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The SJSU Emeritus and Retired Faculty
Association

Summer 1-3-2014

SJSU ERFA News, Summer 2014

San Jose State University, Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association

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SJSU ERFA News

Remembrance of Things Past

Is it possible for a family van to become a member of the family? Or if you thought Margaret Dumont got herself in a fix in Duck Soup, read what happened to Benny McCreath. Answers on Pages 4 and 5.

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

President's Message On "Graduations"

By Carmen Sigler

As my term as ERFA President comes to end, I am approaching another "graduation." On Saturday, May 24th, I will be attending the San Jose State Commencement ceremony. Throughout the years, I have loved being part of the celebration and, invariably, I have been moved to tears watching the joy of the graduates and the pride reflected in the faces of their parents, family and friends. This



year, however, it will be doubly moving for me since I will have the honor of attending my "last Commencement" as representative of the Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association. As we celebrate the accomplishments of our graduates on that day, I will reflect on what teaching has meant to me and I will think of all of you. You will be there with me and I will remember your many contributions to this great institution to which you have devoted your lives. Reflecting on the past few months with our association, I feel so grateful for the opportunity to reconnect with dear colleagues and, most importantly, the pleasure of serving with an outstanding group of Executive Board members. All of them are extraordinarily dedicated to our organization and they have made my task as President easy and enjoyable. Thank you for your trust in me. It has been a singular honor and an enormous pleasure.



More Luncheon photos on page 7 . . .

Photo by Jill Cody

calendar

Friday, October 24, 2014

Fall Luncheon
Mariani's Restaurant
(Speaker TBA)

Date to be Announced

Holiday Celebration
MLK Library, Rms. 225-229
(Mailer to follow)

University and Academic Senate Report *Change: The Positive and the Negative*

By Peter Buzanski (History)

Visit the Campus after even a short time period and you will be impressed by all the new construction. The Student Union expansion, extending to Seventh Street, now contains the Spartan Book Store on the corner. Although the book store features attractive merchandizing on the ground floor, with all text books upstairs, it's strictly temporary; once the old portion of the Student Union is completed, the book store will return to its traditional

location. A faculty dining facility is already available and the eastern portion is now expected to be finished in twelve to eighteen months.

Perhaps even more spectacular is the immense building currently under construction across from the Event Center on the corner of 7th Street and San Carlos. That building will house the Health Center and the Counseling Unit, and is slated to be functional by winter, 2015. Finally, the Men's Gymnasium expansion is expected

to be completed by spring 2015. Mentioning the Event Center prompts me to relate that my wife and I were part of a crowd of over 6,000 to hear Hillary Rodham Clinton speak on Women's Issues. She dealt with the inequalities that continue to confront women—even in Silicon Valley where only a tiny number of women head its many conglomerates. Her speech was enthusiastically received by an audience consisting of a majority of white women and few people of color. We spotted a few SJSU-ERFA members.

Another positive change is the appointment of SJSU's new Provost and Academic Vice President, Andrew Hale Feinstein. He began as deputy provost in July 2013 and has now been appointed as the new Provost, following Ellen Junn who left for CSU/Dominguez Hills.

There are less cheerful topics to report. The alleged racially-motivated attack on an African-American student in the Campus Village dormitory brought forth the filing of a five million dollar claim against the University. Before this claim was filed, President Qayoumi's "Task Force on Racial Discrimination" headed by retired Judge LaDoris Cordell also released its report with 53 recommendations.

The President accepted the recommendations and Provost Feinstein said he would immediately begin implementing them. However, Feinstein worried that many require funds and there is no budget provision to deal with these issues. When asked about the funds, the President claimed there are emergency funds available which he believes may be sufficient to deal adequately

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SJSU ERFA Officers, 2014-15

President -- Joan Merdinger

Vice Pres. -- Gail Evans

Secretary -- Jo Bell Whitlatch

Treasurer -- Abdel El-Shaieb

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Bill McCraw

Patrick Hamill

Academic Senate -- Peter Buzanski

Past President -- Carmen Sigler

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Lonna Smith Bob Wilson
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University and Academic Senate Report

Positive or negative change?

Continued from Page 2

with some of the recommendations. (Readers interested in reading the recommendations can do so by going to the SJSU website.)

The matter of expenses confronts one immediately in light of the Committee's recommendations. It asks for the appointment of a highly experienced Vice President with direct access to the President to deal with diversity. It also recommends a nation-wide search for a Vice President of Student Affairs with experience in diversity and racial issues. Meanwhile, Bill Nance, SJSU's current Vice President for Student Affairs, having been a Campus administrator in a variety of top level positions for the past fifteen years, announced his desire to return to his teaching position in the College of Business.

You may recall our previous

discussion of the campus issues that brought the CSU Chancellor to "undertake a prompt review of SJSU governance." The Chancellor's three-person committee submitted its report to the Chancellor who then met with our Senate Executive Committee. Together they worked on an action plan which they released in the form of an Open Letter on May 8. President Qayoumi called the process "a sobering experience." Several significant improvements are outlined, including an administrative reshuffling wherein the Provost and Academic Vice President takes precedence over the Vice President for Administration and Finance. In his response, President Qayoumi wrote, "It became evident . . . that faculty, staff and students became frustrated and angered by many of the fast-paced actions taken

by me. . . . In attempting to move quickly. . . I stepped on long-standing consultation practices and . . . harmed our practice of collegial shared governance. For this I am regretful."

Regarding student complaints about their Campus "Success Fee," the President explained that the reason the fee was high is that last fall he had combined three separate fees that students normally paid into just one fee, believing that administrative and bookkeeping costs might be lowered. However, he promised the fees will again be divided into their three component parts, and he hoped they might be somewhat reduced. He did not address student complaints that too large a portion of the fees is devoted to Intercollegiate Athletics.

My survey of faculty Senators' Continued on page 8

In Memoriam

• **Anne Murany** (Occupational Therapy) died at her home in Yorba Linda, Aug. 30, 2013, at the age of 96. Anne was born and raised in Chicago, but moved to Washington, D.C., where she attended Georgetown University while working for the Treasury Department. She decided to become an Occupational Therapist and came to SJSU where she took her Bachelor's degree before going on for her Master's at USC. She returned to become a professor of Occupational Therapy at SJSU and eventually headed the department. Upon retiring she moved to Sebastopol, where she remained active in her field and the community. She belonged to

the Historical Society of Northern California, the Newcomers Club, the Genealogy Society and many others. Anne enjoyed traveling all over the world, until declining health forced her to stop, at which time she moved to Yorba Linda to be near family members. She is survived by a brother, three sisters and several nieces and nephews.

• **Rebecca Herrold** (Music, '05) passed away after a long illness on May 5, 2014, at the age of 75. Born in Warren, PA, Rebecca began her musical education at the age of five and became an accomplished pianist. She won a scholarship to the Univ. of Miami, graduating from there with a BA in Music in 1960. She

married a fellow music student, cellist Steven Herrold, and they shared their love of music for the next 54 years. She taught music at all school levels in Florida, Georgia, Colorado and California. She completed her MA at SJSU in 1969 and took her Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Stanford in 1974. She taught for a time at Oregon State, then returned to SJSU for 25 years, becoming the head of Music Education. She authored two college textbooks, *Mastering the Fundamentals of Music* and *New Approaches to Elementary Classroom Music*. She is survived by her husband and a sister.

Remembrance of Things Past

Sharing memories with our members . . .

The Dodge Van

By Verle Waters Clark

(Verle is the widow of two SJSU English professors and was Dean of Nursing at Ohlone College in Fremont.)



We bought it used and drove it heartily for more than ten years.

Lou and I were still together when we bought it, and it suited our summer trips to Yosemite with Bret and Will, who were something like ten and six at the time. It was an already well-used Dodge Van with a roof that popped up, revealing two hammock-like beds. That was where the boys slept; the table and seats below flattened to make another bed that accommodated Lou and me. A cupboard with a counter-top and small ice box provided separation from the driver and front seat passenger. It was perfect.

A summer or two later Lou and I decided to separate. He continued to be part of some family activities, but not vacations, and I decided as a single mom to prove something to myself (with the help of the Dodge Van) by a special vacation expedition.

We—Bret, Will and I— would drive down Highway 101 to the Mexican border, then cross the desert and come back up Highway 395. And we did.

Now, these many years later, I wish I remembered everything about that trip, or at least more. A very few incidents are as clear as yesterday, but apart from the feeling that the trip was a success, most of the details are gone. The Dodge Van was unquestionably part of the success.

The San Diego Zoo was of course a destination. I found a large parking lot nearby that allowed recreational vehicles, and we pulled in for a night—maybe two. Walking somewhere within the so-called park with Will, we strolled by R.V.s that looked ready to stay awhile. Awnings hung over doorways, non-fabric rugs were spread on the tarmac, and tables and chairs accommodated

people enjoying a glass of wine. We passed a row of these spreads and Will took my hand and pulled me down toward his six-year-old level. “Mother,” he said in a subdued voice, “I think some of these people actually think they are camping.”

It was blistering hot as we drove across the desert. In those days there was no air conditioning in automobiles and drivers kept windows open in hot weather. A hitch-hiker appeared to shimmer in the intense sunlight and he looked as if he was suffering. I stopped for him. He sat next to one of the boys in the seat that faced the ice box. I invited him to help himself to a soft drink in the refrigerator, cold to both touch and swallow because I had bought a chunk of ice. Watching his face in my rear-view mirror I was charmed by the young man’s response to the cold drink. It was as though he rose slowly from the depths of misery to a happy nirvana. He was in better shape when he left us.

Years went by. Bret was approaching the age of becoming a driver, and preliminary lessons were held in the Dodge Van. One of the practice sessions took place in the parking area of a state park and there was a moment when it appeared we were going to slam into a toilet building at some speed. But it didn’t happen; he regained control and looked at me as if I was foolish to have doubted him.

When he got his license he began driving the Dodge Van with three friends—Mark, Charlie and (“can’t remember”)—to Yosemite many weekends. They left after school Friday and returned late Sunday night. What kind of a mother would let a 16 year old drive an aging Dodge Van with his 16 year old friends on winding

mountain roads, weekend after weekend? I asked myself that question, and I had an answer. It was a period when Los Gatos High was the scene of a lot of drug use, and I reasoned climbing the rocks in Yosemite was a safer weekend pastime than hanging out with the drug crowd. I knew enough about Mark, Charlie and “can’t remember” to believe them sensible.

Of course there were surely many events—even escapades—on those weekends that I never heard about. But I did hear one story, a good one. In one of the small towns they always drove through on the way to and from Yosemite, a bank building had a side wall that tempted the four devoted rock climbers. The flat surface of the wall had randomly placed holes from the high top to the bottom. On a late Sunday night, they decided to stop briefly and climb that bank wall. Suddenly the local police appeared and they were whisked off to the police station. They weren’t kept long and were soon on their way home again, making jokes, I imagine, about scary moments, not on the wall, but in the police station.

One last memory: it was early summer 1975 and I was driving the Van to Ohlone College in Fremont where I was to be interviewed for an administrative position. Somewhere between Stevens Creek and Bascom Ave the engine turned itself off and I coasted to the edge of the road. A couple of helpful motorists stopped and tried to figure out what happened. Then I remembered something about a wire, looked, saw it was detached, re-connected it, and I was soon on my way again—a half hour late for my interview. I got the job anyway. And the Dodge Van retired soon after that.

Remembrance of Things Past

Sharing memories with our members . . .

Hijinks at old San Jose State

By Gene Bernardini (Humanities)

Do you still remember those WW Two quonset huts on the old San Jose State campus? A colleague’s recent mention of them brought to mind a story told me by my late friend Harrison (“Benny”) McCreath. Those of you fortunate enough to have known Benny and his sense of humor, or on campus long enough to remember those two huts, might appreciate this true tale.

The two war-surplus buildings were installed between Tower Hall and the old Health and Hygiene Building, near where the statues of Tommie Smith and John Carlos now stand. The buildings were brought in to cope with the large influx of WW II veterans returning to college on the GI Bill. They were used as classrooms initially, but after a few years of rapid building on campus the huts were transformed into temporary faculty offices.

Benny was assigned to one of those offices, which he shared with a colleague from English. The office contained their two desks, a few book shelves and a bank of metal lockers to be used for office supplies. The vertical lockers were close to six feet tall.

One semester, Benny and his colleague were teaching late-morning classes that ended just about noon. They usually returned to their office about the same time and quietly relaxed over a brown-bag lunch. On one sunny

day, Benny arrived a little before his colleague and, entering the office, decided to have some mischievous fun. He opened one of the empty lockers and squeezed inside, intending to surprise his office mate when he returned and settled into his chair. Unfortunately, when his colleague arrived a few minutes later, he was accompanied by a student who had questions about his grade on a recent essay. Benny’s colleague sat the student down and the two of them began going over the essay in some detail.

The day was unusually hot and the metal huts were neither insulated, nor air-conditioned. Benny, fully dressed in a sport coat and tie, soon felt the heat inside the locker and began to perspire. The conversation with the student went on interminably, until McCreath, jammed in the locker and now finding it difficult to breathe, began to feel

light-headed and faint. Unable to take the pressure anymore, he burst forth from the locker into the room. The two observers sat stunned, staring open-mouthed at the well-dressed professor who had just exploded into their midst.

McCreath never told me what he said or did at that point, but it didn’t matter—the visual impact had to have been enough. I suspect that only a Groucho Marx would have had a quip equal to that moment.



“Wow! It’s hot in here!”

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

• **Lois Rew** (English, '01) has edited a book on Irene Dalis, SJSU music professor, opera star, and founder of Opera San Jose. The book, *Irene Dalis: Diva, Impresaria, and Legend* by Linda Riebel, contains photos, Irene's reminiscences of her career, and the origins of Opera San Jose. It will be available in June from Operasj.org, Irenedalis.com, or Amazon.

• **Gus Lease** (Music, '93) was elected VP of the 33,000-member Cal State retirees. Gus is still teaching—his 64th year at SJSU—and sang for the opening ceremony of the CalPers Educational Forum Convention last October

• **Jill Cody** (Recreation Managem't, '06), past president of SJSU-ERFA, announced that she and Jerry Grimes, after being together for nearly 15 years, are getting married this June 14, 2014. Jill was a former Chair of the Recreation and Leisure Studies Dept. and a Deputy Director for the School of Library and Information Science. Jill is also a double graduate of SJSU.

• **Fred Schutz** (English, '86) and his wife, Natalie, took a one-week cruise to Alaska on the same ship (in the Holland Line) they took a few months before on a cruise to Mexico. They went from sunbathing to nice warm coats, but enjoyed wining, dining and pleasant company on both trips.

• **Jennifer Loventhal**, widow of Milton Loventhal, (Library, '92) is pleased that a comic opera written by her and Milton has just been released on CD, entitled *Under the Moscow Moon—the Highlights*. It's a 21-track comic opera in a Gilbert-

and-Sullivan-like style. Two of the singers are from Opera San Jose, plus Pamela Polland, who sings McDowell's song, "She Likes Antiques and Young Men." (Jennifer claims Steve Jobs wanted to feature this song on his NEXT computer.) For details, write to Lipstick & Toy Balloons Publishing Co., P.O. Box 5602, San Jose, CA 95150. Jennifer also wrote *The Women's Basketball Songbook*, a project to promote women's rights that started with an ERFA grant. Contact her for more information.

• **John Pollock** (English, '03) writes that last summer, "In spite of undergoing treatments with heavy doses of steroids (prescribed by my doc to combat a particularly nasty bout of sciatica), I'm happy to report that so far I've resisted the urge to become a professional baseball player."

• **John Canario** (English '83) has just been through a "turning point year." After 93 years of good health he discovered a heart valve problem and the beginning of rectal cancer. "Worse," he writes, "after 16 years we had to put down our little dog, Pepper." On the plus side, his wife "Penny is doing well health-wise, the sun still shines most every day and we adopted 2 cats to keep us busy—and they do."

• **Ed Laurie** (Marketing, '91) announces that he is still "Doing nothing, extremely well."

• **Irene Lewis** (Nursing, '12) is the historian for the Nat'l Black Nurses Assoc. and is editing Volume II of the NBNA History book, which should be published later this year.

• **Virginia Patterson Maeda** (widow of H. Robert Patterson,

Biology), past president of the SJSU Faculty Wives, was given a celebratory luau for her 90th birthday in August, 2013, by her children and grandchildren. She is still managing the gift shop at the Hilo Medical Center which gave 11 scholarships of \$1000 each to nursing students this past year.

• **Susan Murphy** (Nursing, '01) still leads "Courage and Renewal" retreats and meditation groups. Her husband, Michael, keeps busy with his Rolphing and teaching career. They both are active in gardening, bicycling and keeping tabs on 5 grandchildren. They traveled to Scotland this past year.

• **Robert Wagers** (Library, '02) is now a volunteer at Forgotten Felines in Sonoma County. He'd like people to stop by for a tour when in the Rohnert Park/Santa Rosa area.

• **Patricia Villemain** (widow of Francis Villemain, Education) has now moved from her house to a 5-room apartment in Seattle. She was able to bring her two cats but had to send her pet dog, Rex, to live with her daughter in Pacifica, CA. "The staff here said they'd happily walk Rex every morning and every night, but once they got me to move in they changed their mind." Otherwise, the move has been a happy one. She says "the people are pleasant and courteous, the food is excellent and the vibes are great."

• **Audrey Unruh** (widow of Daniel Unruh, Kinesiology) took a cruise last fall in the Mediterranean, starting in Barcelona and ending in Monaco. She then returned to her home state of Minnesota to

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At the Spring Luncheon

Photos by Dennis Wilcox



Helen Stevens, Wayne and Sandra Savage, and Ada Loewer.



Jill Cody greets her old friend, Steve Kelton.



Carmen Sigler, Bill McCraw, Peter Buzanski and Sheryl Walters.



Dolores Escobar between Penny and John Pollock



Bob Wilson, Gareth Williams and Rob Moore



Susan Meyers and Barbara Conry

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Chat Room

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visit friends, and just in time to watch SJSU play Michigan.

• **Phyllis Connally**, (Nursing, '11) took part in an ACE/Sloan Project podcast interview last September. The subject: "Transitioning from full-time employment to full retirement."

• **John Gruber** (Physics/Astronomy, '05) remains active doing research at the Univ. of Texas, San Antonio. Since retiring, he's published 25 journal articles and has recently authored a well-regarded text in

Special news from and about our members.

Edited by Gene Bernardini

photonics/physics: "Magneto-optical Spectroscopy of the Rare-Earth Components," *Scientific Research*.

• **Elsie Leach** (English, '94) remains active in outreach at St. Andrew's United Methodist Church in Palo Alto. "I am also very interested in the education of my 5 grandchildren," she writes.



University and Academic Senate Report

Change

Continued from Page 3

opinions about the Chancellor's response uncovered a large amount of disappointment. Some Senators had wanted to see a change in the top administration at SJSU, with at least two departures; yet most Senators understood that the Chancellor's actions, which must be supported by the Board of Trustees, was unique, since no similar action has ever been undertaken by a Chancellor since the system came into being in 1962.