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The SJSU Emeritus and Retired Faculty
Association

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SJSU ERFA News, Late Spring 2010

San Jose State University, Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association

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SJSU ERFA News

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST

A dinner party that left a vivid impression is remembered on page four.

Don't miss the poem on page eight that might take you beyond the boys of summer.

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

President's Message

Transitioning into the future: SJSU EFA to SJSU ERFA

By Bobbye Gorenberg

As we complete our twenty-third year, this organization has accomplished many things. As I review the year, the most striking change is to our bylaws. The committee that reviewed the bylaws and suggested the changes to bring us up-to-date with our principles and practices was

composed of Bob Wilson, David Elliot and Carol Christensen. The bylaws approved at our May 7, 2010 meeting included a name change which better reflects the composition of our membership. Thus our major transition into the future begins in the new year as SJSU Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association (SJSU ERFA).

A second transition will occur as a result of the membership poll conducted this past year. Those results indicated that some in our membership desired more organized group activities throughout the year. To this end, Marian Yoder will be joining the Executive Board as a Member-at-Large in charge of organizing a movie group and a book group. In addition, she will organize groups to attend University events. More information regarding this will come in the Fall newsletter.

Here we go again!

President Whitmore resigns

The recent announcement by President Jon Whitmore that he was resigning as President of SJSU took many faculty members by surprise. He chose to accept

... but this is an extraordinary opportunity that came out of nowhere." His salary will increase from just over \$350,000 to more than \$554,000 in his new position, and he and his wife will be able to be near their two children, who are currently undergraduates at the University of Iowa.

Despite some disappointment, faculty members could appreciate his willingness to make the change, given the enormous fiscal problems he has had to face in his two years at SJSU. Bruce Reynolds (History) said "I can understand why he'd want to jump off a sinking ship." Whitmore has had

As an attempt to better communicate with our membership, we have undertaken several initiatives. The first was the revision of our Web Page under the leadership of our Webmaster, Carol Christensen. The web page now has links to a variety of items of interest to our organization, among them copies of our newsletter. Also, Dennis Wilcox, Vice-President, and Jill Cody, another new Member-at-Large, are undertaking the design of a Facebook page for SJSU ERFA. This will be unveiled in the Fall of 2010.



Jon Whitmore

a position as the CEO of ACT, the college entrance exam testing service located in Iowa City, IA. Apparently he had not sought the position, but had been asked to take it. "I realize," he said, "this is not an ideal time to be leaving

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**Thursday
October 21**

**Fall Luncheon
Mariani's Restaurant,
Santa Clara
Speaker: Pat Nichols**

**Friday,
December 10**

**Holiday Celebration
3-5:30pm, 2nd Floor
MLKing, Jr. Library.**

University news and Academic Senate end-of-year report

By Peter Buzanski

Without a doubt, conversations at the University have been dominated by news of the recent resignation of its president, Jon Whitmore. Perhaps some indication of his mindset was revealed at the April Senate meeting. He began his address by saying that April 15 was the saddest day in his life, as well as in the life of SJSU and the entire campus community. It was not because that was the deadline for filing tax returns, but because it was the legal deadline for layoff notifications. Sadly, Whitmore announced that 76 staff personnel were being notified that, as of July 1, they would no longer be employed at the university. While these layoffs consist entirely of staff and management employees, academics will also be affected by the crisis when 22% of lecturers will not be rehired this fall. The staff reductions will save the university \$4.9 million, while the loss of lecturers will save more than \$4 million. Elsewhere the same process is underway. Cuts in the Student Affairs Division will save \$1.5 million and University Advancement will be reduced by a half million dollars. Cutting back on overhead expenses everywhere will save \$6.9 million, but it will result in many departments being unable to allow hard copy handouts in classes and students will be unable to participate in instructional activities unless they have internet access. These reductions amount to more than \$17 million, yet Whitmore cautioned the Senate that SJSU would not know its actual appropriations until August or September. Therefore, additional cuts might be necessary.

With state support diminishing, fund raising now becomes ever more important. In July, 2006,

the University embarked on an ambitious eight-year fund raising campaign designed to yield \$200 million. University Advancement devised a three-phase plan, consisting of a planning phase, followed by a silent phase, and concluding with a public phase. We are now at the mid-point of the cycle, the silent phase, which will give rise to the public phase in October 2010. So far, the



university has raised \$120 million, with \$58 million in cash, a sum deemed to be "extraordinary." During the public phase the emeritus faculty will surely be contacted more vigorously than has been the case so far.

Enrollment management remains a severe problem for academic 2010-2011 because of the limitations imposed by the Chancellor's office. As of the May Senate meeting, we have already achieved 176% of our target figure for transfer students, which means that despite a target number of 2,200, 3879 have already paid the orientation fee. In addition, we are at 109% of the target number for first time freshmen. But since about 10% of all students do not

finish all the paperwork or complete the entry requirements, the administration is not overly worried that the excess of applicants would result in penalties applied by the Chancellor.

The most significant policy that passed the Senate was one which deals with academic standards. The new policy toughens SJSU probation and disqualification procedures over the previous policy dating back to 1996. Vigorous debate ensued over this proposal, which makes it likely that more students will be disqualified and find it harder to be readmitted. Senators lamented the fact that a smaller budget is forcing larger numbers of students away from the university.

The University's new Chief of Police was introduced to the Senate. He is Peter Decena, a graduate of SJSU where he earned a BS and then a Master of Fine Arts. For two years he worked with SJSU police, before becoming employed by the San Jose Police Department for 28 years. He now returns to SJSU as Chief and will administer a staff of 31 sworn officers and 50 parking personnel.

In the previous issue of this newsletter I mentioned Donald Gerth's recently published book, *The People's University: A History of the California State University*. The next issue of the CSU-ERFA newsletter, which should be distributed about the same time as this newsletter, features a symposium of three retired CSU faculty members discussing Gerth's book. I mention this because my article is one of the three. For those who are not CSU-ERFA members, the newsletter, when published, will be available on the CSU-ERFA website, just as our own newsletters are now available on the SJSU website.

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST

Sharing memories with our members . . .

If Edward Albee knew Cousin Maurice

By Verle Waters Clark

(Verle Waters Clark, a retired Nursing educator, is Dean Emeriti of Health Sciences at Ohlone College. She is the widow of two SJSU English professors, Lou Waters and James Clark.)

Remembrances are never complete, but parts of some memories stand out like bright shards in a dusky background. Sometimes there are tenacious memory shards that I want to put into words, but connections that anchor the experience are missing. One such occasion is the Washington D. C. dinner party in 1970 where I met Cousin Maurice. Vivid as my memory of some parts of that evening is, I have struggled in writing about it, wondering, at the same time, why I felt the urge to put that brief evening into words. In the midst of my struggle, I had a flash: Edward Albee has already done this story. It is "Who's afraid of Cousin Maurice?" Now I knew why those shards still reflected such light.

He wasn't my cousin. Maurice. I heard about him from Bardy, a man whom I was close to at the time, and from Bardy's mother and brother, who lived nearby. It was as though Cousin Maurice alone in their Irish clan carried on a family tradition of distinction that had somehow eluded the others. Cousin Maurice had been for many years a Diplomat--capital letter D--assigned to Ecuador. When Cousin Maurice came up in his family's conversations, it was to praise his achievement, and also, it seemed, to polish the speaker a bit in being Maurice's relative. In time Bardy and I made a trip to the East Coast

to visit Cousin Maurice and his wife, Maura.

Now the play that emerged as I wondered why I remembered that long-ago evening begins. The curtain goes up as Bardy and I travel from our low-budget hotel to the apartment where Cousin Maurice and his wife, Maura, lived. I am excited and a little nervous, as though I faced an evening not really with royalty, but certainly with people above my social station. Others at the dinner party, we've been told, are Cousin Maurice's former colleagues who all worked



in South American foreign service positions. Would I be able to carry on a decent conversation with a diplomat? I wasn't sure I had a dress to suit the occasion. And what about my social skills? Again, my insecurities are those of a farm kid wondering if there's still manure on her shoes.

The Washington apartment is the first little crack in the story. It is unexpectedly undistinguished--a rectangle of a building on a street of similar rectangles, ordinary rooms, budget-style furniture, and no exotic wall hangings made by Ecuadorian Indians. Two couples are already there. The 3 men stand in a corner, Martinis in hand,

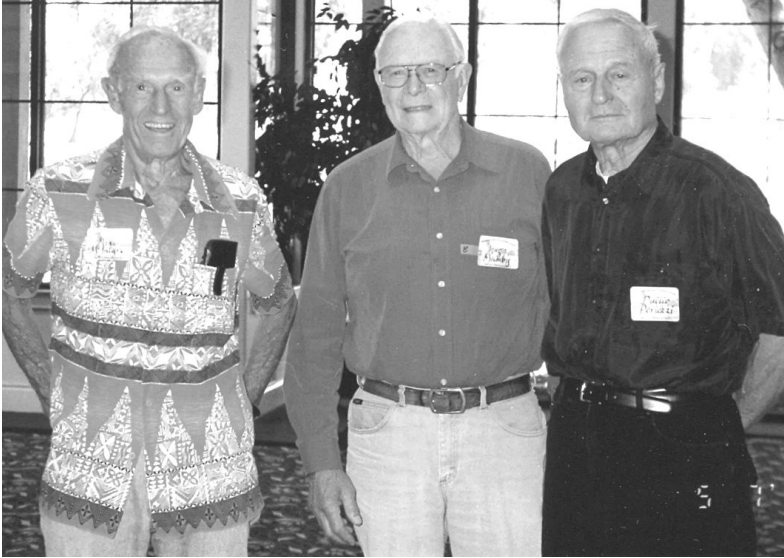
regaling each other retelling the old stories. Maura welcomes us and confides that all are awaiting the arrival of one more couple. The man, also part of the shared South American work history, had divorced his wife of long standing and remarried. It would be the first time any of them had seen the new wife, and sympathies were all with the old one.

As the first act draws to a close it becomes clear my concerns about how to speak diplomatese are needless. These are long time friends enjoying a reunion. I sit with the women on one side of the room; they are trading daily life anecdotes, and lamenting altercations with children who are deep in the youth culture of 1970. The men are noisier, and there is a competitive edge to their story telling. Martinis are poured freely. For some reason I go with Cousin Maurice to the freezer where he shows me three bottles of vodka. He points out that the ice hardly melts when one uses freezer-stored vodka to make a Martini. He likes a very dry Martini.

The act ends with the arrival of the couple they have all been waiting for--the one with the new wife. In drama analysis, this would be called the "inciting incident."

I slip into the observer role as though it is the dress I was afraid I didn't have for the evening. And here the shards of memory are splendidly illuminated. The new wife is tall, beautiful, and very pregnant. She could be a model, the way she moves, showing off her fertility as well as her wardrobe. Her skin is un wrinkled. The contrast with the other wives could not be greater; their bodies have

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Above is Sheila Tiedt and Allen Friebel. At left is Mike McIntyre, Hugh Mumby and Duilio Peruzzi.

Spring Luncheon Speech: Food for Thought



Dr. Andy Wood

By Don Keeseey (English)

On May 7, 2010, EFA members and their guests met at The Villages in East San Jose for the annual spring luncheon. After the usual social hour and lunch, the group heard a thought-provoking talk by Andy Wood, Professor of Communication Studies at SJSU. A hands-on researcher, Dr. Wood described how he drove across the entire United States while speaking only 5 words. This intriguing

experiment is recorded in his award-winning book, City Ubiquitous: Place, Communication, and the Rise of Omnitopia (Hampton Press, 2009), and Prof. Wood used his experiences on that trip to introduce his topic: "omnitopia." As Prof. Wood sees it, this bi-lingual hybrid term describes life in the 21st century where we live cocooned in homogenous spaces, with technologies that both shape, and impede, communication. The solo driver in his car is an obvious example, but our motels, malls, airports, and coffee shops function in the same way, offering us a reassuring sameness anywhere in the country, and in much of the world. We are further insulated by our portable music players, smart phones, and laptops--always in touch but never touching. His prime example of "omnitopia" was Las Vegas: in one space, all places and no place.

An engaging speaker, Prof. Wood used slides to illustrate his points and drew the audience in by asking direct questions. His talk reminded us that a good lecture can be at once challenging and entertaining.



Past president Bobbye Gorenberg presents a bag of gifts and the President's gavel to new SJSU ERFA President, John Pollock, during an informal "changing of the guard" ceremony.



Pat Nichols and Bobbye Gorenberg

Chat Room . . .

Special News from and about our members.
Edited by Gene Bernardini

This edition contains news about travels and activities taken from the membership renewal forms. Members are invited to send additional news about themselves to Gene Bernardini at gebernard@comcast.net or by snail mail at 775 Seawood Way, San Jose CA 95120.

• **Paul Betten** (Elementary Ed., '86) says that despite being in good health at the age of 88, he had "a sudden attack of sanity" and decided to quit playing tennis. "I was holding my own and having fun, but messages from a hip led me to think I would prefer to be able to walk a few years more." Woodworking and Photoshop are now his main activities.

• **Robert Spicher** (Civil Engineering, '96) lost his wife of 28 years in July, 2009. "Marge put up a good fight with pancreatic cancer for about a year, but eventually she lost. I was diagnosed with prostate cancer and underwent nearly three months of radiation. 2009 was not a good year."

• **Steve Achtenhagen** (Marketing, '02) last summer went on a 17 day riverboat tour on the Rhine and Danube rivers from Amsterdam to Budapest. "Delightful, and recommended!" he says. He now resides in the Palo Alto Classic Residence by Hyatt, a retirement community with "continual energizing programs, both mentally and physically."

• **Blodwyn Cockrell** celebrated her 90th birthday last year and moved to the mountains and the small town of Portola to be near one of her daughters.

• **Bill Gustafson** (Human Performance, '90) claims that at his regular hangout, the "Full of Beans" coffee emporium in Aptos, he's still known as "Vertical Bill," which he takes as a compliment of sorts. He and Lori Lindquist took two weeks of R & R in Saugatuck, MI, in August. "I first vacationed there in 1931," he says. "Wow! Am I getting old!"

• **Joanne Rife** (University Relations, '92) spent most of the spring and summer of 2009

dealing with her husband Ed's deteriorating health. "He and I did manage some short trips to favorite places (Yosemite and Cambria) before he died on August 20. We were married 55 years. I hope to become more active in EFA this year."

• **Marjorie Fitting Gifford** (Mathematics, '92) also took an Amsterdam-Budapest river trip in September, 09, and enjoyed the marvelous scenery. She is taking classes in accounting and doing volunteer work for the

AARP Taxwise Program, as well as belonging to Rotary, the Kauai Chorale, her church choir, and is a docent at Na Aina Kai Gardens. She "hopes more of you will visit Kauai and look me up in the coming year."

• **Simone Renaud** (aka Dieteker) (Foreign Languages, '81) is still revising her textbook, "En Bonne Forme" (1973) with co-author Dominique van Hooff (Chair of Foreign Languages). The eighth edition appeared in 2007. Simone
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In Memoriam

• **Edith Eagan**, wife of Thomas Eagan (Music), passed away peacefully on April 18, 2010, at the age of 97. Raised in Gridley, CA, she attended SJSU and majored in music. She and Tom were married in the Stanford Chapel in 1937 and lived in San Jose ever since then. Edith was an accomplished pianist who also played the oboe and English horn in the SJSU orchestra, the San Jose Symphony and the Bach Festival in Carmel. She was a member of SJSU Faculty Wives and Mu Phi Epsilon. She enjoyed composing, gardening and traveling. She is survived by her husband of 72 years, one daughter, three sisters and several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

• **Bruce Roberts** (Science, '75) passed away in his sleep in Burney, CA, on May 8, 2010, at the age of 100. Bruce grew up in California, took his Bachelor's degree and a teaching credential from San Francisco State College, and later an MA (in Marine Biology) and his

doctorate (in Science Education) at Stanford University. He taught all grade levels from elementary through high school, then spent five years at Humboldt State before coming to SJSU in 1955 where he taught a generation of science teachers before retiring in 1975. He was active as an instructor with the Field Studies Program in Death Valley. He was also a WW II veteran who fought with the 5th Marine Division on Iwo Jima. Upon retiring, he and his wife Martha, who had taught elementary school in the Campbell school district, traveled extensively to every continent but Antarctica, covered thousands of miles pulling a travel trailer, and sailed their boat throughout Puget Sound and the San Juan Islands. Martha preceded him in death, in 1999, after 60 years of marriage. Bruce leaves behind two daughters and a son, and four grandchildren. Remembrances for his family can be posted at www.mcdonaldschapel.com.

More Chat Room

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says "I enjoy living by the Pacific Ocean. I paint and travel . . ."

• **Robert Moore** (Applied Arts & Sciences, '83) says his "body parts replacement is in full swing! My latest was a hip joint in late September, to add to a pacemaker, an arterial stent and a few other bits and pieces."

• **Jack Holland** (Business, '80) has been in an assisted living residence, the Carlton Plaza of San Jose, for the past three plus years. "Fortunately," he says, "many former students come by and I am in good health despite a stroke. I really miss traveling and lecturing throughout the world and teaching. The stroke took away my handwriting ability and I can't use my computer or typewriter."

• **Arlene Okerlund** (English/Dean, H&A/AVP) took a trip to Panama in January of this year where she had the experience of traveling by "Zip line," a cable suspended from tree tops 100 feet above the jungle floor. Using a safety harness, she smoothly rode ten of these 200-foot-long cables over rivers and jungle with spectacular views from the forest canopy.

• **Helen Brazil**, widow of Burt Brazil (Political Science/Admin), after a quiet summer last year, travelled to Calgary and Vancouver, BC, in October with fellow residents of The Terraces in Los Gatos. After one day's rest (to do the laundry) she left for the shores of Lake Almanor for her granddaughter's wedding. Again, at Thanksgiving, she found herself travelling to Texas for a visit with her son John and family.

• **Patrick Hamill** (Physics, '07) is FERPing and continues to teach physics at SJSU. He is also maintaining his relationship with NASA Ames Research Center, spending two days a week doing research in atmospheric problems.

President Whitmore resigns

(Continued from page one)

to confront protests, layoffs and serious cutbacks in enrollments, limiting access to many students. He developed several initiatives, promoting the use of technology in teaching, working toward a more "green" and "sustainable" campus, and improving the school's retention and graduation rates. He also worked hard to raise money from outside sources.

But his quiet, low-key demeanor struck some faculty as a liability. Stefan Frazier (Remedial English) said Whitmore rarely communicated with the faculty except through press releases, and though the president met often with state legislators, Frazier questioned whether he had been forceful

enough in fighting the battles of the budget, or comfortable in communicating with his faculty colleagues. "It seemed like he was just not present. He was a very absent person," he said.

Since 2003, SJSU has had five presidents or interim presidents: Robert Caret, Joseph Crowley (interim), Paul Yu, Don Kassing and Whitmore. Whitmore will stay on until July, when a new interim president will be appointed. Until then, he promised to put in place a new budget for the next fiscal year. Meanwhile, the process of finding a new president will begin again. "In our current fiscal state, the last thing we needed was another costly administrative search," Reynolds said.

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST

Sharing memories with our members . . .

Cousin Maurice

(Continued from page four)

evolved protuberances that contain no babies. Years of cigarette smoke, sun-baked beaches, and altercations with spouse and children have etched wrinkles make-up will not conceal.

The man is the same age as his career-buddies, but he's not about to act it. He struts. I think, if it were acceptable for him to display his powerful genitals, he would. He introduces his bride, and pats her swollen belly possessively. The conversations become less fluid; not so the Martinis.

Then there is dinner, enlivened by a very long joke which Cousin Maurice tells in Spanish. I don't know Spanish, but I know the joke is not only very long but very risque, including gestures that could pass for sign language.

The couples leave. Cousin Maurice heads for the bedroom. He is drunk, as is Maura. She is sitting beside me and rubbing one

of my hands. She talks about a daughter that Maurice refuses to see or speak to. The daughter's boy friend has been arrested for drug trafficking--he said he was buying beads in Afghanistan and selling them in the U.S., but his real merchandise was hidden under the beads. They have a child, Maura's grandchild, and she never sees him, and she cries. Then last she tells me that when Cousin Maurice retired he had the choice of taking maximum retirement so long as he lives, or taking less now in order that Maura would continue to receive support. He chose the former. She works in an office in the Pentagon, and says she will need to work all the rest of her life. She cries.

I listen, I hug her and we leave. The curtain comes down. In time my life moves on to another chapter, but this one stays forever in my memory.

That's the Ball Game

A small meditation on Baseball, Aging and Time itself.

By Nils Peterson (English/Humanities)



A single – but Russ, knees high, pumping hard, leaned round first with never a stop thought as the right fielder overran then fumbled the ball, *and when the whole body sings with moving why drop anchor at second*, so by the time the short stop caught, wheeled, and heaved it wide, Russ was hell-bent for home, ready to barrel into the catcher who simply stepped aside when no throw came.

Wrapped in a warm summer cocoon of the high school stadium lights, the three of us cheered from the bleachers, my friends halfway between me and Russ in years, beginning to mourn their distance from the carelessness of the young body, from the confidence that this day's bruise will be gone by tomorrow, from the understanding that life would offer no hurt more than a bruise, from the conclusion:

*Why not run heedless – breath comes easy, flesh is immortal,
the last obstacle will step aside, there'll be friends to cheer.*

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