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SJSU ERFA News, Fall 2014

San Jose State University, Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association

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President’s Message

Staying connected to the University

By Joan Merdinger

As your new President this year, I’d like to welcome you back to the new academic year on behalf of the ERFA Board. I am an Emerita Professor of Social Work, and prior to retiring in 2012, I served as the AVP/Faculty Affairs. I’ve enjoyed my career at SJSU and am happy to be associated with ERFA as a way of continuing my University service. I’d also like you to know that your Board has been working diligently to bring you stimulating programs and events again this year to keep us all connected to SJSU.

As part of our stated mission to contribute to the University, we’re initiating the ERFA Faculty Research and Creative Activity Award this year. We plan to award $2500 to up to two candidates to support scholarly research and creative activities among our on-campus colleagues. We intend to offer these awards each year and will be accepting applications beginning in Fall 2014. SJSU-ERFA will oversee the competitive process with assistance from the Provost’s Office and the Center for Faculty Development.

As for stimulating events, please make sure you put the ERFA Fall Luncheon on your calendars. It will take place on Friday, October 24th, at Mariani’s in Santa Clara.

Our speaker will be Dr. David Wagner, professor emeritus from Sacramento State and current Chair of the CSU-ERFA Committee on Health Benefits. His presentation will cover the upcoming changes to CalPERS and their effects on Long Term Care and health benefits. It should be most informative, as well as timely.

We also look forward to seeing you at our annual Holiday Celebration in December. It’s always a wonderful way to bring the calendar year to a close with an informal gathering of friends and colleagues in a convivial atmosphere. As for our Spring 2015 Excursion, I want to thank those of you who answered the survey I sent out this summer asking about your interests, and soliciting your suggestions. The Board will review your votes and preferences and announce its decision in an upcoming Newsletter. Finally, we’ll wrap up this 2014-2015 year with our annual Spring Luncheon and Business Meeting at The Villages in May. I hope to see you there as well.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as I can this year. If you’d like to contact me, I can be reached at jmmerdinger@yahoo.com.

No fading away here

Info available on SJSU retirees

By Jo Bell Whitlatch (Library)

After we retire, many of us seem to disappear into the empyrean. Except for close friends and a few SJSU-ERFA members, we lose touch with most of our colleagues, both predecessors and successors. Even though some retirees leave behind scholarships in their name, we, like current faculty and students, find it difficult to know much about them.

To find information about our colleagues, one useful source is the collection of San Jose State University College Catalogs, which generally include faculty members’ dates of appointment at SJSU, their degrees and granting institutions. Many of these SJSU College Catalogs are still available.

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By Peter Buzanski (Academic Senator)

This summer, SJSU came in for double criticism in both the local and national news. First, the California Legislative Analyst (CLA), Mac Taylor, singled out SJSU and two other CSU campuses for misappropriation of funds. He claimed that because required courses were not being offered in sufficient numbers during the courses were not being offered, students felt forced to attend alternate classes offered through the International and Extended Studies program (IES) for which they had to pay excessive fees. SJSU came in for much public criticism in the local press and in a KQED morning radio program where President Mo attempted to defend his actions with little success.

Secondly, the CLA criticized SJSU for misappropriating those IES funds. The Chancellor's Executive Order requires that the percentage of IES funds earned be used only for IES purposes, whereas SJSU returned much of those funds to the campus general fund. SJSU Provost Feinstein had already instructed all College deans that the IES funds could not be so used. He knew the confrontation this misuse caused among department and program chairs who needed those funds, earned by their faculties, to supplement their ever-shrinking budgetary appropriations.

In this fall's rankings of national universities, SJSU was ranked in eighth place among western institutions. Among the top 50 programs in the US News and World Report magazine, however, the Washington Monthly, a forty-four year old magazine well known for its liberal perspective, failed to provide a ranking for SJSU. The Monthly uses more diverse criteria, like percentage of students with Pell Grants, social mobility, research and service. Understandably, the Monthly uses categories where SJSU should not be evaluated, such as "Top 30 National Universities" and "Top Affordable Elite," but in one important category, "The Top 100 Master's Universities," SJSU was excluded from consideration because SJSU campuses—several much smaller ones—were evaluated, SJSU's exclusion was disturbing. After the SJSU Provost was alerted, he launched an investigation which is still ongoing. All that is known so far is that our exclusion was not caused by an institutional refusal to respond to an inquiry. No inquiry had been made.

You may recall that the Academic Senate's motion early this year asking the Chancellor's office to review existing problems on this campus resulted in the Chancellor's open letter to the faculty regarding steps that need to be taken. In the first Senate meeting this Fall, members were informed that

Rebecca Herrell (Music) passed away on May 5, 2014, at the age of 75. Rebecca was born in Warren, PA, in 1938, and by the end of high school, as an accomplished violinist, she accepted two scholarships to the Univ. of Miami where she took her BA in Music in 1960. She married a fellow music student, cellist Stephen Herrold, and for the next 54 years they shared their passion for music while teaching at all school levels in various states: Georgia, Colorado, Oregon and California. Rebecca took her MA in Music from SJSU in 1969, and her doctorate in Musical Arts from Stanford in 1974. She taught at SJSU for 25 years and was head of Music Education. She authored two college textbooks: Mastering the Fundamentals of Music and New Approaches to Elementary Classroom Music (thirteen editions). Rebecca is survived by her husband Stephen and her sister Clarice.

Sidney Tied (Elem. Education, ’99) passed away on May 20, 2014 at age 86. Sid lived an adventurous life for an academic. Born on the same day and in the same day and in the same town in the same year, he tells the whole story: How he survived a poor, unhappy childhood, a near-fatal illness as a boy, a learning disability (dyslexia) that impeded his ability to read and write, and a coming-of-age stint in the Merchant Marine where he shipped down the coast of California, to Central America and the Galapagos Islands, which whetted an appetite for travel. The opportunity offered by the GI Bill temporarily brought him back to Chicago and Northwestern University, where he took a BA and MA in 1950-52. He soon left for Alaska, where he taught in a K-12 school while working summers as a commercial salmon fisherman. He organized a statewide fisherman's co-op to negotiate with the canneries while teaching, and became a prominent leadership in Anchorage. When he retired from teaching, he enrolled at the Univ. of Oregon where he took his doctorate in education in 1961, and was immediately hired to teach history in May 1961. He was a prolific writer who wrote too many books and articles to be listed here, but much of his work was based on his wide-ranging experiences which led them to embrace teaching English and Language Arts in elementary schools, social activities and curriculum development, the role of the federal government in education, the social and cultural foundations of education and teaching disadvantaged children. He not only taught teachers throughout the Bay Area, but conducted classes and workshops as far away as Iran, Crete, the Marianas and the Island of Saipan. Sid leaves behind his wife Sheila, four children and one grandchild.

John Springer (Humanities, ’72) died on August 22, 2014, at age 90, in San Francisco. John was a larger-than-life figure whose Horatio Alger trajectory took him from a log cabin in the Missouri Ozarks (really!) to billionaire status as the founder of the University of Phoenix. In his autobiography, Rebel With A Cause (John Wiley, 2000), he tells the whole story of how he survived a poor, unhappy childhood, a near-fatal illness as a boy, a learning disability (dyslexia) that impeded his ability to read and write, and a coming-of-age stint in the Merchant Marine where he shipped down the coast of California, to Central America and the Galapagos Islands, which whetted an appetite for travel. The opportunity offered by the GI Bill temporarily brought him back to Chicago and Northwestern University, where he took a BA and MA in 1950-52. He soon left for Alaska, where he taught in a K-12 school while working summers as a commercial salmon fisherman. He organized a statewide fisherman's co-op to negotiate with the canneries while teaching, and became a prominent leadership in Anchorage. When he retired from teaching, he enrolled at the Univ. of Oregon where he took his doctorate in education in 1961, and was immediately hired to teach history in May 1961. He was a prolific writer who wrote too many books and articles to be listed here, but much of his work was based on his wide-ranging experiences which led them to embrace teaching English and Language Arts in elementary schools, social activities and curriculum development, the role of the federal government in education, the social and cultural foundations of education and teaching disadvantaged children. He not only taught teachers throughout the Bay Area, but conducted classes and workshops as far away as Iran, Crete, the Marianas and the Island of Saipan. Sid leaves behind his wife Sheila, four children and one grandchild.

John rejected that characterization, but it was a long, hard-fought process which drove him from California to Arizona and involved hiring, as advisors, retired academic establishment who saw state accreditation boards, buttressed by campaign contributions to state legislators who would side with him over the traditional establishment. He finally succeeded and his learning programs (which became the University of Phoenix) soon spread from Arizona to dozens of other states and Costa Rica. It would become the largest For-Profit private university in the world and paved the way for many “diploma mills” that followed suit. John rejected that characterization, believing he was creating a practical education for the future. He later would say, “I only had one good idea—higher education for the masses.”

By the end of his long career, he claimed he had never been cut Continued on Page 7

In Memoriam

by John Springer (Humanities, ’72)
By Fred Schutz (English)

I was drafted into the US Army in 1943, and after basic training I read on a bulletin board about a program called ASTP (Army Specialized Training) which had four branches of college study—medicine, psychiatry, language, and engineering. The first three required previous college credits for admission—the engineering program did not. The program was devised to meet a potential lack of certain professionals if the war lasted a long time. I applied for the engineering program as a way to acquire some college education, and was sent to William and Mary. I had only taken an algebra course in high school, but this program took me through algebra, trig, analytic geometry, calculus, engineering drawing, chemistry and physics, some 70-plus units in all—all packed into a few short months.

I have never studied harder— I studied a book a day, read a book while walking through the campus (classrooms and buildings were only vague shadows), some times even studied a book in a bar. I somehow navigated with a date! I somehow writing for Williams Air Base in Arizona. Then I went to Japan during the occupation in Assistant Personnel at our air base there. But my ultimate goal was education, and I decided to take advantage of the GI bill. I had a wonderful time in Manila, but then I could not have been more fortunate in my whole military life—a great start on my college education. I had a wonderful time in all—all packed into a few short months.

I want you . . . to go to college and be happy!

By Calvin Howes Stevens, (Geology)

My ancestors immigrated to southeastern Montana from Massachusetts in 1880, becoming the first Caucasians to settle in the area. They initially put down roots on the Tongue River, but later relocated to a place called Otter Creek, which they considered better for raising cattle. My grandfather, Levi Howes, was eight years old at the time and at that young age one of his major concerns was running into snakes in the grass. He said he once asked his father, “Does there always have to be a snake in the grass?” “No,” his father replied, “but you can never be too careful.”

Six years later, when Levi was 14 years old, tension developed between the settlers and local Indians. Despite his age, he was assigned by his father to watch part of their family’s herd of cattle which were grazing across a creek from an encampment of Indians. Levi admitted to me some years ago, that, on his first evening there, he became frightened by the sounds of drums and incantations on the other side of the creek. So he packed up his bedroll and took off to spend that night, and succeeding ones, at a friendly ranch farther from the Indian encampment. Fortunately, no trouble ensued.

Sometime later, Levi’s father made friends with one of the Indian chiefs called “Wooden Legs.” As far as my family and the other ranchers in the area were concerned, peace had been established. Later, however, tensions developed again, and in 1897 an Indian uprising was anticipated. This resulted in the construction of a small primitive fort composed of irregular slabs of sandstone on the crest of a barren hill at my family’s ranch. This “fort,” now a historic site called Fort Howes, consisted of a loop of one room large enough to accommodate about a dozen men, with openings in the walls for observation and shooting, and a roof composed of rough planks. The women and children were evacuated to Sheridan, Wyoming, about 70 miles away, while the men gathered and planned to retreat to the fort to fight, if necessary. Again, nothing transpired.

In the following years famines struck the Indian communities. I remember my mother talking about how Indians would come to the ranch. They never knocked at the door but instead pressed their faces against the windows, indicating their hunger. My grandmother always provided food and sometimes clothing when necessary. After the food was distributed, our family watched these sad, hopeless, displaced people disappear over the hills, only to return during the next famine. The interaction between a family member and an Indian took place many years later when my mother, Levi’s daughter, answered a knock at the front door in Sheridan, Wyoming. She was met by an old Indian warrior who said he was destitute and had heard she was a friend of the Indians. My mother replied she was willing to help and walked back to her bedroom to retrieve her purse. When she turned around she was startled and alarmed to find the Indian had followed her unnoticed through the house. Somewhat shaken, she quickly handed him a few dollars. He smiled, simply said “Thank you,” and left.

Frightened as she was, like Levi, she discovered that there doesn’t always have to be a snake in the grass.

My Happy Life in the Army

I operated a paperback copy and had $5000 in the bank. We intended to return after our discharge from the Army to continue, but other attractions came along. For a time I did write for Williams Air Base in Arizona. Then I went to Japan during the occupation in Assistant Personnel at our air base there. But my ultimate goal was education, and I decided to take advantage of the GI bill.

I had a wonderful time in Manila, but then I could not have been more fortunate in my whole military life—a great start on my college education. I had a wonderful time in all—all packed into a few short months.

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A true story from the western plains

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The importance of being Emeritus . . .

To improve the Academic Senate’s policy regarding Emeritus and Retired Faculty, the current Chair of the Professional Standards Committee, Ken Peter, is circulating a questionnaire seeking feedback from SJSU-ERFA members. It consists of the following seven questions:

1. Do you use the book and reference resources located in the MLK library? If so, how often?
2. Do you use electronic resources such as Link+, Inter-Library Loan, or electronic books, articles, or databases through MLK Jr. Library? If so, how often?
3. Do you attend University events? If so, please give an example and state how often.
4. Do the University supply you with your own office space? With a shared office space?
6. Do you think that Lecturers should be eligible for Emeritus status? If so, under what conditions?
7. Is the title of Emeritus Faculty important to you? Please briefly explain.

You may respond in one of two ways. You can reply either via email to Kenneth.Peter@sjsu.edu or by regular mail to Kenneth Peter, Dept’ of Political Science, One Washington Sq., San Jose, CA 95192-0119. Since the policy is currently under review, a prompt reply will be most appreciated.
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 gene@comcast.net or by snail mail at 775 Seawood Way, San Jose, CA 95120.

• Anne Fountain (Foreign Languages, ‘12) and her partner Mike Coniff, both spent the Spring semester of 2014 teaching at the University of Florida. Anne just published a new book: Jose Marti: the Revolutionary and Race (published by the Univ. Press of Florida) while Mike, designated the Bacardi Eminent Scholar, headlined and international conference on Panama.

• Bill Barrett (Computer Engineering, ‘84) keeps busy writing Android cellphone applications. One of them makes shopping easier in a supermarket; another allows one to predict how liberal or conservative people are by answering their questions; and a third helps with the drought. “We’re the first to act and his recent actions reveal a different president. In his new book, Charles Burdick praises Charles Burdick for his many contributions to the engineering building. And, finally, the President praised Charles Burdick for his contributions to the welfare of the university. In another indication that the President is seeking to modify his relationships on campus, he announced a “Selfie with the President” event in which he scheduled a few hours with students and others who wanted to have their photos taken with him. Finally, his action and comments on a policy recommendation made by the Senate at its last meeting in May also suggests a change. The Senate recommended that the two-Unit physical education requirement be toughened and made mandatory for all students, except for those whose situation made this impossible. This policy proved divisive, both in Committee and on the Senate floor, but eventually the measure was passed and sent to the president. The president took from May to August to decide how to respond—and then came to a surprising conclusion. Mindful of the CSU mandate that all degree programs should not exceed 120 units, the president wrote, “I believe physical education is a luxury we can not (sic) afford, [however] I believe physical education is a luxury we can not (sic) afford, [however]...”

• Peter Buzanski (History, ’96) and his wife Colleen returned early this summer from a visit to Fallbrook, CA, 30 miles northeast of San Diego. Fallbrook is the avocado capital of the world and while there they observed the consequences of the drought. Most of the avocado trees have been totally destroyed. “We expect avocado prices to be astronomical this coming year,” he says.

• Dennis Wilcox (Journalism/Mass Comm., ’05) and his wife Marianne spent six weeks from this January and February visiting Vietnam and Asia. They spent a day caring for elephants at a conservation center in Thailand, took a spectacular trip to Angkor Wat in Cambodia. “We also sampled some exotic dishes,” Dennis says, “including fried crickets and a scorpion fried tarantulas with garlic—not bad with cold beer or the local white lightning (rice or palm wine).” As for academic pursuits of the 11th edition of Dennis’ major textbook, Public Relations Strategies and Tactics, was published by Pearson in March.

• Betty Auchard (widow of Denny Auchard, Education, ’88) continues to write her memoir stories and invites anyone to access her Story Blog at www.bettyauchard.com/blog. Leave your name and email address if you’d like to receive new ones as they are posted.

• Lois Brainard (Elem. Ed/Instr. Tech., ’83) writes that she is keeping in mind the memories teaching in those WW II quonset huts on campus long ago when Tommie Smith was one of her students. His statue there today reminds her of Smith’s presence then and now.

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No fading away here

Information available about retired SJSU faculty members

Continued from Page 1

in paper format in the King Library. These course catalogs go all the way back to San Jose State Normal School and San Jose State Teachers College, from 1872-1935.

The Special Collections reading room on the 5th floor also includes a subset of physical copies of the SJSU College Catalogs, with dates ranging from 1940-present. You can find all this online at http://library.sjsu.edu/sjsu-special-collections/sjsu-special-collections-and-archives.

The SJSU Library’s Special Collections and Archives hold all of the SJSU College Catalogs, but the catalogs from 1969 to the present time are available online through CollegeSource Online. To access CollegeSource Online, you can go to the main library webpage: http://library.sjsu.edu/, then select Databases and scroll down to CollegeSource Online. If you are off campus, you will need to enter your name, university ID and pin number (the standard procedure for accessing databases off campus).

Finally, extensive information on various SJSU faculty members is available through the Online Archive of California: http://www.oac.cdlib.org/institutions/.

There you can select San Jose State University/Special Collections and Archives to view collections such as O. C. Williams’ papers, documenting his poetry and tenure at San Jose State; the Faculty Publications Collection, which includes academic publications and scholarly articles written by faculty members over an eighty year span (1907-1987); and two significant oral history projects interviewing San Jose faculty and administrators.

These library tools can help you with research, or simply satisfy your curiosity and refresh your fading memories. Take advantage of them.