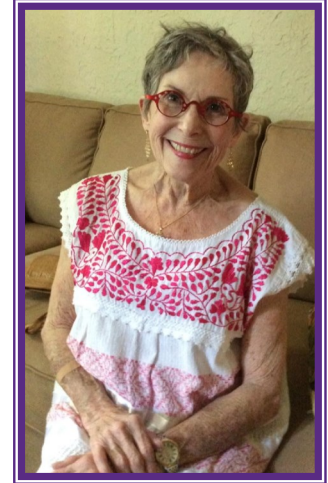
VOLUNTEERING:

How Silver Frogs Share Their Time and Talents

Several years ago I started volunteering on Friday mornings at **The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders**, where I'm a long-time patient—just my way of giving back to this institution which has been so helpful and friendly to me. The Resource Room is a little space staffed by volunteers whenever someone is available; we provide literature in Spanish and English about different cancers as well as giving free hats, scarves, and YES, even wigs to our patients undergoing chemo! Nothing puts a bigger smile on my face than fitting a woman with a wig and watching her face light up as she leaves feeling much better about herself and her medical situation. Volunteers do NOT have to be patients—The Center welcomes anyone who has the time and desire to help others.

I volunteer at the main office on Magnolia in Fort Worth simply because my hematologist is there, but there are several locations. For more information, [click here](#) or contact [Leslie Hunt](#), Patient Navigator.

—Bonnie Thalman



For over two years I have volunteered at [True Worth Place](#) in Fort Worth, which is the only day shelter for the homeless in Tarrant County. TWP is open 7am-3pm every day of the year for the homeless to check their mail, use computers, use the telephone, shower, get laundry done, attend life enrichment classes, attend AA and/or NA meetings, talk with social workers, get leads on jobs and housing, obtain a state ID or voter registration card, and take a TB test. I work every Wednesday with Risa Payne in a book club led by Shari Barnes after which I work in the mailroom until the end of the day. Once a month I am a foot washer at the foot care clinic and I also serve coffee with Betsy McDaniel and Risa Payne during their monthly True Brew Cafe.



The unhoused I have met are appreciative, intelligent, kind people who enrich my life tenfold. Anytime they hold a new activity I am there. I'm also on call when they have days with no volunteers to work the mailroom. My new friend (pictured at left) and I danced and sang to live music during the last True Brew Cafe. I am fortunate and blessed to work there and I was surprised to be awarded the Tarrant County Homeless Coalition Volunteer of the Year for 2019.

—Debbie Maddux

Volunteering continues on page 10

VOLUNTEERING:

How Silver Frogs Share Their Time and Talents



For Silver Frogs Carol Vlasich and Betsy McDaniel, Tuesday afternoon means library time!

Under the direction of Librarian Laura Singleton we shelve, pull, cut, glue, paste and color. The Wedgwood Branch of the Fort Worth Library is dear to our hearts...we brought our children to this library years ago and still utilize it for ourselves. Now, in addition to checking out the latest bestsellers, we spend

time each week volunteering there. As lifelong library users we encourage you to drop by any library branch or just visit online...fiction, non-fiction, hard copy in your hand or downloaded to your favorite device...it's all available!

—Betsy McDaniel and Carol Vlasich

I have the privilege of serving on the board for the [Methodist Justice Ministry](#). The mission of MJM is to provide light and hope to families who have experienced neglect and domestic violence by providing free legal representation and ongoing support to ensure that the children are with a caring and protective caregiver. MJM has protected over 2300 women and children to date.

—Ken Seeling



Some of the most gratifying volunteer work is not done on the front lines at fundraisers and/or special events. Instead, you'll find the staff members and board members of your favorite

non-profits are extremely grateful when you offer to relieve them of some of their required (sometimes tedious) administrative tasks! If you are fortunate to have strong office skills like keying, editing, composing, or even basic computer knowledge, have good math skills, or can offer just a competent, willing presence to do whatever needs to be done, you can be an agency's hero!

I personally enjoy working one morning each week in the Meadowbrook-Poly United Methodist Church office as receptionist where I greet callers and visitors to the church. I work at other times to assist the financial secretary count Sunday offerings and

make deposits for her, proofread the weekly worship bulletin, and contribute articles to the monthly church newsletter. I serve on the Congregational Care team and respond to specific individual needs as they arise, and I have been singing in the choir for years. Although most of my volunteer hours are devoted to the church, I also am involved with Fort Worth's United Community Centers as a member of their Foundation Board, serve as an officer and committee chair in the Altrusa Club of Fort Worth, and participate in numerous special community activities when needed.

I have found that volunteering is a great outlet for expressing one's "attitude of gratitude" and, at the same time, is one of the best ways to build new friendships and strengthen existing ones! Win-win!

—Diane Griffin

Volunteering continues on page 11

VOLUNTEERING:

How Silver Frogs Share Their Time and Talents

The Lutheran Church Charities Comfort Dog program at St Paul Lutheran Church in Ft Worth is where I volunteer. Lutheran Church Charities (LCC), Northbrook, Illinois places comfort dogs in Lutheran churches across the US. Pax and Phoebe are the dogs at St Paul. Each week handlers and assistants take each of the dogs to schools, hospitals, nursing homes, memory care facilities, cancer centers, or anywhere we are invited to visit. Also, the dogs are deployed to disasters such as the El Paso and Odessa/Midland shootings when they occur. Phoebe and Pax also go to TCU for various events, plus helping students de-stress during exams.

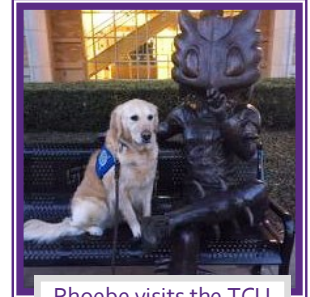
I am a handler and was trained in Northbrook to work with any comfort dog. The dogs each have Facebook and Instagram sites; visit [Phoebe](#) and [Pax](#) online any time. Visit Lutheran Church Charities [here](#).

The LCC K9 Comfort Dog program depends entirely on donations and benefits many people without charging for any services. [Contact me](#) for more information.

– Teresa Wilson



Teresa with Pax at a recent school visit



Phoebe visits the TCU Frog on campus



My husband Larry and I are involved in a number of Broadway Baptist Church Volunteer opportunities. To learn more or to sign up, contact: [Dawn Shepard](#).

Agape Meal, Thursdays, 5:30-7pm – a weekly meal and worship service for our hungry and homeless neighbors. This isn't just about feeding the hungry – it's about creating spaces and times for us to build relationships that celebrate the gifts of all of our neighbors. Volunteer orientation for servers and table hosts starts at 5:30pm.

Mobile Food Pantry, Fourth Wednesdays, 8:30-10:30am – In partnership with the Tarrant Area Food Bank, we set up four lines in our west parking lot to give away items like frozen meat, yogurt, juice, fresh produce, bread, and desserts. We always need lots of volunteers for this event.

Clothing Ministry – Through this important ministry, we distribute school uniforms and other clothing items to children and adults.

May Street Market – In partnership with the Tarrant Area Food Bank, we operate a free food store for neighbors living in the 76104 zip code west of I-35.

Kids Hope USA – Through this new partnership, we pair reading partners with students at Van Zandt Guinn elementary school. Mentors meet weekly with a student for an hour. For more information or to sign up, contact: [Siân Borne](#)

FWISD Opportunities

Academy 4 connects churches to schools and communities through mentoring 4th graders in leadership. We provide a mentor for EVERY 4th grader in the economically disadvantaged schools we serve. Our volunteers serve together once a month for 90 minutes and mentor the 4th graders in leadership. They express love and care and provide the students with a positive relationship with a dependable adult. To get involved, [email Academy 4](#) or call (817) 744-8707.

– Siân Borne

Local Volunteer Opportunities

by Polly Hooper

“Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in.”

~ Author Unknown

Our Silver Frogs volunteer in a myriad of ways that give back to our community, enrich others' lives as well as their own and just plain make a difference! Here are some places you can volunteer that you may not have on your list; most of the opportunities involve filling out an application; just click on the links provided if you are interested.

[Fort Worth Fire Department](#): You can sign up to help with the Community Risk Reduction Volunteer Program. This involves things like helping firefighters install smoke alarms, teaching fire safety at the firehouse to the community or even helping at FD banquets and ceremonies as support staff. Examples of events are Chili Cook-offs and Firefighter Graduation Ceremonies.

[Cook Children's Hospital](#): Several area hospitals offer volunteer programs. Cook's involves working with children—playing with them in the playrooms, comforting them, and distributing items like stuffed animals and blankets to help soothe them. You can also work in the gift shop.


[Fort Worth Zoo](#): The zoo uses volunteers for special events like the Zoo Run and Boo at the Zoo. Find out how to be a part of the Zoo Crew [here](#).

[Log Cabin Village](#): The categories vary from raking leaves to historical interpreter or even just helping from time to time with special events.



[Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo \(FWSSR\)](#): Arguably Fort Worth's premier annual event has passed for this year, but think about signing up for a volunteer position for next year. There are a myriad of ways to help out. A lot of the positions are about fundraising, but you can also sign up to be a greeter and to give tours. Or if you are interested in wine, consider applying to be a part of the Vine 2 Wine committee! This committee oversees Wine Camps (tasting workshops), Sip & Shop (shopping and wine sampling), Bubbles & Bites (champagne and food pairing), and a new wine competition.

[Fort Worth Sports Commission](#): Silver Frogs have a special relationship with this Fort Worth organization. Last spring some of us attended a presentation and signed up to volunteer for various sports-related events at either the Tarrant County Convention Center or Dickies Arena. Duties vary by event, and may include helping athletes get signed in, keeping hospitality rooms neat and stocked, or maybe even making copies. To ask about future opportunities, contact [Pamela Lea](#), Volunteer Coordinator, or [Cassie Poss](#), Sports Event Manager.

Finally, if you're into the Fort Worth Arts scene, there are many opportunities at our wonderful museums and live theaters for docents, ushers and more. Pick your favorite, and then check their website or give them a call to see where and when they currently need assistance. 

**As you grow older, you will discover
that you have two hands – one for helping
yourself, the other for helping others.**

– Audrey Hepburn

Reading on East Lancaster by Shari Barnes

Aristotle said, "What is the essence of life? To serve others and do good." Even in 350 B.C., the value of volunteering resonated with the great Greek philosopher.

I was raised in a family that believed Aristotle was right. We had been given much, and we were expected to give back. Church, school, and community were places we could serve others.

When I retired, I knew I wanted to do more volunteer work; but, like many of us, I probably overdid it. Now that I've reached a reasonable middle ground, I find tutoring, serving on two boards of directors, teaching, and church and community service give me a real sense of accomplishment.



My favorite volunteer activity is my book club at True Worth Place. Each Wednesday morning at 10 a.m. between 10 and 20 homeless people gather to discuss a book. While it is a mixed group, there are always more men in attendance. (Women don't have a lock on book clubs.) At the end of our preview, they take the book with them to read. No need to return it when they're finished...they just pass it on to another literature enthusiast. I am always delighted with the lively conversations, the in-depth analysis, and the wisdom that comes from the folks in these sessions. Homeless people share so much of their lives through the book club, and I am gratified to call them my literary friends. Silver Frogs Debbie Maddux and Risa Payne are my partners in this endeavor.

We read everything from modern classics to mysteries and children's books. Here I've listed several of our most recent books, and I'd recommend you select a few for your own reading pleasure:

Liberty Falling by Nevada Barr...a park ranger investigates a murder on Liberty Island.

The Relic by Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child...there's a monster wreaking havoc in a big city museum.

Open Season by CJ Box...the game warden in a small Wyoming town is involved in ecology and murder.

The Catcher in the Rye by JD Salinger...the quintessential tale of teen angst.

The Great Gatsby by F Scott Fitzgerald...jazz age novel about the impossibility of recapturing the past.

In the Woods by Tana French...detectives search for murderer of young Irish girl.

Anne of Green Gables by Lucy Maud Montgomery...classic children's novel set on Prince Edward Island.

Sometimes at True Worth book club we read an entire book together over a period of several weeks. We usually choose something light or amusing for our read-aloud. Right now we're reading Cleo Coyle's ***On What Grounds***, a culinary mystery about a coffee house.

Volunteering is good for the soul. And if you'd ever like to join our True Worth book club discussions, you're welcome any Wednesday morning. Income, ethnic, and social differences don't matter when you're talking about books.



Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.

– Helen Keller

Volunteering with Silver Frogs

by Sharon Harrelson

To wrap up our special section on volunteering, here's a reminder that while Silver Frogs is administered by the wonderful folks in TCU's Extended Ed department, the organization is managed and run by its dedicated volunteers! How can you help?

- **Be a Classroom Host** – simply respond to the email request at the beginning of each session and agree to host in a class you're already registered for. It's very easy and so helpful to your instructor (who is also a volunteer).
- **Join a Committee** – get involved in the groups that make Silver Frogs classes and activities happen. Curriculum, Newsletter, Special Events...which one speaks to you?
- **Serve on the Advisory Board** (see page 2)
- **Teach a Class** (see page 1)

THANK YOU to everyone who gives their time and talents to make Silver Frogs tick!



It has become increasingly difficult for us to figure out what to buy our adult child and her spouse for Christmas each year. You know the struggle: They have everything and what they don't have and want they would rather buy themselves. So, we decided this year to give them an experience and thought we would plan a family trip for the days after the 25th. We excitedly shared our plan and they sheepishly admitted that what they would really like was a few kid-free days and nights to themselves. They had a third child last year and both have careers with challenging workloads. They said they wanted rest for their gift, so we agreed to take the older two on a trip and the other grandmother agreed to care for the little one.

Fort Worth Staycation with the Grands

by Polly Hooper

We originally thought we'd go to San Antonio; but after we both battled whatever was going around the week prior to Christmas, we were not long on energy. What better place to have a staycation than our own Fort Worth? We knew we wanted an indoor pool and were delighted to find that less than a mile from our house, the [Hilton Garden Inn](#) had not only an indoor pool but one with lots of fun water features for little ones.

We got what we deemed a great rate at \$124 for a king room with a rollaway bed. It included a mini kitchen of sorts with a dorm-size fridge, microwave, and coffee maker. We booked for two nights at the last minute by just calling the hotel directly.

The first night we ate at [Ol' South Pancake House](#) as both grandsons love pancakes and waffles for dinner. We returned to the hotel and took our first dip in the heated indoor pool. Lots of splashing and giggling was a great start to our mini-vacation.

(Continued on page 15)

On One Tank of Gas *continued*

This hotel does not offer complimentary breakfast but does have a couple of breakfast options. There is a \$7.95 buffet with cereal, pastries, boiled eggs and fruit. For \$12.95 you can get various eggs and breakfast meats cooked to order. Our first morning we opted to bring breakfast into the room as the boys were deep into a movie and didn't want to get dressed.

When the boys declared we were going to have a pajama party vacation, we just let them wear their dinosaur pajamas for the walk across the parking lot to [Torchy's Tacos](#).

The afternoon included more time in the pool and lots of game playing. We taught them to play the Jr. Edition of Monopoly and it was so much fun listening to a 4- and 5-year-old strategize about the best properties to buy. We eventually migrated to the lobby for more games including Pokeno, Slap Jack, and Left Center Right.



Still in their pajamas by dinnertime, we headed out to a favorite Mexican restaurant (I know we had tacos for lunch), [La Playa Maya](#), and then around town to see the Christmas lights. The oldest grandson informed me that it is not Christmas anymore when I suggested it, but he had as much fun as we did. Another dip in the pool after we returned from dinner made for some tired little boys ready for bed. We had planned to go to The Stockyards for the cattle drive as well as Sundance Square and The Water Gardens, but it rained all day. Our game day in pajamas was just the right alternate plan.



Our last morning, we ventured out (after showering and getting dressed in street clothes for the first time all weekend) for breakfast at [Snooze](#). We'd encountered long wait times there before, but this time we were in luck and scored a table right away. If you've not eaten there it is a real treat. The boys had chocolate chip pancakes from the kid's menu, I had French toast adorned with berries and mascarpone cheese and the hubby had corned beef hash.

The boys said the pancakes were the best in the world. Our adult choices were excellent as well.

Back to the hotel and one last dip in the pool took us to checkout and a sad couple of faces when they realized the mini vacation had come to an end. They had gotten to know the staff and other guests by this time and felt very at home.

If you want to book a similar mini-vacation in the summertime, the Homewood Suites on the same corner has a standard-issue outdoor pool and is about the same cost, with suites ranging from one room (like an efficiency apartment) to two-room suites with a fully equipped kitchen. Breakfast is complimentary at this sister hotel.

I highly recommend a staycation at a local hotel. You save on drive time and gas, and as you already know, Fort Worth is chock-full of things to do for fun with the grandchildren. Do all those things or stay in to play games and swim like we did. Getting away from the house with the laundry, cooking, cleaning, and all the other responsibilities to distract you from just relaxing is a great idea I wish I'd thought of sooner!




Taxes 2020 by Richard Ranc

It's that time of year when most Americans complete their "voluntary" tax forms. It's stressful, but may be less so for many. With changes in tax laws, more and more are eligible to use the standard deduction, foregoing itemizing all together.

The standard deduction for a married couple filing a joint return is now \$24,800 and for couples both over 65 that deduction jumps to \$27,000. With state and local tax deductibility at \$10,000 and mortgage interest capped on some jumbo loans, the standard deduction may work for most middle-income filers. Also, note that deductibility for medical expenses have risen to 10% of AGI (formerly 7%), making normal medical and insurance payments generally not deductible. The new tax laws have kept hands off charitable deductions for now but, again, keep in mind the standard deduction may be sufficient to cover all these formerly deductible expenses.

Since there are many tax programs available, some at no cost, it may be prudent to compute your taxes with and without the standard deduction. More and more retirement communities and volunteer groups also offer free tax services.

The IRS will continue to allow individuals who are required to make minimum withdrawals from retirement plans to donate directly from these plans to qualified charities. The process is simple and allows the donations to be counted as a required minimum distribution and not reported as income.

Questions specific to your situation should be directed to a professional tax consultant. 

What Are YOU Reading and Watching?

Member Recommendations



Of the First Class: A History of the Kimbell Art Museum by Tim Madigan, a well-researched and dramatic account of art acquisitions and architecture, will delight and surprise. It makes a perfect guide for your next trip to the museum.

—Mahala Stripling



Parasite. Academy award-winning movie for best foreign film and domestic film. Riveting story, incredible twists and turns. Subtitles, which I do not enjoy, but didn't mind due to the well-written and directed film.

—Sally Stevens



Knives Out. There are familiar faces in this whodunit (including Captain von Trapp, a James Bond AND Captain America) and a story that could have been concocted by Agatha Christie herself. Great fun along with a hugely wealthy, hugely dysfunctional family – and a little murder thrown in for good measure. If you love this one, also watch ***Crooked House*** (which is by Christie) with an excellent performance by Glenn Close. There are definite similarities but they're both worth seeing!

—Sharon Harrelson



The Flight Attendant by Chris Bohjalian. Flight attendant Cassandra Bowden wakes with a hangover in a hotel room in Dubai to find a dead body next to her. Afraid to call the police, she continues as though nothing happened, joining the rest of her crew going to the airport for a flight to New York City. Met in New York by FBI agents who question her about her recent layover, she is unable to piece the night together and starts to wonder whether she could be the killer. I enjoyed this book so much that I've since read two more by the same author!

—Siân Borne



All the Light You Cannot See, by Anthony Doerr. You live life during the war, albeit through the "eyes" of a blind girl. Recommended.

—Sally Stevens

[Tell us what you're reading and watching for the April issue!](#)

Silver Streak Staff



Siân Borne (SIGs) A Silver Frog since Spring '17, Siân came to Fort Worth in 1973, after moving to the US from England. She has two daughters and five grandchildren. She loves to read and travel, is active in several Silver Frog committees, serves on the Advisory Board and is the SIG Chair.



Linda Eastwick (Instructor Spotlight) is a former educator who has called Fort Worth her home since 2006. She enjoys researching, writing, and all things grandchild-related. She has been a Silver Frog since 2017.



Diane Griffin has enjoyed Silver Frogs since Spring 2016 and is an enthusiastic advocate for lifelong learning. She is a retired business owner who loves reading, writing, listening, travel, theater, volunteering, and frequent interaction with family and friends.



Sharon Harrelson (Editor, etc.) is a Fort Worth native who's been editing various publications for work and fun since middle school. She's delighted to be a Silver Frogs instructor and Advisory Board president this year; she also enjoys cooking/baking, gardening and being a band mom to twin high-schoolers.



Polly Hooper (On One Tank of Gas, Volunteer Opportunities, Photographer) is a native Texan and is passionate about all types of photography. Her hobbies include travel and reading. She also loves to play games and is in a neighborhood book club. Her grandsons keep her very busy as well.



Richard Ranc (Taxes 2020) came to Silver Frogs following a 10-year affiliation with Senior University in Georgetown. He's a retired VP of Investments at Wachovia Securities. He serves on the Advisory Board and Curriculum Committee in addition to writing for Silver Streak.



Ann Shelton is a charter member of Silver Frogs. She retired after many years as an Administrative / Executive Assistant, and now enjoys being a grandmother, playing tennis and volunteering. She recently wrapped up several semesters as chairperson of the Luncheon Lecture Committee.



Carolyn Stephens came to Silver Frogs three years ago following a career in journalism, public relations and crisis communications. She loves the concept of lifelong learning and enjoys reading, cooking, gardening and new adventures.

What do you enjoy about *Silver Streak*?
[Click here](#) to send feedback. [Click here](#) to view past issues.



Office of Extended Education
 817-257-7132
lifelong@tcu.edu
www.lifelong.tcu.edu/silver-frogs

Up Next in Silver Streak

Get Outside!

We'll be looking for your garden photos, as well as recommendations for your favorite outdoor activities (al fresco dining, hiking trails, festivals, etc.).

And, as usual...

- Tell us what you've been reading and watching
- Recommend technology that makes your life better
- Contribute photos or comments on Silver Frogs activities and classes

[Click here](#) or [email us](#) to contribute by April 3.

Thank you to everyone who shared a story for this issue!

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 2

Session II Begins

March 11

Tour of TCU Athletic Facilities

March 20

Luncheon Lecture

★ **Advisory Board Nominations Due** ★

April 1

★ **Fall Course Proposals Due** ★

April 3

★ **Silver Streak Deadline** ★

End of Session II

April 17

The Golden Age of Musical Theatre

April 20–May 15

Session III

May 11

End-of-Semester Celebration @ Joe T's

May 21

Spring Cookie Challenge