

On Thursday, October 8, 2009 the Endacott Society hosted a reception for Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little at the Adams Alumni Center. Endacott President, Vic Wallace, offered the following comments:

Welcome Chancellor. Welcome members and guests.

One of the Endacott Society's traditional activities is its monthly "Birthday Party/Afternoon Lecture," at which we ordinarily celebrate, in a simple way, the birthdays of members who have a birthday that month, normally followed by a program.

Back in July, when we were seeking a way to welcome the new Chancellor, it happened that the best available time in her schedule coincided with our regular date for the Birthday Party. Then, when we discovered that the Chancellor's birthday was also in October, the Committee decided then and there that we would have a combined celebration of October birthdays and a welcoming.

We are so very appreciative to Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little for taking the time to visit with us and give us a chance to know each other better. I'd like to take a few minutes now to sum up who we are, and what we do.

The Endacott society was founded in 1983, and owes its existence to the dedication of Mr. Paul Endacott, KU alum and former President and Vice Chairman of Phillips Petroleum, whose ideas and gifts gave impetus to the incorporation of a Retirees Center into the building of the Alumni Center. He was determined to give something back to a faculty he deeply appreciated.

The group is now an organization of about 400 retired faculty, staff, and spouses who aspire to a vital retirement, with plenty of opportunities to share interests, and maintain our levels of intellectual vigor and social awareness. We currently have about a dozen groups that meet regularly to pursue the interests of many of our members.

In addition to the group programs, we have: a monthly pot-luck dinner which features outside speakers of some prominence, such as November with Kansas Attorney General Steven Six (don't miss it); a travel group that does bus-tours to places of interest in the immediate tri-state area; a weekly coffee where about 50 members get together to talk; and an on-going oral history project, collecting histories of an impressive number of retirees.

I have also found the group to be a community of people who care about, and support, one another in profound ways and in many smaller ways.

Chancellor: This is a group that cares deeply about the University, in a way that reflects the tens of thousands of person-years they devoted before retirement. [pause] What the University has so far achieved, is in no small part the culmination of dedication to education and research, and to the Institution, by all retirees, faculty and staff alike.

This dedication does not suddenly stop when a person retires. Retirees are a continuing source of volunteer expertise, capability and energy that can be, and often is, devoted to the benefit of our community and the University. We continue our ties to our former departments where we can, and to the students we taught long, and not so long, ago.

We hope, Chancellor, that you will accept our offer of continuing help to the work of the University, and can help us to be recognized as the resource to the University that we are.