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Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association  
(ERFA) Newsletter

The SJSU Emeritus and Retired Faculty  
Association

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Spring 2020

## **SJSU ERFA News, Spring 2020**

San Jose State University, Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association

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SJSU  
**ERFA**  
**News**

*Inside . . .*

**Lonna Smith** and **Scott Rice** have lots to say about their recent travels, including a few things that may surprise you. Read all about it in *Travel Adventures* beginning on pages 4 and 5.

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



*At the Holiday Celebration . . .* Heather Lattimer, Dean of Education; Susan Meyers, Michael Katz and Dolores Escobar-Hamilton.

## Spring Excursion sails into friendly waters

By **Bill McCraw (Political Science)**

Our spring excursion will take us to two special sites on San Francisco Bay that are likely new to most of us, the California State

University Maritime Academy at Vallejo and the adjacent Mare Island Historic Park.

On our morning tour of our sister CSU campus, we will visit

classrooms and training facilities at the only maritime academy on the West Coast. A highlight of our tour will be viewing the state-of-the-art ship bridge simulator, which offers students a 360-degree view and realistic controls to enable them to learn navigation and piloting skills. We will also see the Maritime Academy's training ship, Golden Bear.

A short drive along the waterfront will take us next to the Smithery Building, dating from 1855, at the historic Mare Island Naval Shipyard, where will have our catered lunch. The adjacent

*(Continued on Page 6)*

## **calendar**

Wednesday, April 1, 2020

**Spring Excursion**

**CSU Calif. Maritime Academy & Mare Island Historic Park**

*See enclosed flyer and article on page 1*

Friday, May 1, 2020

**Spring Luncheon**

**Location: The Villages**

*Speaker: TBA*

University and Academic Senate News

**January Senate Retreat discusses support of faculty success**

**By Susan McClory**

**(ERFA Senate Representative)**

On January 31, the Academic Senate held a Retreat. The topic for the retreat was "Exploring and Supporting Faculty Success." It was a well-attended and informative day with input from both students, administrators and faculty members.

At the first meeting of the spring term, Ravisha Mather was

unanimously approved for a second year as Chair of the Academic Senate.

Some of the policies being considered this spring regard the following: undergraduate students taking graduate level courses; English language proficiency for international students; student rights to timely feedback on class assignments; and criteria and standards for retention, tenure and

promotion. In addition, Organization and Government continues its work on reviewing and updating the Senate Bylaws, Standing Rules and committee seats.

**SJSU ERFA Executive Board, 2019-20**

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and Clyde Lawrence (Layout/Design)

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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 editors or of San Jose State University.

*In Memoriam*

• **Michael (Mike) McIntyre** (Geography '83) died in San Jose on February 10, 2020 at age 98. A native of Seattle, he took his B.A. degree at the University of Washington in 1943 before serving four years in the Marine Corps in WWII. After the war, he took his M.A. degree at the University of Washington, and then went on to complete his Ph.D. at Ohio State University in 1951. He subsequently taught at Kent State University and Wayne State University before beginning his long career at San Jose State (1956-1983) where he was the first chairperson of the Geography department, a post he held for eleven years. He also served as President of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers. His book, *Physical Geography*, went through five editions (1966-1996).

Mike is survived by his daughters, Pat and Maureen, three grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. He requested no services be held but memorial donations to environmental protection and animal welfare groups are welcomed.

# The 'Truths' In My Pockets

## James J. Asher (Psychology)

Sherwood Anderson's book *Winesburg, Ohio: Short Stories* about small-town life in 1919 was required reading in an English class at the University of New Mexico in 1948. Although I was only 18 years old when I read it, one of the stories inspired me the rest of my life. It tells the tale of an old man who died and the surprised mortician who found a thick wad of paper in each pocket of the dead man's crumpled suit. On each scrap of paper, the old man had scrawled a "truth" he had discovered from the people he met.

I don't know why that story had such a lifelong connection with me except to share with you my father's observation that "Every person is a walking university because each knows something that no one else knows." So, the old man had a collection of insights about living that cannot be found in an actual university.

The story doesn't reveal what was on those scraps of paper, but I'd like to share with you a few "truths" I think may have been in the old man's pockets and would surely be found in my own. The first is something that could save thousands of people from taking their own lives.

I learned this first "truth" from Jimmie Doyle, the son of the police chief in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and a classmate with whom I had many university classes. He shared this observation with me: "Don't think at night. You will think against yourself." Every night, I remember this prescription and every night I want to thank him, but, like scores of other friends and relatives, he disappeared from my life long ago.

Maybe this "truth" was also in the pocket of Anderson's fictional old man: "Sometimes trouble is

the tool that God uses to prepare us for better things." Or this one, which comes from Desi Arnez: "My father always said, "If you do not know what to do, don't do anything."

A "truth" about families I learned from my dear friend, Shirley Guest, who had five children, is this: "I get along with my sons-in-law and daughters-in-law because I remind myself I don't have to live with them." And I know this, "Friends are relatives we choose for ourselves."

About lawyers, my father (whom I quote often) provided me with an important insight. He said: "Don't get involved with lawyers. They are the only ones who win." This is good advice even when there is a death in the family, and the "whisperers" quietly assure the survivors that they didn't get their fair share of the inheritance and had better talk to a lawyer.

When the Korean War flared up in 1950, most men my age were inducted into the military service. Almost as soon as we had finished promising to defend the Constitution of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic, the captain taught us how to get through the war. He said, "I want to start you on the path to being good soldiers. There is a word in your vocabulary I want you to erase. That word is 'unfair' because everything that happens from this moment on will be unfair. For example, why should you live and the soldier next to you die? It is unfair."

In basic training for the infantry, we passed a huge billboard every day. With a picture of George Washington was this "truth": "Soldier, pray not for an easy life, but to be strong." Those words led me to think about the Revolutionary War. It was

extraordinary that Americans won their independence from the British crown. First, no colony of Britain had ever dared to break away because King George had thousands of ships and thousands of professional, well-trained and well-equipped soldiers. Second, only one-third of Americans supported a revolution. And third, the colony had a citizen militia more like Boy Scouts than professional soldiers. I admire the courage of our "founding fathers" who risked being hanged in the public square for treason. If King George had not been apprehensive about the threat of the French intervening to support the American rebels, the separation of America from Britain might never have happened.

When a truce was finally signed ending the Korean War, a master sergeant looked at the soldiers in formation in front of him and said, "Lads, I feel sorry for you. The rest of your life is an anti-climax. What will you ever do that tops this for adventure?"

Of course, the Korean War wasn't the only combat arena that led to "truths." I heard an interviewer on radio ask a general who served in World War II who he thought the two greatest generals in American history were. Without hesitation, the interviewee responded: "General Robert E. Lee and General Douglas MacArthur." The reason: "Both could take real estate with a minimum loss of life."

As to Lee, it is not well-known that at the start of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln offered the command of the Union army to Robert E. Lee, who declined because his home was in Virginia, a southern state. In my opinion, the entire Civil war would have ended years sooner with thousands and thousands

*(Continued on Page 6)*

## Travel Adventures

# 'What we did on our summer vacation . . .'

**By Lonna Smith  
(Secondary Education)**

As the plane touched down, I felt that wonderful "now our summer vacation begins" thrill. Michael and I were starting a new adventure that would take us to four U.S. states and two countries, and our first stop was Birmingham, Alabama.

I know what you're thinking. Birmingham? Why did they go to Birmingham? Well, I'll tell you. We went to Birmingham because neither Michael nor I had ever been in Alabama.

Birmingham was a pleasant surprise, a lovely city in a horrible state. Yes, despite Alabama's ugly past and continuing assault on women's rights, Birmingham seems to be a vibrant city with a beautiful art museum, enviable public parks and great restaurants. Once dubbed "Bombingham" in the '60's, modern Birmingham has confronted its past sins and is striving to become a thriving metropolis with opportunities for all...at least on the surface. While we were there, we visited the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, a very impressive museum, where we learned of the racial atrocities as well as the struggles for civil rights that took place in the city. We also took a three-hour Civil Rights Tour where we were shown the strict racial boundaries that determined where people would live, the church where four little girls were killed and the sites of many homes and churches that were bombed. No one tried to sugarcoat any of this grim history.

After two days in Birmingham, Michael and I flew to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. You are, no doubt,

guessing that we went to Iowa because we had never been there. Well, you're half right. I'd been to Iowa as a child, but Michael never had. So there we were!

My memories of Iowa as a place with rolling hills and serene pastoral views were accurate, and both of us loved being there. There are no rapids in Cedar Rapids, and the town lacks luster, but we stayed in a fantastic B&B and found lots to do. The morning after we arrived, we visited the Amana Colonies, a group of seven tiny villages built in a large circle around acres and acres of farmland. The colonies were built by a German sect whose members came to this country in 1856 for religious freedom and to live communally. In exchange for working six days a week and going to church eleven times a week, the residents of the Amana Colonies were given food, shelter, clothing, furniture, education and medical care. They operated a woolen mill, a furniture factory and, of course, the huge farm for 80 years until the community broke up, partially due to the Depression and partially because the younger generation wanted to assimilate into mainstream society. It was a fascinating visit!

On our second day in Iowa, we drove to LeClaire, a tiny Mississippi River town. Michael's a fan of the TV show, "American Pickers," and he wanted to see where it originated, so off we went. I assumed we would be the only

visitors to Antique Archeology, the "American Pickers" shop, but boy was I wrong! The place was crowded with fans like Michael taking photos and admiring the antiques displayed.

On our way back to Cedar Rapids, we stopped in West Branch, the home of the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum. This modest museum turned out to be a highlight of our trip with fascinating displays showing Hoover's life and his work to save Europe from postwar starvation...twice. Hoover's childhood home and his and his wife's graves were on the grounds, and we visited those as well.

With our visits to both Alabama and Iowa, both Michael and I had visited 49 of the 50 states. There was but one state left, North Dakota, so you know where we traveled next. We landed in Fargo around 4:30 in the afternoon and hightailed it to the Visitors Center where we became members of the Best for Last Club! Since North

Dakota is the most common state to be the last one visited, Fargo decided to make it an honor.

We were given "Best for Last" T-shirts and certificates, and they snapped our picture for their Facebook Page. While at the

Visitors Center, we also had a photo taken beside the original wood chipper from the movie, "Fargo."

One thing I forgot to tell you is that we timed our trip so that we would be in our 50th state on June 15th, our 50th anniversary, and

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## Travel Adventures

# Baltic Cruising or navigating through elbows, backpacks

**By Scott Rice (English)**

Cruises are not for hard-core travelers, for those prepared to desert beaten paths and comfort zones. They are not for those who want to climb Mt. Fujiyama or sleep in a yurt and sip yak milk. Sybarites like to travel, too, and those who have to watch their meds. Thus, my wife and I are Norwegian Cruise Line loyalists. We enjoy sleeping in the same bed every night and having three comfortable meals on sea days. On port days we buy lunch from the locals to answer the traveler's perennial question: What kind of people eat this stuff? But at night we return to escargot and filet de loup de mer at Le Bistro, filet mignon at Cagney's steakhouse, or the choice from a full menu at one of the main dining rooms. And we enjoy meeting other elderly travelers (for what is a cruise ship if not a floating necropolis?). And we enjoy being spoiled although we know that we are barely dipping our toes in other cultures.

Thus, this past May MB and I boarded the Norwegian Pearl at tourist-choked Amsterdam for a two-week Baltic cruise to Warnemunde (Berlin), Gdansk, Klaipeda (Lithuania), Helsinki, St. Petersburg, Tallinn (Estonia), Stockholm, Riga, and Copenhagen. A cynic can be forgiven for recalling the 1969 movie, "If It's Tuesday, This Must Be Belgium." But what is the alternative, hunker down in one over-visited site for a week or two, or venture into the hinterlands? If you want to skip the crowds, it means skipping the Musée d'Orsay and the Prado. It means bypassing what a friend's mother-

in-law calls "the clean countries." If you want to see celebrity sites like the Hermitage or the Vasa Museum, you must be prepared for long waits and navigating through elbows and backpacks. It means putting up with people doing the same thing you are.

Our Berlin tour introduced us to a city that nurtures its status as a cold war memorial, from its somewhat cheesy Checkpoint Charlie to its preserved sections of the Wall adorned with art, some futuristic and some hortatory ("Save Our Earth!"). We strolled under the Brandenburg Gate and later through the controversial Holocaust Memorial, a rolling labyrinth of over twenty-seven-hundred coffin-like slabs or stellae that some critics do not find adequate (as if anything could be). It is at least a site for somber contemplation and not appropriate for selfies, something which, alas, did not deter some of the very young.

In St. Petersburg (the city where Putin got his start as right-hand man to the city's mayor), the Hermitage and the Summer Palace were gigantic and labyrinthine but nevertheless overwhelmed by throngs. Although I was swelling the rout, the claustrophobia almost overpowered the extravagant and, let's face it, obscene opulence (visitors can see why the Russian peasantry was ripe for a revolution). Unless you pay extra for accelerated admission on a tour, you must be prepared to wait in line for up to three or four hours to see famous buildings in a mode of wonder and, let's be honest, only partial comprehension. (One of my hobby horses: Why don't

schools offer courses in the history of architecture?).

In addition to infrequent moments of connectedness, there were flashes of cultural insight. In a large St. Petersburg souvenir shop, I asked a young man to show me some authentic Russian chess sets. "Why?" he asked. "Because in the twentieth century most of the world's best chess players were Russians." "I didn't know that," he said, apparently ignorant of Alekhine, Botvinnik, Smyslov, Tal, Petrosian, Spassky, Korchnoi, Karpov, Kasparov. We are winning the cultural war: In their ignorance of history, many young Europeans can compete with Americans.

Some benighted soul has called this the golden age of travel, which means good for those in the tourism industry but bad for actual travelers. There are just too many freaking tourists. The best times we've had were in the Lofoten Islands of Norway or in a small hilltop village in Istria or in another in Slovenia ("You're from California and you come here?"). Or in Trieste and Reykjavik, locales not yet clogged by tourist buses (on this trip, it was a wooden village in Finland where our bus was almost the only motor vehicle on the road). You have to choose: the well trodden path to the Louvre or off the grid to minor scenic wonders and picturesque villages in the beyond, the latter not served by cruise ships or pickpockets (my wife has had her purse stolen twice, once in a village just outside Lisbon and once in Trajan's palace in Split).

After almost twenty cruises the  
*(Continued on Page 6)*



## 'Our summer vacation . . .'

*(Continued from Page 4)*

we are very happy we did. Our anniversary day started with us going to the ABC affiliate station in Fargo where we were interviewed and featured on the news that evening. We then went on a three-hour Fargo Food Tour. Who knew that Fargo is a foodie's paradise? I can attest to that after eating THE best food I've ever had, including a bacon donut! And, no, we didn't just eat for three hours. The tour included a walking history and architecture tour of downtown Fargo. It was a GREAT way to spend our anniversary!

Later that evening, we got all dressed up (I wore one of my mom's old dresses I saved) and went to the fanciest restaurant in town. When we were shown to our table, we saw a beautiful arrangement of flowers and a bottle of wine. The maitre d' told us, "The flowers and wine and your dinner are being taken care of by Andrew."

It took me a few seconds to comprehend what he was saying. Yep, our son, Andy, had managed to get the name of the restaurant out of me in a previous phone conversation, and he arranged for

the flowers and wine and paid for our dinner. (We ordered the filet, of course.)

With all 50 states under our belts, we ended our trip in Northern Michigan. I had always heard that the Upper Peninsula was drop-dead gorgeous and wanted to see for myself. Yes, it was! We visited quaint little towns, Mackinac Island and even ventured into Canada for lunch one day. The trip also gave us the opportunity to see Lakes Huron and Superior for the first time.

And that's what we did on our summer vacation!

## 'Truths' In My Pockets

*(Continued from Page 3)*

fewer casualties had Lee accepted Lincoln's offer.

The secret of General Douglas MacArthur's success was this belief: "Don't hit 'em where they are. Hit 'em where they ain't." For example, if the Japanese were on the east side of an island, MacArthur would land his troops on the west side with the explanation, "Let them hack their way through miles of jungle to get to us. We'll be rested and waiting."

I believe MacArthur suffered his worst humiliation (which was never made public) when he was passed over to be the Supreme Commander of the European invasion in favor of a junior officer, Dwight D. Eisenhower. I don't believe there would have been a massive frontal assault at Normandy if MacArthur had been in charge. Such a strategy was contrary to every battle MacArthur ever planned.

I enjoyed a 40-year career as a university professor. I'm proud of the fact that I served with 1,800

Ph.D.s, and I retired with the Outstanding Professor Award. I had a feeling of adventure every time I walked into a college classroom and every time I began the search to discover something nobody else knows. I was especially guided by this "truth" stated by Albert Einstein: "God is subtle but not mean. If you get close to discovering the answer, God will not suddenly change the rules to trip you up."

In my pocket is one final and personal truth: Professor, what do you profess? You have examined an issue in more depth than all the students in your classroom. They want to know your conclusion. They do not want you to play it safe with: "It could be this or, on the other hand, it could be that." But you must leave the students with, "You decide."

*Article based upon an invited presentation to*

*Dr. Kurt Schwalbe's Unitarian Congregation in Friday Harbor, Washington.*

## Baltic Cruising

*(Continued from Page 5)*

belated realization came to me that cruises are not just drawn to congestion, they create it. And they serve tourists, not travelers. In Dubrovnik the locals—except for vendors of tourist kitsch--groan when cruise ships hove into view. You can visit The Places That Everyone Should See, but at a price. It is like getting to view a blockbuster movie, but only if you must stand the entire time. Svalbard or bust

## Mansions, chapel on Mare Island tour

*(Continued from Page 1)*

museum displays exhibits from the shipyard's long and varied history on San Francisco Bay.

We will then have a guided tour of two of the Historic Parks restored and period-furnished mansions, including the Admiral's Mansion. Our tour will conclude at the distinctive St. Peter's Chapel, constructed in 1901 and known for its Tiffany stained glass windows.

## Holiday Celebrating . . .

At the 2019 ERFA Holiday Celebration, approximately 85 of us feasted on a generous taco bar while renewing old friendships. The event was so successful, we decided to make it a new tradition. Put December 4 on your calendar because that's the date for the Second Annual Taco Bar Holiday Celebration!



Tom Layton, Shahin Gerami, Bill McCraw and Ken MacKay



Elba Maldonado-Colon and Ji Mei Chang



Joel and Cheryl Franks



Diana Wu, Nancie Fimbel, and Jackie Snell



Michael Kaufmann, Dean of Science, and Joan Merdinger



Newsletter of the Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association  
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**Return Service Requested**

## *Something New Is Coming*

Later this year, ERFA will switch to a new opt-out email list. In other words, you will be part of it unless you tell us you don't want to be.

Why? First, so that you will receive messages about upcoming lunches and events from the ERFA board more quickly and more reliably. Second, so you can view the newsletter in color. Third, so our organization can save money on printing and postage.

What do you have to do? Nothing right now, but the board wants you to know this change is coming later in 2020.



*Chat Room . . .*

**updates are most  
welcome**

**Send them to:  
Nancie Fimbel at  
fimbeln@gmail.com.**