Frederick G. Ruffner Jr.

isn't like most people.

Most people who couldn't find the kind of reference material they wanted would simply shrug their shoulders. Fred Ruffner decided to write the book instead.

Most downtown Detroit business owners fled to the suburbs after the riots of the late 1960s. Fred Ruffner stayed downtown and became a leader in the revitalization of the area.

Most people have trouble imagining $350 million, let alone raising it through private contributions. However, Fred Ruffner has volunteered to do just that through his leadership of the Ohio State University Campaign.

As national campaign chair, Ruffner will have overall executive responsibility for the campaign and will head the eight-member national steering committee, which sets policy, strategy, and timetables. He is devoting his time, energy, expertise, and resources to making the campaign a success.

Ruffner, an Akron native who earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Ohio State in 1950, is the founder and president of Gale Research Co.

In 1953, Ruffner was working as a marketing representative for a Detroit manufacturer and needed a complete list of trade associations. Unable to find what he needed, Ruffner resigned his job and began compiling his own directory, believing there would be a market for it.

In the beginning, he and his new bride, Mary, worked on the directory in their home, but as their files grew, Ruffner rented space in the aptly named Book Building in downtown Detroit.

Their Encyclopedia of American Associations was published in 1956. Gale Research Co., which now has about 500 employees, creates, publishes, and sells specialized directories, biographical and literary reference books, and indexes to nearly 50,000 libraries. In 1984, its sales were $31 million.

In May, Ruffner sold Gale Research to International Thomson Organisation, Ltd. He continues as president of Gale Research, which now operates as an independent, wholly owned subsidiary, and he will direct its planned expansion and future development.

The company headquarters now occupies six floors in the Penobscot Building, also in downtown Detroit. Ruffner's commitment to the central city is well known. He kept his firm located downtown throughout the turbulent 1960s, and since 1977 he has served on the executive board of Detroit's Central Business District Association.

Ruffner is a strong advocate of libraries. He served on the board of directors of the Friends of the Libraries of The Ohio State University from 1976 to 1979 and played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Friends of the Libraries U.S.A., of which he is currently president. He has headed Friends of the Library groups in Detroit and in Fort Lauderdale, where the Ruffners maintain a second home. In addition, he is president and founder of the Council of Florida Libraries and is a leader in the construction of the new Broward County (Florida) Library.

For more than 20 years, he has been a member of the Presidents Club, Ohio State's major donor recognition organization. For contributions totaling more than $100,000, he was made a member of the Presidents Council in 1982, and in 1970 he received the University's Centennial Medal.

"There's no precedent for a campaign of this scope at a public university, but then Ohio State is a leader, not a follower. I'm fully confident we'll succeed in meeting the $350 million goal," Ruffner said.

"We have the people—dynamic volunteer leaders, dedicated faculty and development professionals, and loyal alumni and friends. Together, we'll meet the challenge."

He is a member of the board of directors of The Ohio State University Foundation, the private corporation established earlier this year to assist the University with fund raising. The other members of the national steering committee are Daniel M. Galbreath, vice chair; Charles R. Carson; Richard J. Denman; John W. Kessler; Alex Schoenbaum; Frank Stanton; and President Edward H. Jennings.
OSU gets $3 million in donations

By Ina Rene Lubeach
Lantern staff writer

The Ohio State University Campaign is getting closer to its goal, as it received three $1 million gifts in December.

The goal is to raise $350 million by 1990. The campaign, which began late September, has raised about $100 million so far. This is the largest campaign for private funds in the history of public higher education. Gifts may support the university's academic core, student body or athletic programs.

Frederick G. Ruffner Jr., national campaign chairman and one of the donors, said he is undecided about which aspect of the campaign will benefit from his contribution.

As a leader of the campaign, Ruffner said, it was very important to make an early contribution. He is excited about reaching the goal and says he has no doubt the project will be a success.

"I've been involved with other fundraising activities and I just don't recall anything that has been so carefully planned and orchestrated and staffed with exceptionally competent people," Ruffner, a 1950 OSU graduate, said. "I'm particularly pleased that all aspects of the university will benefit."

Ruffner is a member of the board of directors of The Ohio State University Foundation. He is the president of the Friends of the Library USA and served on the board of directors of the OSU Friends of the Libraries.

Ruffner is founder and president of Detroit-based Gale Research Co., a firm that publishes specialized directories, biographical and literary reference books and indexes.

OSU alumni Alex and Betty Schoenbaum of Charleston, W. Va., are giving their contribution to the Department of Athletics.

Alex Schoenbaum, a 1939 graduate, serves as national chairman of the athletics campaign which seeks to raise $46 million.

Schoenbaum, who played varsity football from 1936 to 1938, said his athletic career was a factor in choosing the amount he contributed.

"Without that education and without their helping me, maybe I wouldn't have as much to give," he said.

Schoenbaum is founder and director of Shoney's Inc., a major food service operation based in Nashville, Tenn.

The L.M. Berry and Co. of Dayton, contributed to the campaign to help maintain Ohio State's educational excellence, said John W. Berry, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of the company.

"I feel very strongly towards education in this country and I feel Ohio State is one of the outstanding schools. We want to keep it that way," he said.

Berry has not yet determined which area of the campaign will receive the money, but he is considering applying the gift to a professorship in one of the departments.

He has been a member of the university's board of trustees since 1981.
FOUR TO RECEIVE HONORS AT COMMENCEMENT

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- A federal cabinet member, two former faculty members, and a former fund-raising campaign leader will receive special honors from The Ohio State University at spring quarter commencement June 9.

The Distinguished Service Award will be bestowed upon Robert E. Georges, associate dean emeritus of the College of Business, and Frederick G. Ruffner, former national chair of The Ohio State University Campaign.

Honorary degrees will be presented to Secretary of Labor Elizabeth H. Dole and psychologist Julian B. Rotter, who taught at Ohio State.

Dole will be the commencement speaker at the 9:30 a.m. ceremony in Ohio Stadium. The university will award 5,463 degrees and certificates at the 9:30 a.m. ceremony in Ohio Stadium.

The Distinguished Service Award is given to faculty members, administrators, alumni or others in recognition of outstanding service to the university. Those who have received or are eligible for an honorary degree are ineligible.

The award consists of a medallion, presented at a
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commencement ceremony. In addition, a plaque containing the text of the citation is presented at the university's post-commencement luncheon.

Honorary degree candidates are nominated by faculty, students and others and considered by a university committee. The committee makes suggestions to the president, who then makes a recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

RUFFNER, of Detroit and an alumnus of the College of Business, provided the university libraries with a large number of reference materials through his publishing company, Gale Research. He bolstered the general emergencies priority fund and many other preservation and instructional advancement funds in the libraries.

Ruffner chaired Ohio State's National Campaign Steering Committee and was influential in the initial planning, strategy and progress of Ohio State's five-year fund-raising campaign.

He also has been active in The President's Club, the Alumni Association, and Friends of the Libraries. He is president of Friends of the Libraries U.S.A. and involved in preparing projects for the 1992 Quincentenary Celebration as president of the Phileas Society. He is the recipient of the 1988 Ohioana Career Medal and The Ohio State University Centennial Award.

-more-
Frederick G. Ruffner, Jr.
Distinguished Service Award

The $350 million Ohio State University Campaign—the largest ever conducted by a public university—requires the dedication of hundreds of volunteers. Fred Ruffner is among the most devoted of those volunteers; he has given unstintingly of his time and resources and has been an inspiration to other supporters of Ohio State.

A 1950 business graduate, Ruffner served from 1985 to 1988 as national chair of the University’s five-year campaign. His involvement with Ohio State has spanned three decades—over the years he has spent countless hours meeting with committees, working with prospective donors, recruiting other volunteers, and promoting the University. His generous gift to the campaign further illustrates his concern for Ohio State: instead of establishing a chair or program in his name, Ruffner elected to give money to a flexible, general fund for emergencies and newly emerging needs. He is a member of The Presidents Council and the Alumni Association and serves on The Ohio State University Foundation board of directors, as well as the National Campaign Steering Committee.

Ruffner is president of Omnographics Inc. of Detroit, a publisher of educational books, journals, and videotapes. He and his wife, Mary, founded the Gale Research Company, which creates and publishes reference books, in 1954 and sold it in 1985. Ruffner received the tenth annual Curtis Benjamin Award in 1985 from the Association of American Publishers, Inc. for setting new standards for information publishing.

An active advocate of libraries, he is a member of Friends of the Libraries groups at Ohio State and in both Detroit and Fort Lauderdale and served as president of Friends of the Libraries U.S.A. He was recently honored by the American Library Association for his corporate support and volunteer leadership. We commend him for his decades of service and proudly present him with the Distinguished Service Award as an expression of the University’s appreciation.