

Summer 6-1-2018

## SJSU ERFA News, Summer 2018

San Jose State University, Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association

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SJSU  
**ERFA**  
**News**

Inside . . .



Look closely to see this otter pup cruising on his mother's tummy. See more on Page 7.

A Newsletter of the San Jose State University Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association

President's Message

## Presidential service "enriched retirement"

**Ji-Mei Chang**  
**(Special Education)**

As we end this academic year, I would like to share what I have learned while heading the Executive Board of SJSU ERFA. First, I became aware of the Board's multiple tasks and responsibilities, one of which is to recruit and retain ERFA's membership on campus by working with the Office of Faculty Affairs and participating in a recently reinstated event: the Retiring Faculty Reception.

Another is to collect and enhance ERFA faculty biographies by partnering with the King Library on SJSU ScholarWorks. This initiative is intended to honor and preserve our faculty's history and contributions. In the coming months, members will receive detailed information on this project. We hope you will participate!

Additionally, the Board focuses on social activities for its members. At our fall and spring luncheons we have had enlightening speakers, presentations by our Faculty Award recipients, entertaining performances like that of the SJSU Choraliers, as well as a joyful holiday celebration and an exciting spring excursion. The minutes of our monthly Board meetings published on the SJSU ERFA website reflect that it does indeed take a village to sustain a well-run Association! I am most

impressed with the dedication, support, and conscientiousness of the Executive Board members.

During my tenure, we were able to create two checklists to ensure that future Presidents of the ERFA Board are aware of what they will be responsible for during the year. One focuses on the regular tasks that the President must manage and oversee, and the second on "key items" for the monthly agenda. Both ensure that critical tasks will be carried out according to specific timelines each month. These include planning and carrying out all the social activities mentioned above as well as the time-consuming process of administering our Faculty Research and Creative Activity Awards program

I would like to highlight the importance of continued fundraising to support that program, which is designed to promote the scholarly and creative pursuits of SJSU campus colleagues. We began it in 2014,

with awards originally given to two recipients. This year and next year, we are fortunate to be able to provide financial support to three recipients because of our members' generous donations. Through these faculty awards, SJSU ERFA has been able to strengthen its connections to colleagues on campus. Our thanks also goes to the Center for Faculty Development for their assistance in processing the large volume of faculty applications for these Awards. Their valuable support allows committee members to more efficiently review the increasing number of proposals and select each year's award recipients.

I have really enjoyed the opportunity to serve as President and work so closely with Board members this year. These experiences have truly enriched my retirement. In the coming year, as Past President, I look forward to working with our incoming President Elba Maldonado-Colon.

## calendar

Friday, October 26, 2018

**Fall Luncheon**  
*Prof. Emeritus Terry Christensen*  
Dept. of Political Science

Cafe Stritch  
Downtown San Jose

Friday, December 7, 2018

**Holiday Celebration**  
3 to 5 p.m.

MLK Library  
2nd Floor, Rms. 225-29

University and Academic Senate News*The CSU and SJSU:*

# *A Summary of This Year's Notable Events*

By Peter Buzanski  
(ERFA Academic  
Senate Representative)

Surely the most significant occurrence of this year is the recent announcement by Chancellor Timothy White that there will be no tuition increase for 2018-19. However, the Chancellor accompanied his message with a plea that everyone concerned with higher education should

put pressure on the California legislature to increase the CSU funding for 2018-19. Otherwise, he claims, there will have to be an increase in tuition plus a reduction of admissions next year. Despite Governor Brown's May revision of the legislative budget, the CSU was still \$171 million short, even though the budget included a one-time appropriation of \$100 million specifically targeted to fund

deferred maintenance. (Since SJSU is the oldest of the 23 campuses, we might be allotted about 10% of that total.) We also learned that the surprisingly large monetary surplus which the Franchise Tax Board accumulated after April 15 prompted Brown to state that he would not veto any additional funds appropriated by the legislature. That's why Chancellor White is appealing for concerted pressure on members of both houses of the legislature to give the CSU the \$171 million that is still lacking.

Another significant fact is that this year more than half of the 23 campuses are headed by female presidents. Thirteen women, many of them belonging to minority ethnicities—Asian, Hispanic and African-American—are presidents. We recall with some satisfaction that SJSU was the first CSU campus to be headed by a female, the late Gale Fullerton, and that our newly established president, Mary Papazian, is one of the current thirteen.

A third notable event is that Spartan Shops, our longtime campus supplier, which lost its Book Store operation some years ago to Barnes and Noble, is now losing its campus food operations as of July 1, 2018. The university found that the meals Spartan Shops offered were widely detested by students, staff, and faculty. The result is that Chartwells, the largest domestic supplier of food for colleges and universities, won out over two competitors who bid on the university's proposal. The good news is that the price charged by Chartwells will be lower than that of Spartan Shops and that all students currently working for Spartan Shops

(Continued on Page 7)

**SJSU ERFA Officers, 2017-18**

**President** -- Ji-Mei Chang

**Vice Pres.** -- Elba Maldonado-Colon

**Secretary** -- Dennis Wilcox

**Treasurer** -- Abdel El-Shaieb

**Members at Large** -- Carmen Sigler

Bill McCraw

Jo Bell Whitlatch

**Academic Senate** -- Peter Buzanski

**Past President** ---- Nancie Fimbel

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**Membership** Wayne Savage      **Consolations** Jill Cody

**Activities** Dolores Escobar-Hamilton      **Archivist** Celia Bakke

Lonna Smith      **CSU-ERFA Reps** Don Keeseey

Jackie Snell      Bob Wilson

Joan Merdinger

**Program Committee:** Carmen Sigler, Barbara Conry,

Bill McCraw and Jo Bell Whitlatch

**CSU ERFA State Council Delegate-at-Large**--David Elliott

**Webmaster**--Carol Christensen

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**Visit the SJSU ERFA Website at** [www.sjsu.edu/emeritusfaculty](http://www.sjsu.edu/emeritusfaculty)

Views and opinions expressed in this SJSU ERFA Newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the editor or of San Jose State University.



# The Spring Luncheon . . .



Ji-Mei Chang, our outgoing president, with Dolores Escobar-Hamilton.



Carol Christensen with old friends Hugh Mumby and Bob Wilson.



Director Jeffrey Benson introduces the renowned Choraliers.



Chris Jochim, ERFA's incoming President-elect, with his wife Bauchin Lin.



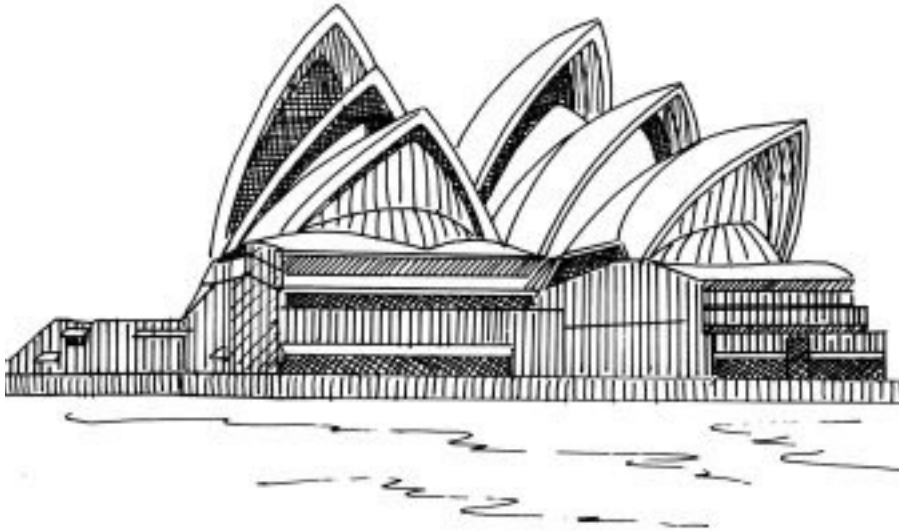
Marian Yoder, Bill McCraw and Mary Jo Gorney-Moreno.



Two of this year's three ERFA Faculty Award winners, Alan Soldofsky and Ningkun Wang.

## Sydney Opera House Secret

# A Crown Jewel lacking a few



**By Lonna Smith  
(Secondary Ed/LLD)**

As the plane rose into the sky, I turned to the window in hopes of one last glimpse. We passed over the harbor, and there she was— the Sydney Opera House. Her white sails reached out as if to wave “Goodbye. Goodbye forever.”

For more than three days, she was truly my obsession. Who could blame me? She is one of the most iconic structures in the world, immediately recognizable by millions, and hauntingly beautiful. The crown jewel of Sydney Harbor, she is correctly touted as, “A building that changed the image of an entire country.”

But, she is also Sydney’s little secret. Although breathtaking from the outside at any angle, no matter what time of day, inside the Opera House is a disaster.

On our second day in Sydney, Michael and I bought tickets for the 11:45 AM tour. Forty dollars each didn’t seem too much for an hour inside the most magical of buildings, this homage to the finest of the arts.

Tickets in hand, and with time to spare, I in a burst of prudence, decided to look for the ladies room. A sign with an arrow pointing to the left directed my way.

I strode confidently to the end of a curved hallway where I was met by an elevator and another sign to the toilets, this time pointing in the direction from which I came. Quickly turning, I retraced my steps. Out in the lobby, there was another sign indicting bathrooms on the level above me as well as the non-existent ones at the end of the hallway from which I had just emerged.

Trusting the arrow pointing up and spotting a staircase, I climbed. At the top, I found myself outside on a rooftop with what looked like a loading dock and some large containers. There was nothing resembling a bathroom.

Down the stairs I went. This time, I stopped and asked directions. Despite all the signs to the contrary, I was told the toilets were on that level, just around the corner. As it was getting close to the time of the

tour, I quickly rounded the corner. No bathroom. Instead there was a gift shop. Another inquiry, and I was directed around a second corner to a long corridor flanked by several restaurants. There at the end, I finally reached my destination. Relief!

Mission accomplished, I dashed back just in time for the tour to begin. Our friendly tour guide was a sweet young thing with a flair for the dramatic and a decidedly American accent. She knew her script well as she explained to us that Jørn Utzon, the Danish architect who won the competition to design the Opera House, submitted his plans without bothering to consult a structural engineer. Of course, his original winged vision couldn’t support itself and needed modifications. It ran over the original cost estimate by a factor of five and took a decade longer to build than was originally planned. What’s more, ever since, the Opera House has undergone countless improvements to make it actually usable including installing windows in the lobby, which was originally open air. Apparently, the architect didn’t know it rains in Australia.

We moved on with the tour, walking on hard, granite surfaces, up many flights of stairs as our tour guide cheerfully explained that they are still trying to install enough elevators to make all the theaters in the Opera House fully accessible.

Climbing higher, we finally entered a small theater and settled into rather uncomfortable seats consisting of molded plastic shells with small red cushions for petite derrières. “I bet no one falls asleep during boring plays in this place,” Michael whispered to me.

Miss American Tour Guide told us that this theater could only be used



# carats on the inside

for events that were suitable for small stages. “And since there’s no backstage here, everything needs to be front and center,” she added.

Leaving the theater, we walked down and up several flights of stairs to the main opera venue, the Joan Sutherland Theater. A gaudy portrait of Dame Sutherland hung by one of the last flights of stairs we traversed before entering her namesake theater. It was the only artwork I saw in the entire Opera House. Again we sat in the cramped, ugly seats as we all looked around. Nothing pleasing adorned the theater, just audience seats, granite walls, an ugly red carpet and a plain stage. I remember nothing else.

Finally, we were told we would be going into Sydney’s finest concert hall, the largest in the Opera House. Up more stairs, down still more and up again we trudged, no doubt all of us remembering the warning when we bought our tickets: we would be climbing 300 stairs during the tour.

We entered the Concert Hall, and I looked around. Now, I don’t pretend to be an expert, but I’ve performed in enough venues to recognize a disaster, and this was definitely one. The shape of the room was somewhat like an egg, with a ceiling so high, you could barely see it. The upper third of the walls seemed to lean inward. Those ubiquitous molded plastic seats ran halfway up the walls and seemed to wrap around the stage. I plunked into my plastic seat aghast.

Despite cheery chatter from our perky American guide, who I later learned was from Walnut Creek, California, I sat glum. There was no way sound could travel smoothly in this monstrosity. Our California Cutie excitedly explained that when the Opera House was new, the orchestral musicians were so

flummoxed by the acoustics, they couldn’t play in sync with one another. By the time the sound traveled from their instruments up to the Mount Everest of ceilings and down again to the musicians’ ears, the conductor was several beats ahead. The solution? Large plastic disks were installed that could be lowered to form a false ceiling.

I asked a question, “Despite the disks and the wooden panels, aren’t there still acoustical challenges in this hall?”

Big smiles and assurances answered me. “No, this hall is just like all the other concert halls in the world.”

I looked up at the tall, narrow cavern above me and around to the seats flanking the walls all the way to the sides of the stage area. It was easy to imagine the sound floating up, then down and then being swallowed by all those people sitting against the walls. She’s lying through her teeth, I thought, but since I was a guest, I simply smiled.

“Next year, this hall will be completely remodeled,” our guide added. “It’s great now, but it will be even better!”

Our tour was over save for another fifty or so stairs to exit. Later that evening, we had dinner with friends who live in Sydney. “Is it just me, or is the Opera House an acoustical disaster?” I asked.

“It’s horrible,” they confirmed. “And there’s no way to fix it. A total mistake, but you have to admit, it’s beautiful on the outside.”

Yes, it is. The next evening we strolled by Sydney Harbor watching the Opera House shimmering in the gentle moonlight. Surely she is the Queen of Australia. And Her Majesty is as beautiful on the outside as she is on the inside.

## Down the Memory Hole

By David McNeil (History)

Soon after retiring, I discovered that my email account at SJSU had been eliminated, along with its contents—my teaching and research notes, memos, letters, etc. I demanded an explanation and learned that a tech had misunderstood “emeritus” to mean “deceased,” and acted accordingly.

I sought to have the material recovered—unsuccessfully. I later found that my mailbox in the department was also gone. Old colleagues, now scarce, were also hard to find.

Of course, all this was to be expected. But I did appreciate that my name continued to be listed in the ADM hallway as recipient of the first Distinguished Service Award (1999-2000).

On my most recent trip to campus, planning to do some library business, I discovered that my SJSU Library account had gone missing. A helpful librarian entered my information, but “no record” was the response. Advised to go to Admissions & Records to rectify matters, I passed through ADM again, only to find that my name was no longer listed with the faculty awards. (All the Outstanding Professors from before 2000-2001 are also gone, soon to be forgotten.)

Feeling more than ever like an unperson, I cut short my campus visit and went home to read to my youngest granddaughter at bedtime. “Goodnight Gorilla” failed to put her to sleep, but reading her a bit of Orwell’s “1984” did the job.

# Notes on a Balkan cruise

## By Scott Rice (English)

In April Mary Beth and I cruised down the Danube from Budapest to Bucharest with Viking. In my case, to travel is to read. For our brief excursion to the Balkans, I loaded up on Rebecca West, Patrick Leigh Fermor, Olivia Manning, and Robert D. Kaplan. They were my tutors, my guides, and—because I like to read on location—my Kindle companions. For months I looked forward to sitting at a sidewalk café in Bucharest and savoring passages from Manning's *Balkan Trilogy*.

These authors were real travelers, not mere tourists like myself. I like to think I occupy a notch just above the KFC faithful, those who prowl foreign cities looking for American fast-food franchises. As for me, I pride myself on eating the local grub and drinking the local plonk. In the Balkans, that means plum brandy. On site, though, I toasted our embarkation with Unicum Zwac, an Hungarian liqueur that looks and smells suspiciously like creosote. With a head full of information about the Dacians, Magyars, Romans, Pecheneg invasions, the Bogomil heresy, the Ottomans, the Austro-Hungarians, the impact of two world wars and Soviet domination, I was prepared, if nothing else, to impress our traveling companions with my knowledgeable—or not.

Bracketed by four days in Budapest and six days in Bucharest, we spent a week on a Viking long boat called the *Atla*. In addition to the usual visits to museums and galleries, highlights of our trip included:

- Sitting at a sidewalk café viewing the floodlit Buda Castle and Chain Bridge while a gypsy band serenaded us with “Lara’s Song.”

- Receiving a tutorial on Tokay wine from “Peter” at the Paprika Souvenir Shop and being persuaded to buy an over-priced bottle that he assured me had been informally assigned 98 points by the president of the Brazilian Sommelier’s Association (and I don’t even like Tokay).
- Trekking across Budapest to visit an art gallery supposed to house a large collection of Spanish masters only to find that it is closed until November.
- Touring Kelemegdan Park and Fortress on an overcast day in Belgrade before being taken by



Peles Castle

our guide to the Tito Memorial (we have a word for it that rhymes with “ugly”).

- Visiting Belgrade’s magnificent St. Sava Temple where I beheld my first Iconostasis (icon screen) behind which Orthodox priests perform masses (I spent the rest of our trip ferreting out iconostases, of which West had written so fondly).
- Spending a day admiring the architecture of Bulgaria’s Veliko Tarnovo whose old town is located on three hills overlooking a river, as picturesque a town as you could ever ask to see.
- Listening to a series of conventionally patriotic tour

guides expatiate on the evils of life under Communism and being stunned by the unexpected charm of Bucharest which has made enormous progress in barely two decades since Communism was overthrown.

- Viewing Bucharest’s colossal Palace of the Parliament, constructed by former dictator Nicolae Ceausescu and looking like something Albert Speer might have designed for Kim Jong Un.
- Strolling about Bucharest’s delightful old town and dining on a gigantic pork knuckle at Caru’ cu bere (the beer cart), one of the oldest restaurants in the city where our wine-country guide had taken us as his guests.
- And, of course, the obligatory visit to Bran Castle, the home of Vlad the Impaler, inspiration for Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (the site is as tourism-corrupted as a place can be, but Marie of Romania once lived there and on the same tour we visited Peles Castle, one of the most beautiful palaces in Europe, once the summer home of King Carol I).
- Tasting wine in every country we visited (Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Romania), ultimately having a case shipped to us from the latter because it does not export to the U.S.

- Riding past miles and miles of canola fields boasting a stark yellow that Van Gogh would have loved.

I spotted not a single Pecheneg or Bogomil and was unable to visit the shrine of St. Gropius where one may view the mummified right hand with which this holy man ignited fires under seventeen thousand heretics—but Romania rocks. If American tourists have not yet discovered this affordable destination, Europeans have. But don’t brave the heat of July or August, I was warned.

## University and Academic Senate News

(Continued from Page 2)

can reapply and have the same hours and wages guaranteed by the new food vendor.

What should, perhaps, have been the initial item in this report is that SJSU is losing one of its very best Provosts. Andrew Feinstein is leaving on July 1 to assume the presidency of Northern Colorado University (NCU). At the final SJSU Senate meeting, Andy was asked what he had learned at SJSU regarding the collegiality practiced in our academic senate and elsewhere on campus and his reply brought him a standing ovation. He said that in his discussion with NCU trustees and officials, he inquired about cooperative structures on their campus that include administrators, faculty and students, the committees that embrace the collegiality so vital in higher education. He found that none of that exists at NCU. The trustees told Andy that search committees for administrators do not exist and that he can hire whomever he wants. That

prompted Andy to say that he will now embark on establishing a new method of operation at NCU. His reply reminded me of Robert Clark, our SJSU president from 1964-69 who, almost immediately after arriving, launched a successful campaign to change SJSU from a teacher training institution into a liberal arts university.

Given that we are losing our provost, President Papazian announced that a search committee will be established to select an interim provost, one who will be ineligible for the permanent position. Early in the fall, another committee will begin a national search and Papazian hopes to have a permanent provost appointed by the beginning of the spring 2019 semester.

A minor kerfuffle took place on our campus recently when Condoleezza Rice was invited to be a speaker on our campus. James P. Walsh, who had been chair of the SJSU

History department, Dean of Social Sciences, served as the Provost and had written a history of the University, wrote a letter to

President Papazian, which he also sent to the San Jose Mercury News. In this public letter, Walsh harshly criticized the invitation of Rice to speak on campus. Her appearance at SJSU, he said, “. . . soils the noble history of our university. Let us not contribute to her public rehabilitation. Dr. Rice and her equals (Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Powell, and Paul Wolfowitz) broke the Middle East and cracked the World with their optional, now 17-year war.” His view was attacked by many faculty members who argued on behalf of free expression at a university. Rice’s invitation remained intact and she spoke as scheduled, with no ill effect.

This summary of the year’s Senate activities fails to mention one surprising fact: the Senate actually passed 235 policy recommendations, which resulted in the reduction of a large number overlapping policies, contradictions and redundancies. Isn’t that a fine way to end the academic year?

### *Moss Landing Adventure*

A family of cormorants  
settle in . . . .



One of our two ERFA groups embark on a boat tour of Elkhorn Slough to see the wild life up close and personal.



**Newsletter of the Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association**  
SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY  
One Washington Square  
San Jose, CA 95192-0210

## **Return Service Requested**

# ***SJSU ERFA and CSU ERFA – A Great Partnership!***

**By Jo Bell Whitlatch (Library)**

A previous article in our SJSU ERFA News explained the difference between SJSU-ERFA and CSU-ERFA. Although the missions and activities of SJSU-ERFA (staying connected socially) and CSU-ERFA (protecting retiree benefits) are very different, the SJSU-ERFA Board would like to encourage all our retirees to join both organizations.

Why join both organizations? You receive several important benefits:

Your dues are automatically deducted, which means you never have to remember whether you paid your annual membership

fees. (This year, 23 of our members paid twice!) It also means we are saved the time and cost of sending multiple requests for dues payment.

Joining CSU-ERFA strengthens your support for our pension and health benefits, while SJSU-ERFA influences the future of SJSU.

SJSU faculty who join CSU-ERFA also benefit our local organization because for each member we get a rebate from the state organization that helps with our programs, such as the annual faculty awards to promote creativity and scholarship.

Many of you already belong to both organizations and we thank

you for your support!

If you are a member of SJSU-ERFA but not CSU-ERFA and would like to join, please contact our Treasurer Abdel El Shaieb ([abdel39@verizon.net](mailto:abdel39@verizon.net)) and he will arrange for you to get the information as well as approve a payroll deduction for both organizations to simplify your payments. SJSU-ERFA dues continue to be a flat \$2.00 per month; however, CSU-ERFA dues are from \$5.00-\$10.00 per month, depending on the size of your monthly retirement benefit. For more details see <http://csuerfa.org/membership.html>.