

New president a pro at accessorizing



Judy Rogers shares some of her favorite things.

Photo by Barbora Batokova

By Barbora Batokova
Staff Writer

When I first met Dr. Judy Rogers at the President's House, 738 W. Cherry, during orientation, I could not miss the glasses with bright red frames she was wearing.

Yes, THE red glasses. Everybody knew about Rogers' passion for glasses, so I asked her how this passion of hers came about.

"I made the decision about ... five or six years ago that I wasn't going to get contacts, so I thought I might as well make my glasses an accessory," she explained.

It was then she started buying pairs to match her outfits, and today she has gathered quite a collection.

But when asked how many pairs exactly she has, she replied, "I have several pairs, but I really am just wearing maybe five or six of them."

She admitted that sometimes she selects the glasses first and then an outfit to match, and sometimes she selects the glasses to express how she is feeling that day.

"There are some days when I just wouldn't wear certain glasses..." she said, referring to the attention the red pair attracts.

"If I'm in a restaurant, people would come up to me and say things about them, and there's some days you don't want that."

While the glasses are hard not to notice, Rogers has another passion: hats. "I love to wear hats, and if you wear a hat you can't wear certain glasses ...," she commented.

Rogers began wearing hats in college when she went to church every Sunday. She has kept hats with special meaning to her over

the years, so she has accumulated a collection, including those big, fancy hats with flowers.

She brought some of her favorites with her to Nevada, but right now she is still thinking about whether she has the courage to wear them on campus.

What is also clear after talking with Rogers for just a short period of time is that her passions go way beyond about glasses and hats.

One of her main interests is in higher education and making it available to more and more people. This priority has taken her to places such as Italy, France, Austria, Germany, England and the Soviet Union, where she studied different education programs in each of the countries.

As Rogers has her M.A. and Ph.D. in English, she also loves reading and going to the theater. She doesn't have a favorite playwright or novelist, but authors from early 20th century are among the ones she likes the best.

She also enjoys reading literature by regional authors from Kentucky, where she was born. On an upcoming business trip to New York, she also plans to see a musical "Fiddler on Roof," which she hasn't seen yet.

When we came to the end of the interview, Rogers showed me around her office; I saw her favorite books in the bookshelf; her perfectly organized desk; pictures of her two sons, John and James; a glass bowl with her and her husband's initials engraved in it; and a vase of white and red gerbera daisies.

As Leslie Pirzadeh, SGA president, said, "I absolutely love her. The first time I saw her I thought she would be a good president ... and you gotta love the glasses."

Writing well means much

Poorly written job applications are a figurative kiss of death, and corporations spend several billion dollars annually improving writing among employees, according to a business survey released on Sept. 14 by a blue-ribbon group worried about the quality of writing in the nation's schools and colleges.

The report, "Writing: A Ticket to Work ... Or a Ticket Out, A Survey of Business Leaders," concludes that the ability to write opens doors to professional employment. It was prepared by the National Commission on Writing for America's Families, Schools, and Colleges, which surveyed 120 human resource directors in companies.

"Writing is both a 'marker' of high-skill, high-wage, professional work and a 'gate-keeper' with clear equity implications," said Bob Kerrey, president of New School University in New York and chair of the Commission. "People unable to express themselves clearly in writing limit their opportunities for professional, salaried employment," he said. The survey found that advanced technology in the workplace plays a significant role, increasing the need to write clearly and quickly.

Historic preservation a question for all communities

By Allison Jurgens
Staff Writer

"It is probably the tragedy of modern America," said historic preservationist Don Miller about the loss of historic structures and sites in many communities.

As a member of the Bourbon County Historical Preservation Association, Miller has seen some structures lost, but other buildings, like an 1870s congregational church in neighboring Fort Scott, Kan., re-roofed and saved in his community. Bourbon County has committed itself to historic preservation regardless of the challenges it presents.

Miller's appreciation for historic preservation brings up a few questions.

How important is it save structures within your own local community? Does it matter to people to save an old school house, a home that held generations of the same family, or the first real bank a town had?

Perhaps some of the value of history comes from knowing the story behind the building, and the people who once gave it life.

His name was Frank Anderson.

He was a man who walked on crutches his entire life, afflicted with what Vernon County historian, Patrick Brophy, described as "the white swelling -- likely tuberculosis.

While working as a construction contractor for the Missouri Pacific Railroad, he built a house in 1879 on what is now the corner of southwest Austin Boulevard and Ash Street in Nevada. Brophy said that the home looked different then, "with turrets and towers."

Later, time would shape the house to what it looks like today.

Since construction, the home has had many owners. One such owner, important to the home's history, was Sidney A. Weltmer, who turned it into an alternative healing facility -- alternative in the sense that in 1907 he started psychic research.

After Weltmer died, the home became Milster Funeral Home. The home is now scheduled to be demolished.

In its place will be Family Video, a typical video rental store.

"When you lose a building, you lose an integral part of your community. And if it goes, it's gone, and you can never get it back," said **Don Miller**, former president of the Bourbon County Historic Preservation Society.

Milster Funeral Home, 301 W. Austin, will not be saved because of likely structural problems. According to Ron Clow, building codes inspector for the city of Nevada, old structures can have many problems; in the structural sense, they face cracks in mortar lines, water damage and fire damage.

Time can damage buildings beyond repair, but occasionally a structure is not lost, it simply changes its purpose with the aid of different owners and developers.

One example of historic preservation through a building's change of function is the post office in Nevada that was built in 1908.

Brophy explained that because of a slight depression suffered in

1961, the decision was made to build a new post office to create more jobs. This left the old post office with its terra cotta exterior and molded ceilings to become what it is today, the Vernon County Jail.

These are just two examples of local historical structures that tell a story.

Every town has some type of connection to the past, whether it is large or small. Congress conceded the importance of saving historic structures in 1966.

They did this in what is known as the National Historic Preservation Act. The first section of that act acknowledges that "the spirit and direction of the nation are founded upon and reflected in its historic heritage ... The major burdens of historic preservation have been borne and major efforts initiated by private agencies and individuals."

This has certainly become true, especially as communities take a part in preserving their own history.

For example, Miller of the HPA explained that banks in his community have provided no interest loans to aid with the efforts of historic preservation. And visitors need only to look at downtown Fort Scott to see that the community prizes its history.

As stated by the Fort Scott Chamber of Commerce "Beginning in the 1960s, the community made a long-term commitment to preserving its extraordinary and elegant past."

This is shown in the respectful and dignified old buildings that line the streets of downtown Fort Scott. Someone cared enough to preserve them for future generations to enjoy.

Miller said it well: "When you lose a building, you lose an integral part of your community. And if it goes, it's gone, and you can never get it back."



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