



PostScript

Summer 2011
Volume XXV No. 3

SDSU Retired Faculty/Staff News
The On the Level Issue



Retirement Association
President Patricia Koppman
greet's SDSU President
Elliot Hirshman

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A LETTER OF WELCOME TO PRESIDENT AND MRS. HIRSHMAN

Dear President and Mrs. Hirshman,


The 403 members of the SDSU Retirement Association remember when we first came to SDSU and were welcomed to our new home which we grew to love. Many of us stayed for years and wanted to stay involved with the university so we joined the Retirement Association. We hope you grow to enjoy SDSU as much as we do.

Our members have come from nearly all 50 states and most of us are grateful for the opportunity to live in the San Diego area, to make friends at SDSU and to share the opportunities available at SDSU. Now, in its 25th year, the Retirement Association members continue to enjoy the university atmosphere and our Retirement Association friends. We keep our members in touch with each other through our website, our email address and *PostScript*.

Our major goal this coming year is to provide more scholarships. We are launching a drive to raise more funds for these scholarships. Many of our members have remembered SDSU through their charitable gifts and we hope that this trend continues. Our annual events keep us connected: Oktoberfest Picnic, Holiday Party, Valentine's Day Party, Borrego Desert Escape, Kentucky Derby Party, Spring Scholarship Luncheon and Day at the Del Mar Races. The Golf Duffers play on the first Thursday of every month and we work closely with the SDSU Women's Association and their monthly Dinner Group and various special interest groups.

We welcome you and your wife, Jeri, as honorary members of the Retirement Association and invite you to join in any of our activities.

Sincerely,



Patricia S. Koppman
President, SDSU Retirement Association



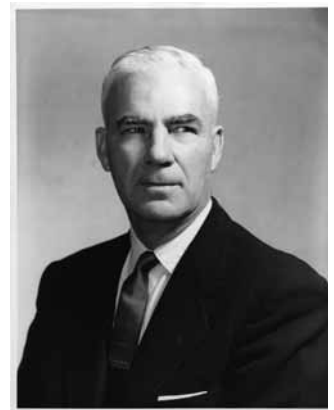
Samuel T. Black
1898-1910



Edward L. Hardy
1910-1935



Walter R. Hepner
1935-1952



Malcolm A. Love
1952-1971



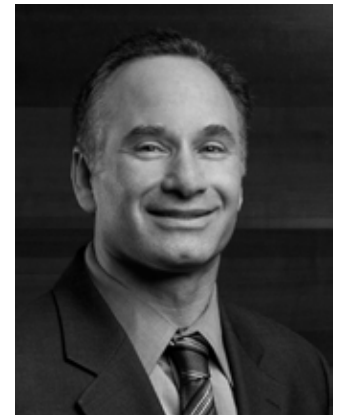
Brage Golding
1972-1977



Thomas B. Day
1978-1996



Steven Weber
1996-2011



Elliot Hirshman
2011-

EIGHT UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS AND ME *Andrew Olson, Biology*

Photos of SDSU's past presidents courtesy of Robert Ray, Head of Malcolm A. Love Library's Special Collections and University Archives.

As a 93-year old native San Diegan who grew up on Campus Avenue across the street from the earlier campus at the west end of El Cajon Blvd., I can now claim to have had the unique experience of a relationship with each of the eight SDSU Presidents, including our latest, President Elliot Hirshman.

Samuel T. Black, the first President from 1898-1910, died before my birth but as a faculty member I had his grandson, William "Bill" Emery, as a student and friend. I have shaken his hand and his hand was used as a mold for Black's hand in the life size statue on the Campus. The statue was dedicated on Founder's Day, March 15, 1997, at the launching of the Centennial Celebration. It was a gift from two graduates of the '20's, Dr. Sue and Les Earnest. The base was given by Black's grandson. What's more, in 1907, my future

step-grandmother attended San Diego Normal School under President Black.

In the 1920's, Edward L. Hardy was President of San Diego Normal School/San Diego State Teachers College during my six elementary school years in the associated Normal Training School. (eventually named CLS on the current campus).

In 1935, Walter R. Hepner became President and I entered as a freshman. Earlier, when Walter Hepner was San Diego City Schools Superintendent, he had handed me my Roosevelt Junior High School diploma. I graduated in 1939 with Honors in Life Science. Following my discharge from the U. S. Air Force in 1946, President Hepner offered me a faculty position in the Zoology Department and I retired in 1980, 34 years later. Obviously, I had many occasions with Presidents Mal-

colm A. Love, Brage Golding, Thomas B. Day and Stephen L. Weber.

My meeting the eighth President, then President Designate Elliot Hirshman, was at the Introductory Reception, May 16th, in the SDSU Alumni Center. It was a unique personal experience for me, an Emeritus Professor of Zoology, who can say that I am the only person who has ever had these relationships with eight San Diego State University Presidents. President Hirshman is the last that I can expect to meet in my lifetime. We have Yale University in common but I was there in 1944 as an Air Corps Cadet long before he was there as an undergraduate.

There you have it from an old timer for whom SDSU has occupied most of his life—now 31 years retired!♦

AN INTERVIEW WITH DAN GILBREATH

RR. Dan, you've had a varied career at SDSU, UCSD, and in the private sector. Take us back to your early life and give us a sense of how all this started.

DG. My dad was military, an enlisted man. I was born at Fort Ord, CA. I graduated from high school when I was sixteen, and went to college for about a year—that was back when the draft was always breathing down your neck.

RR. That would have been the Vietnam era?

DG. Yes, 1967, 1968. We were stationed in Monterey—that's where I was going to Community College. My dad was transferred to Fort Leonard Wood, in Missouri, so I dropped out and went off with them. I got a job working in the PX at the Fort. That was a good time. I wasn't ready for college anyway. So then, after a year or so, I came back to California and started college again, but quit again after a year and joined the Navy. I enjoyed my time in the Navy, and it familiarized me with San Diego, where I decided to stay, as thousands of people do. And I've been here ever since.

RR. So you're a Californian, from the start.

DG. That's right. We lived here most of my young life. My dad was transferred to Germany, near Heidelberg, on the Neckar River, when I was nine, so we lived there for four years. But you know, living in Germany as a dependent, on an army base, you don't get to know much about Germany. We lived in a little community called Patrick Henry Village, surrounded by fences.

RR. You lived in an American town in Germany...

DG. That's right. We had our own schools, our own churches, our own theaters. You really had to make an effort to get out and be a part of German culture and life. My parents were good about that. We didn't have much money, but we'd pack up the car every Sunday morning and go somewhere. My mother loved to do that. I never ate so many pimento and cheese sandwiches in my life.

For the first few months there we lived in German housing in a converted basement heated with a pot-bellied stove. My dad would get up in the middle of the night to put coal in the stove so we'd have heat in the morning. My dad was a great guy. He worked hard. He sacrificed so much for us kids.

RR. Is your father still alive?

DG. No. He died ten years ago. My

mother died much younger. She was only fifty-eight. She had leukemia. It's hard to believe, it's been almost thirty-one years now. Her death was heart wrenching. I actually marked on the calendar when I became as old as she was when she passed away. It's an odd feeling, to think that you've lived longer than your parent lived. I'm very much like my mother. And, you know, I was always afraid I'd die young too. My mother and I had the same personality. My dad and my brother were the same as each other, too.

RR. So...how are you and your mother alike?

DG. Oh, you know. In younger days, my brother would be outside, doing things, and I'd be at home, cleaning house with my mother. I guess people should have known, even then, that I was gay. My dad would come home and my



Dan

mother and I would have rearranged the whole house, waxed the floors. He used to tease us that when he came home at night, he always turned on the lights before he came in, because he never knew for sure where the furniture would be. He'd say that one of these weeks he was going to nail all the furniture down to the floor, so that at least a few days would go by before we had a new arrangement.

RR. Were your parents aware back then that you might be gay?

DG. I think they were blind to it, pretty much. My mother was extremely conservative, religious... That was a real blind spot, as far as she was concerned. My dad was pretty much oblivious to any of that, at least as far as I knew. I came out to my dad, in later years, and I was kind of shocked, what with him being a conservative military person, that he said, "Well, whatever makes you happy," and that was the end of our

discussion, basically.

But back in the eighties, nineties—even the late nineties, I mean, people were just beginning to understand that being gay was no big deal. And in many areas, it's still not okay. That was a very difficult part of my life. By the early 90's I was married to Vicki, and had been married to her for twenty-four years. I woke up one morning—it was my birthday, and I sat down with her at breakfast and I said, "We have to talk." And I told her.

Vicki, thankfully, is an extremely smart person—a good person. And while it was difficult for us to deal with, for both of us, she took the tactic that there was nothing she could do about it. She said that if it was another woman, she'd have fought, tooth and nail. But how could she compete with my being gay? So we should just move on.

You know, what triggered my coming out to her was—she had decided, a few years prior to all of this, that she wanted to go to law school. Which I encouraged. But which also meant that I had a lot of time to think and explore my feelings. At that point I kind of knew what was going on with me. I was going off the deep end, and I knew I needed some help. That's when I started seeing a therapist. He told me a story one day about someone he knew, and the guy was keeping a secret from his wife, and one day he realized that he loved his wife enough to tell her the truth. That struck a chord with me. I knew I loved Vicki a lot. Did I love her enough to tell her the truth? He told me that story on Wednesday, and that Sunday was when I sat her down and told her.

RR. Maybe it had something to do with you caring enough for yourself and who you were.

DG. I think so. Do you remember Ken Perry? He was my boss at the University for many years. He was the director of financial management, budgets, that sort of thing. He said to me one day, "You didn't come out of the closet. You burst out of the closet! Nothing subtle about you!" And that's true. I wore the flag. I did everything. I was out! "That's it!" I said. "I'm done with all the lying. Take me or leave me." And I felt fairly secure, being with the University. Most of the people I worked with reported to me, so if they had a problem with me, that was their problem, not mine. Those were interesting days.

RR. Tell us a little more about those early years in your life.

DG. When we left Germany I was in the middle of the ninth grade. In Ger-

many, the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades were high school. Back to California, in those days, none of the courses I'd been taking in Germany were offered in Junior High. So they started signing me up for wood working, three PE classes, courses like that. My counselor called my dad in, said, "You know, I have an idea. Seaside High School is just down the hill from us a few blocks. What about letting Dan go into the tenth grade? All he'd have to make up is one semester of civics. So that's what I did. But I wouldn't recommend it for everyone. You must have some of that same experience, since you started high school early, too.

RR. That's right. I was twelve when I started high school, and about the size of a skinny fifth grader. And about as prepared for high school, I might add.

DG. The same with me. Emotionally, culturally, I was way behind the curve. It was not pleasant. I was a fat kid. I lived in those damned husky Spiegel jeans and I hated them. I did well in school, but it was a tough time. My brother, who was four years older than I, didn't go to my high school. But his girl friend did. So he went to all our school events and parties with her. He was more popular and better known in my high school than I was. I hung out in the library. I joined the Latin Club.

RR. There should be an international fraternity for kids who had a terrible time in high school. It would be a huge organization.

DG. You know, I tried very hard in high school. I had good grades—mostly A's—but one of the reasons I hated high school was because I didn't care for sports. I was a fat little pudgy kid. I'd never played sports. I didn't like sports. And those were the Kennedy days, too, when there was a real emphasis on physical fitness, and youth...

RR. The whole Kennedy clan out playing touch football...

DG. Yeah, and our school—they'd designated certain schools as Physical Fitness Centers, where they could show off the programs for their students. Every day it was like Boot Camp. They'd blow the whistle, and you'd get in formation, and you did your exercises. They never taught us to play games...baseball, or basketball. You did your exercises, or weight lifting or calisthenics, or climbing the damned rope. I never could climb the rope. So I lived through three years



Michael and Dan

of hell, dreading second period PE. And they graded you—this really burned my butt—the people who could do the most sit-ups got an A, and those who did fewer got a B, or a C. Your gym shorts had a gold, or blue, or red stripe on them. I got all A's in my other subjects, but there was no way possible I could raise my PE grade from a C.

RR. What about your parents? Could they help with this?

DG. I complained to them. But they were clueless. My dad, you know, he was military, so he was used to that. He walked around every day with his classification on his arm. My mother—she didn't hear what I was saying either. But they couldn't have changed things anyway. That's just the way it was.

RR. A while back you mentioned Ken Perry. The University has changed markedly since you first came here.

DG. Absolutely. The buildings. The research. Everything. When I first came, you couldn't even say the word *Research*. It was a dirty word. It wasn't part of the educational plan. Even today, the state doesn't fund our research. But changes go beyond Research. There's the involvement with the community. There's the acceptance of various groups. In 1973, when I first came, the administration would never have flown the Flag of Equality. Now, they fly the Gay Pride Flag on appropriate occasions, in that area—you know—the monument to George Koester, in front of the old bell tower.

RR. Walking across campus these days, I'm always struck by the diversity of our student body.

DG. It's wonderful. And I credit Steve Weber with a lot of that. When I came in, I believe the president was Brage

Golding. And then Tom Day. Tom did a lot of good things for the University. He probably deserves more credit than he gets. But there was a real wall between him and those beneath him, pretty much. And then Steve came along, and everything changed. A big change. Of course, the times were changing, too. But over the years, I came to realize just how inclusive Steve was. Even when I wasn't at the University for a period of time, I would come to Gay and Lesbian events on campus, and he was always there. He even walked in the Pride Parade. Things like that. And it wasn't just the Gay issue. He worked hard at making the University inclusive.

There was the establishment of safe zones for anyone who sees himself as part of a minority—a safe place where you can go to get help, support, to vent. And having worked with Steve for these last few years, I think he's quite amazing. For instance, if there was something that needed done, he would say, "It's something we need to do. It's your problem to find the money. I just want it done." That's kind of a different approach, and it changed everything in the way we looked at what we did.

RR. Are you still at the University?

DG. No I'm not. I'm retired. I get my PERS check. And Michael's retired, you know. He retired last year. He's fifty-two. Michael worked with Qualcomm. He was a senior field engineer. He worked with satellite communications there, basically trucking firms, where they provide security and tracking devices, so they can monitor the truck, know where it is at all times.

RR. How long have you and Michael been together?

DG. Seventeen years. When I met Michael he worked at Vons, a diesel mechanic, maintaining their big truck fleets. But shortly after we were together—he had borrowed my car—in those days I had this beautiful Mercedes—and this woman broadsided him. It wasn't his fault. But he was injured—his back—so he retrained, went to Coleman College, he got into computers, went into Qualcomm, got promoted up the chain. He had a hip replacement about a year ago, so he resigned. He'd done very well over the years. We've got various properties across the country, plus our home in Mission Hills. So, I'm anxious to retire, and allow the two of us to do things.

RR. Any travel plans?

DG. We just got off our third cruise. My goal is to go to Germany, see how it's changed. England. Scotland. I'm dying to go to Scotland. And I do a lot of reading. I collect books. Mysteries for the most part—signed first editions.

RR. P.D. James, by any chance?

DG. No. I've read some of hers. But I pick authors where I can find all of their books. My strategy is this, I like these authors, so I have to have a signed first edition of everything they wrote. So the searching keeps me busy. It's interesting. I keep my library organized. I've got lots to do when I retire. I won't be bored.

RR. You and Michael both take an active part in the Retirement Association. You're treasurer, and the two of you come to various events...Any suggestions about ways to get younger retired faculty and staff to join us?

DG. I've asked that question to myself. And to others. There's not an easy answer. People are busy. I don't have the answer. Maybe we need a bowling night. But you know, I've met some of the nicest people in the Retirement Association. And it's allowed me to know people in an entirely different way. I even took classes from some of these people. Tom Atchison was my master's thesis chair. For me, it's like at age sixty-two I've finally grown up. I've lived in awe of many of these people, and now I see them as people I can associate with and enjoy. Incidentally, I think that answers a question you asked earlier, and I never got around to answering. I did my BA in accounting at SDSU, and then my master's, in 1984.

San Diego State's been my whole life, in a way. It's been my extended family.

Editor's note. Dan serves on the board of the Retirement Association, where he is our treasurer. Dan first retired from SDSU in 2000. He'd been with the University since 1973, serving as University Controller for the last eight years, and it had always been his goal to retire at the age of fifty and do something different for awhile. He worked for a year with a company, Informed Decisions, located in Alameda, then took a job at UCSD, where for five years he managed awards and grants and contracts from both governmental and private sources.

The last three years Dan has served as Executive Director of the Research Foundation, and is, as of July 8th, retired for the third and last time.

(Or so *he* says.) ◆

Interviewed by Ramon Royal Ross

MY NEIGHBOR, TOM

Joan F. Curry, Teacher Education

Tom died last night.

Suddenly.

No one told me he was that ill.
He had heart problems, I knew.
But they were under control, I thought.

Tom died last night.

Suddenly.

I wasn't prepared for his death.
But then, are we ever prepared?

Tom was a man of many words.
Brevity in speech was not one of his qualities.
He always had a joke, a story or a news item to share.

Tom died last night.

Suddenly.

He was a good neighbor.
He climbed through windows to open locked doors.
He scurried up a palm tree to rescue a neighbor's cat.
He "captured" and released a jack rabbit and a skunk
brought into a house by a "hunter cat."

Tom was a great neighbor and a friend.

Tom died last night.

Suddenly.

I never had the chance to say good-bye.

THIS ABOVE ALL...

*Cheryl Trtan, University Relations
and Development*

“This above all: To thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

Little did I know that this quote from Shakespeare would haunt me for the rest of my life! It was my first year at college—I was unpacking my bags and beneath all of my ‘stuff’ was this quote in the form of a framed crocheted piece of art... from my mother! I had no idea why she would send this with me. For what reason? I was leaving the nest, spreading my wings...freedom at last! Isn’t that what parents strive for—teaching their children to fly on their own?

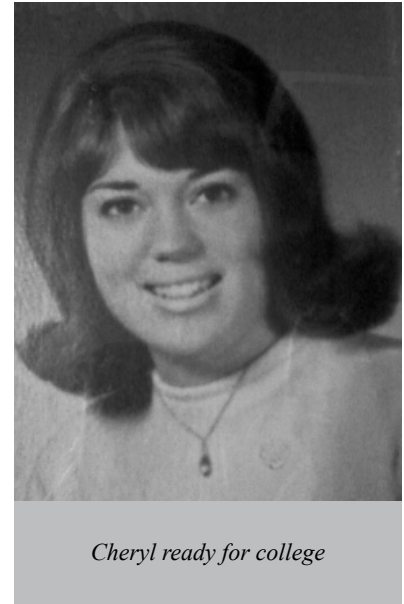
My first inclination was to blame it on my father. He was the psychologist, always the philosophical one. I thought he put her up to it! Well...I later learned he had no idea of my mother’s ‘gift.’ I was too embarrassed to hang the art on the wall, didn’t want my roommates to

see or ask questions, so I left the piece in my suitcase, stored it in my closet and forgot about it.

Several months later towards the end of my first year of college, I was cleaning out my closet and I ran across the framed piece and smiled. My mother knew exactly what she was doing. It was her way of letting go and reminding me of who I was and what she and my father had instilled in me. It all made sense. I took the framed piece out of my closet and hung it on my wall and never a day went by that I didn’t smile and thank my mother (and dad) for keeping me on track.

Move forward twenty years. I was sorting through all of my shelved boxes—ready to purge unnecessary items, when I uncovered ‘the gift.’ All sorts of feelings emerged. Tears. Then laughter. I remembered years gone by. Wonderful memories.

I still have the crocheted piece, now in my bedroom drawer. I’ll never let go of it. Well, maybe I will, when my first granddaughter leaves for college. And



Cheryl ready for college

when she unpacks her suitcase, she can wonder why in the heck Grammy would pack such an odd thing in her suitcase! ♦



Lois and granddaughter Cassidy

LEVELING EXPERIENCES

Lois Yahr, Geography

In the spring of 1952, my husband Chuck got a call from the Editor-in-Chief of Silver Burdette Publishing Company in New York. Chuck had been recommended for a job as an editorial assistant in Karachi, Pakistan. After much thought, discussion, and the advice of his department chair at University of Illinois, he accepted the offer. Not only was I able to go with him, but I was to be paid as a secretary.

I was a naïve farm girl from the Midwest and had never been overseas, but thought this was a golden opportunity to experience another part of the world. Adding to this mix of anxiety and excitement, I learned I was pregnant. That there was a new Seventh Day Adventist Hospital there, staffed by American doctors and nurses, helped ease my mind.

In June of 1952, we arrived in Karachi, after stopping at Bahrain to refuel. The oppressive heat, the streets jammed with donkey carts, rickshaws and bicycles as well as cars, the women dressed in everything from colorful saris to dark burqas were just a few of my first impressions in this new country.

First we lived in the Beach Luxury Hotel near the Indian Ocean. Later the company moved us to two apartments in the northwest section of Karachi. Both places required daily drives through huge refugee camps where masses of people lived in mud huts with no plumbing or sanitation. The only water came from a few spigots. A mixture of charcoal and dung was burned for fuel, filling the air with a stench I can still recall today. During the stay in the hotel, we were waited on hand and foot. Moving into the apartment changed that some, but we still had several servants. There was a separate servant for cooking, sweep-

ing, doing the laundry, and cleaning the bathrooms. There was Naiz to oversee the others. It was my job to ensure that everything got done each day.

In January of 1953, Jim was born at the Seventh Day Adventist Hospital. He was a healthy baby and soon spoiled by Naiz. Pakistanis don’t like to let babies cry, so at the slightest peep, Naiz would pick Jim up and walk the floor with him.

I learned to drive on the left by myself, but soon got used to having servants to cook, shop, clean, and pick up the crying baby. It was hard to convince the locals that we were not rich and I would be doing all of this myself once we got back to the States.

Now, almost sixty years later, I have a granddaughter about to embark on an overseas adventure of her own. Cassidy, a Midwestern girl herself, just graduated from college and has accepted a job teaching third grade in Manama, Bahrain. She, too, has never been in Europe or Asia, and will be experiencing a new country and culture. We are excited about her job, even though there is much unrest in the area. Just as it was for me, this will be an experience of lifetime and an opportunity to open her eyes to another part of the world. ♦

WHERE IS THE TOP?

Marvin Platz, Secondary Education

In Ireland, Brigitte Jones and Molly O'Brien played together as toddlers and took first communion together. Later on they married and each wound up with children and the burden of pub-inhabiting husbands and the shelter of a small old frame house with pine board flooring. Early on, they commiserated about the need for a rug in each of their front rooms. They saw each other much less over time, but met by chance in a market one day. Brigitte excitedly told Molly that she had finally gotten a nice rug, and would Molly please come to see it. Molly tried to beg off but finally agreed. As Molly entered the front room and walked around, Bridgette asked proudly, "Well, what do you think?" Molly looked down and said, "I miss the creaking of the boards."

In our addiction to the leveling effect of "Keeping up with the Jones," our nation is into a systematic educational attempt at leveling children's accomplishments. This is being promoted by intensive written testing and narrowing curricular choices that parallel the testing.

The tests currently in use have been developed by using the results of mass testing of a national sample of students at all grade levels and in various curricular areas (standardized tests). The average performance of sample students in each of the above standardized tests is called a grade equivalent. Local students are tested on curricular offerings and if they don't reach their grade level (average of sample students) they are pressured into trying to level up to average over



Marvin, age 11

time. If they were able to reach it and their classmates who were already average or above had already improved simultaneously at their capability, a new average would be set and would show up nationwide in revised standardized tests. The target students would again be below average. If this actually happened, "all ships would have risen in this rising tide." But this is possible to a very limited degree.

Think of "all men are created equal" as being a set level applicable only to legal and civil rights and the number of human chromosomes. Probably all other aspects of the human condition are states of inequality: height, artistic talent, skin, hair and eye color, blood pressure, athletic ability, and so on. Brain devel-

opment is no exception. It is expressed psychologically as the intelligence quotient and is held to be a comparison of how fast one human's brain develops compared to another, and is found by dividing grade level age by chronological (birth) age. Therefore, if it is verified at a later age it is a rate of development. Although there is a margin of error, over a century it has been established to be more steady than variable. So consider two nine-year-old children. Henry tests at the 12 year old grade level, and has an I.Q. of 12 divided by 9 which equals 133. Harold tests at the grade level age of 8, and has an I.Q. of 8 divided by 9 which equals 89. If their rate of development holds for both Henry and Harold, as it usually does, the gap in grade level grows wider over time. Think of these boys as vehicles starting side by side but traveling at speeds of 89 mph and 133 mph for 100 hours. How far apart will they be by that time? (And, incidentally, even if Henry has a friend with exactly the same I.Q. as he has, other variables are at play—Henry's gifts may lie, say, in languages, aesthetic endeavors, and the like, while his friend might have spatial and other non-verbal gifts.)

Not included in the example I gave above is the effect of environment on the variability of an individual's I.Q. over the years. Lack of nourishment, pre-natal care and pre-school learning experiences may negate otherwise positive genetic effects. Therefore, much good can come from improving the learning environment, which includes competent teachers and the quality of cultural surroundings. One wonders, what would Tarzan's or Romulus' and Remus' I.Q.'s have been if they had been raised in Minneapolis?♦

LATE APRIL 1865:**JULIA WARD HOWE MEETS HARRIET BEECHER STOWE**

William J. Pease, Library

The shimmer on the scythe
Before it strikes the grain,
The shine upon the lance
Before its bloody stain,
So glows the sterling on Harriet's lifted tray
As she serves the steaming tea to Mrs. Howe.
"How sad, dear Julia, losing him that way."

Glossed roses on the teapot
And on china demitasse,
Cut roses on the sideboard
And in the looking glass.
Thus wounds on dying soldiers blazed so red,
And on the backs of blacks escaped somehow.
"And, Harriet, how much more he could have said!"

One recalled a little cabin
Which set a world on fire,
One a surging anthem
Which served as slavery's pyre.
Small crumpets crumbled in each gentle hand.
They purposed his purposes to keep, yet how?
"And can we hence go forward as one land?"

Ironic! Now they meet,
Sad postlude to a play.
They sensed that time stood still
Though clocks struck time away,
Till Julia rose at last to take her leave.
Nor word from Mrs. Stowe, hymn from Mrs. Howe,
Who silently part company to grieve,
Who silently part company to grieve.



Don on the courts

THE DILEMMA OF BEING AN AGING GOLF AND/OR TENNIS ATHLETE

Donald Neuman, Counseling and Psychological Services

During our adult life span, as respite from our daytime careers, many of us have participated in athletic activities. We wanted to experience the thrill of success in sports—the feeling of a finely tuned body executing shots ‘similar’ to those of the pros.

Ultimately, time brings about changes in both our lives and our bodies. Where once we experienced the enjoyment of fluid, effortless strokes and swings, now the effort is more difficult and painful, if not impossible. We want to return to those days of launching 200 yard missiles down the center of the fairway, or executing crisp crosscourt top spin winners on the tennis court. But now our expectations are to just get the drive in the fairway even though we scuff it 100 yards off the tee, while in tennis just getting to the ball on the first bounce and getting it back into play is an achievement.

As we reassess our diminishing performance we now have different goals. “Hey, at least I’m here, exercising with my buddies!” Also, once in a while a twenty foot putt drops in or a lob happens to hit our racquet on an overhead attempt and we crush it for a winner. Then we hear, “Great shot!” That can make our day.

So, let’s compare the two sports. With golf, the ritual is to take your hat off

and shake hands after the round, and comment on how you could have played better, if only... (Feel free to fill in the excuse.) Scoring in golf is complicated by saying things like, “What should I put down for you on that hole?” or “Do you want to play golf, or would you prefer some other game?” Or “I’m four over for the front nine.” Or, “Do you hackers mind if I hit from the back tees?”

With tennis, at this age, you only play doubles. You also do fist bumps after a good point. No chest bumps, especially if playing mixed doubles. After a disagreement, some say, “Take two... if you want.” Or “That ball was clearly out. Not even close!”

So there you have it. Great moments and memories are the reasons you’re still out there. Here are some SDSU athletes who are legends in our own minds, and who have graced the links and courts. See if you can identify these SDSU Warriors. They all have had career days and it’s been an honor to play with them. Feel free to add your own selections to the list.

Dave N., Roy M., Rick S., Don H., Earl P., Paul S., Howard H., Carol C., Don D., Nelson N., Cliff B., Sam G., Bill B., Jerry B., Tom M., Jim M., Fred S., George K., Bob A., Gerry P., John S., George Z., Jay G., Bob N., Joe D., Carol B., Tony F., Bob B., Flo B., Stix R., Dan W., Charles S. ♦

MORE THAN MILLIONS

Leoné D. McCoy, Secondary Education

Recently Sotheby’s conducted an auction of a letter written by Abraham Lincoln. It sold for three million dollars. I am not a collector of Lincoln memorabilia, but I treasure letters written by my own family members that to me are worth more than millions.

What I need, what I want, is to protect the writings of my predecessors, for I find that we who follow resonate to the meaning of their words. In my case they serve as tools to help me understand, preserve, and cherish the past, and, yes, stay on the level. In seeming contradiction, they help me live in the present.

My maternal great-grandmother Hannelle Durham who lived in Billerica, Massachusetts at the time of the Civil



Leoné's Great Grandmother

War and whose relatives had suffered, been imprisoned by the Confederates and died in the war, well understood the meaning of the present. Near to my heart, she was a passionate advocate of education for all, fostered in part by her studies at the academy there, where she earned her teaching certificate with honors. Empowered by her radiant spirit, she held a strong commitment to learning which is vividly revealed in a letter in which she extolled the success of a jubilant friend’s highly literate son, about to receive his Ph.D. at Harvard in the natural sciences. Her lovely countenance is seen here in the accompanying photograph.

When I read these reflections illuminating her life, I can connect with her. Her correspondence, exquisitely expressed, almost painterly, and configured in beautiful script, serves as a tool in my hands where once she laid down the finely curled whorls of her own unique prints.

As you read my musings here, no doubt you can understand why I insist to my adult children that they may give away my property, perhaps holding back a few paintings and sculptures and some antique jewelry, but they must preserve the archival trove of family letters.

Reading them, reflecting upon them, valuing them, will, I am convinced, serve as tools in my children’s hands, better to stitch together the irregular fabric of the past and weave a skein of hue-filled threads of what lies ahead and so keep them safely on a level path. ♦

Desert Escape, Kentucky Derby,



and Spring Luncheon 2011





Steve, at left, in protective suit

RAD—PERSONAL SAFETY AT SDSU

Steve Williams, University wPolice

In May 1994, John Carpenter, my Chief, asked me to take a women's self defense course, called RAD/Rape Aggression Defense, at the University of San Diego. I was neither a martial artist nor all that interested in police defensive tactics but thought it might be something I could do for our community policing efforts in the residence halls and sororities. Little did I realize how much this course would affect me.

John had met Larry Nadeau and Sheri Iachetta at a conference in Seattle. Larry is the founder along with Sheri of the RAD System of self-defense. Larry was coming to San Diego to train other folks and suggested to John that someone take the opportunity to become certified in RAD.

Larry put on a very thorough course which included physical techniques, risk reduction, and defense against violence (namely rape). I found the material connected directly to sexual assault issues we had at SDSU. Women were being assaulted by men they knew and at times by men they did not know. I took it all in, passed the dynamic simulation, the practical technique test, and the written test. I now had to figure out how I would present this twelve-hour class to female students, faculty, and staff.

It took me one year to get organized. By the time I was able to talk twelve friends into taking the course, I had John Smither certified as well. The two of us now had a location, date, printed manuals, and the equipment to complete a course.

In Aztec Center, the students and staff from Aztec Center, Admissions, Aztec Shops, and Public Safety began the first 3 hours of crime awareness, reduction,

avoidance, and recognition training. This was followed by the kicks, strikes, wrist releases, defense against bear hugs and chokes, and three ground defense escapes. John and I did pretty well for our first class but we still had to prepare them for the dynamic simulation exercise on day four. We each had our own simulation suits – at the time, state of the art padded gear to protect our groin, legs, arms, and head. We muddled through the 3 scenarios and each woman utilized their new skills to fend off John and myself. The Walk-by (as if the woman was walking along a side walk and the simulator grabs her wrist), ATM (an assault at an ATM machine), and UK Psych (Univ. of Kentucky developed this scenario; woman verbalizes “get away from me!”), then simulator does a bear hug; woman uses the skills she learned during the training) remain to this day the 3 primary scenarios all RAD instructors use in simulations.

After simulation I held a debriefing to get a sense of how well they internalized the training. Each had similar responses—“I felt energized” and “I realized I had some power to escape.”

During the ensuing years John and I continued to offer the class and it became very popular—who wouldn't want to “beat up on a cop!” We hosted several more instructor courses certifying Linda Kenan (Public Safety) and Bridget Blanshan and Emelyn Dela Pena (Housing) as well as many others. I offered the training to others in Aztec Shops, Housing, and Health Services.

The SDSU RAD program was recognized by RAD Headquarters as one of the most positive and successful programs throughout the United States. We taught over 750 students, faculty, staff and community members during my tenure at SDSU. In 2001 I became certified in the radKIDS program, which provides safety education and awareness to children aged 5-12 years old.

After retirement in 2004, I started a small company, Pacific Coast RAD & radKIDS, LLC and continue to offer RAD as well as the radKIDS classes throughout San Diego County. This chance meeting between John Carpenter and Larry Nadeau has led me through many exciting and rewarding years of training women and children. A passion I will carry with me forever. ♦



THREE GENERATIONS IN LEVEL MINNESOTA

Nelson Norman, History

Nothing could be so level for so far as those prairies in Minnesota. Farther than the eye can see, they are still level. Let's just call them 'flat'. My namesake grandfather came to them as a child of about four; just one decade later he was out on his own, making a living by driving three or four ox carts across those plains from Fort Snelling (St. Paul) to Fort Garry (Winnipeg, Manitoba). That was his 'safety net' around the Civil War era.

How far back are those times? When I was a boy of seven, playing on the Cannon in the Polk County Courthouse yard, an old man told me to shake his hand. No big deal in those days, so I did so. Then he said, “Now you can always say that you shook the hand of a man who shook the hand of Abraham Lincoln.” What a compression of time! Lincoln is separated from me by just a single generation. That is only because I am more ancient, 'longer in the tooth' than most.

FIRST GENERATION MARKERS: Grandpa Nelson had to support himself in a very harsh job. That era had no Social Security. Government was far smaller than even the Tea Party folk have ever dreamed. Jobs for the uneducated or for those with handicaps or limited skills were to be found as 'hands' on the farms of our still agrarian nation. Indians, women, and blacks did not have the vote. Elections were decided in crony-packed 'smoke filled rooms'. We do not want to return to those times. Is it better for each party to spend many months and over a billion dollars each to persuade a few undecideds to go Right or Left?

FROM SHIRTSLEEVE TO SHIRT-SLEEVE IN THREE GENERATIONS. This oft-quoted bit simply means, families rise and fall. And so, the torch passed on to me, the third generation Minnesotan. Many virtues of my honorable ancestors seemed to have evaporated until spouse Dottie resurrected some of them in me. (I can show you the scars!) I cannot help but envy and admire grandpa for starting from nowhere and building a base for his family. The same goes for my father. He was apprehensive about this offspring for so long— he never expected me to graduate from Stanford, and yet I did— a semester early! Can success stories be repeated today? Perhaps. Or maybe our country has grown too large, too complex, and too populous

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OKTOBERFEST SPONSORSHIPS

Gordon Shackelford, Biology and SDSU Foundation

During the 25-year history of the SDSU Retirement Association, we have always sought to provide scholarship support to promising students. In these difficult times, the need has never been greater. During the last 25 years, Student Fees, now called Tuition, have gone from a few hundred dollars a year to approximately \$5,000, with substantial increases on the way. To increase our ability to help students, through scholarships, the SDSURA Board of Directors would like to ask for your support of an effort to make our Annual Oktoberfest a scholarship fundraiser as well as a great fun event. We are asking for individuals to sponsor the costs of the items listed below. Sponsors will be recognized at the event and in the *PostScript*. If all of the items listed are sponsored, all revenue from ticket sales will go toward much needed scholarship support for our hard-pressed students. The ticket price for the SDSURA Oktoberfest will continue to be based on the costs of items that must be paid to stage the event.

One-Half of Beer	\$107	Sponsored by Kendall Home Team
One-Half of Beer	\$107	
One-Quarter of El Monte Park Rental Fee	\$81	Sponsored by Henry Janssen
One-Quarter of El Monte Park Rental Fee	\$81	Sponsored by Nancy Carmichael and Jack Stewart
One-Quarter of El Monte Park Rental Fee	\$81	Sponsored by Gloria and Ramon Ross
One-Quarter of El Monte Park Rental Fee	\$81	Sponsored by Janis and Gordon Shackelford
Strudel & Whipped Cream	\$67	
One-Half of Bratwurst	\$60	
One-Half of Bratwurst	\$60	
Plastic Table Cloths, Cutlery & Paper Plates	\$46	
Snacks & Trays	\$42	Karol and Rick Schulte
Buns & German Bread	\$37	
Wine		Donated by Wendlings and Stewarts
German Potato Salad	\$36	
Soft Drinks, Water, Coffee & Ice	\$36	Sponsored by Cheryl Trtan
Sauerkraut		Donated by Norma Summersgill
Charcoal	\$24	
Beans	\$20	
Pickles & Pretzels	\$15	
Condiments	\$8	
One-Quarter of Entertainment	\$50	
One-Quarter of Entertainment	\$50	
One-Quarter of Entertainment	\$50	
One-Quarter of Entertainment	\$50	

To become an Oktoberfest Sponsor, please call Gordon Shackelford at 619-561-6323.

PASSIONS

Ellen Phillips, Physical Education

Our passions—what makes each of us unique. How do we decide on them? They can start early, and they can change over a lifetime. I look at mine and love them! Who else feels as I do about them? For most of us, family comes first—our first passion—central to our lives. And after that, what comes up in our lives that makes us different, special, even perhaps noteworthy, interesting? What do we care most about? What makes us—us?

I have three main passions: the great-out-of-doors, travel and the visual arts.

I was lucky to spend a summer at Cheley Camps near Estes Park, Colorado when I was eleven. I loved horses and rode often. And there were riflery, archery, jewelry making, hiking and out camps in the mountains, and much more. My mother, who was a great walker, was spending part of the summer nearby in a small cottage and occasionally checked in with my counselors about my weekly activities. Soon she wrote my counselors, "Please get Ellen out hiking more." My counselors insisted I sign up for a couple of hikes a week and for out camps. Hiking was okay. Mountain lakes were pretty, and it didn't rain often. And then came the day I climbed my first peak, Thatchtop. A terrible first peak, 12,000 feet high with false top after false top—at least 23 of them. I was strong, but this was not a beginner's mountain. I collapsed on the top, flat on my stomach and muttering, "Never again, never, never." The downhill was uneventful if steep but not exhausting. But next week my closest friend wanted to climb another peak. Despite my never agains, she dragged me along, and we had a wonderful day. Not hard, and only three false summits. I enjoyed all of it. And soon I was hooked. By the end of that camp summer I had fulfilled all the requirements for the Timberlion Hiking Club. I still have my green felt hat with its five different-colored feathers that stood for all of the 11, 12, and 13000' required peaks I had climbed. Plus lake hike miles and more I can't remember, plus my Timberlion emblem. I look back oh so many years and say YES! My first passion, the out-of-doors and all you can do in it, is still central to my life. When I was in college I worked as Senior Girls Scout Camp Counselor at Cheleys along with Kathleen Fox. I loved those years. I went on to join the Sierra Club. Bill and I became rock climbers/backpackers and climbed in Yosemite Valley, all over the Sierras and many other mountain ranges



Ellen and son Mark on top of the Matterhorn, summer 1972

in the US, the Alps, the Himalaya and the Karakoram. Lucky!

Then Bill was hired to teach at SDSU and we moved down from the Bay Area and found new areas to explore. Travel became my second passion (we already had a good start). We discovered Anza Borrego and the desert—a whole different out-of-doors. On a Sierra Club Small Fry trip we led, our boys and the Thwaite's sons discovered a huge olla with a basket top high up on the wall of a cave. Friends ran for the ranger who congratulated the boys for not touching the pot, for telling their parents of their discovery, and for alerting him to check out their discovery. He carefully climbed the wall and lifted the pot down. He brushed off the dripped mud covering and found designs painted on the olla. He told us the basket was the first ever found in Anza Borrego. A find! When the desert museum there opened a number of years later, there was the olla and basket and a story of the boys finding it. Exciting! Even though by then the boys were young men.

And then there was the Baja Peninsula just across the border. We bought a 4-wheel drive wagon that would hold all five of us plus gear. We'd met Pat and Jerry Koppman through Newcomers and found out they had a Rover 4-wheel drive. Plans started perking for heading south of the border. Our first big Christmas trip in 1968 took us down over rough narrow mountain roads. We were heading for about half way down and the ocean on the west side of the peninsula when we found we were lost. There was no paved road south of Ensenada until you reached the desert near La Paz. Our track grew smaller and sandier, and we

had no idea where we were. And then, around a corner, there was the ocean, the remains of a tiny fish camp, a lagoon outlet, and on the other side of the outlet, miles of white beach with no one there. We were able to drive across the outlet and continue down the beach past huge sand dunes and views of the sweep of what had to be Malorimo Beach to the west. We had dolphins coming up and laying their heads on the beach and watching us. The dunes were wonderful to run and the men fished and lobstered in this paradise! We were lost, but it didn't matter for we carried everything we needed with us. We eventually found our way back to the "main" track, discovered Guerrero Negro and then turned north for home. We knew we would be back! All of Baja was there for us to discover. Malorimo Beach called.

Our last trip down was in 2005. With all the problems they have been having we don't go any more. Sad. I count my blessings that we had forty years of travel and discovery there including a trip to the tip with the Millers (Biology). The beautiful tip, and with no one there. I'm told it is covered with hotels now. We camped by ourselves on a white sandy beach with no other people. Even though we were on the "main" road around the tip.

And then there was mainland Mexico. We had two Christmas trips with Bob and Lin Ackerly to Guadalajara and Mexico City, camping all the way. And then a summer trip to the Yucatan and Guatemala, visiting the temples and pyramids of those Mayan cultures. A fun month of many discoveries. We discovered the island of Cancun. A new bridge had just been built linking it to the mainland. So we crossed—no one was around. We found a long white sand beach and headed for a swim in the warm water. Gorgeous. But then Bill, who was swimming way out by the reef, yelled and headed for shore FAST. He told us he had seen a huge barracuda out there and wanted us all out of the water. Too bad. It was so beautiful. A boat sailed up and the man sailing it asked how we had gotten our trucks to the island. We told him there was now a bridge. He was devastated. He'd been stopping at this island for years to swim and have lunch. Sad. Civilization was just around the corner. It was so beautiful. And Guatemala, so beautiful with Tikal and Lake Atitlan most special sites to visit. But all the troops with guns all over the country was a bit scary. We were lucky not to have any trouble. ♦

(to be continued)

KENTUCKY DERBY PARTY
SATURDAY, MAY 7TH, 2011
Jerry W. Koppman, Psychology

Once again, on the first Saturday in May, the “Run for the Roses” was celebrated at the inviting home of Jerry and Pat Koppman. A buffet of southern fried chicken, ham with raisin sauce, biscuits with butter or molasses, and of course — pecan pie with whipped cream, were the offerings at this Kentucky Derby Party attended by forty of the faithful.

Tricia Moulton officiated at the bar with her winning Mint Juleps: minted simple syrup mixed with bourbon and poured over crushed ice, stirred to frost the glass, and topped with fresh mint, and a straw to drink with. (To keep one’s nose out of the mint...)

MINT JULEPS

Patricia Moulton, University Relations and Development

Minted Simple Syrup:

2 cups (Baker’s) sugar
 2 cups water
 Mint Leaves (2 bunches mint leaves from grocery – use stems and leaves)

In a 2-quart saucepan, boil together the sugar, water and mint. Boil for 5 minutes until green. Strain into a container and chill.

Mint Juleps: (for 2)

6 oz. Maker’s Mark bourbon
 1 oz. minted simple syrup
 Sprigs of fresh mint for garnish
 Shortened straws

Mix syrup and bourbon. Fill two 10-ounce silver julep cups with crushed ice. Put 3 ½ oz. julep mixture in each. Stir vigorously until julep cup frosts over. Insert sprig of fresh mint and short straw to sip. Enjoy!

(Can make any size batch of juleps if keep ratio 6:1 bourbon to simple syrup.)♦

For \$1 a chance, racing fans could randomly pull from a hat a slip of paper that gave a horse’s name, jockey, trainer, and post position. Soon six winners, by the luck of the draw, would share a \$120 pot.

Just before post time, song sheets were distributed for the guests to join the lady in the big hat at Churchill Downs singing, “My Old Kentucky Home.”

Andy Olson surprised the group by penning a RESOLUTION celebrating the 16th anniversary of this popular party, first held on May 4th, 1996, at the home of George and Ethelyn Sorenson. He ended with “And they’re off!” Which indeed they were.

After taking a picture of the winning members, we all turned in our stirrups for another year.♦



Patricia and the winning mint juleps

Editor’s Note: Those of us who have been fortunate enough to imbibe in Tricia’s Mint Juleps at Kentucky Derby Day at the Koppman’s suggested to her that she include it in *PostScript*.)

IN MEMORIAM

BETTY L. MITTON
 April, 2011
 Wife of Daryl Mitton
 (Management)

MARK VINSON
 June, 2011
 Husband of Dorothy Riggs Vinson
 (Secondary Education)

ROBERT PENN
 June, 2011
 SDSU: 1960-1991
 Psychology

MARY LOCKE ORNELAS
 June, 2011
 Enrollment Services

VIRGINIA IRGANG
 June, 2011
 Wife of Frank Irgang
 (Industrial Technology)

CLAIRE SMITH
 June, 2011
 Wife of Jack Smith
 (Psychology)

EUNICE CLAIRE FARRIS
 June, 2011
 SDSU: 1969-1999
 Public Administration

JULIE BOHNSACK
 August, 2011
 Wife of Kurt Bohnsack
 (Biology)

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to do anything but continue our present division into excessively rich, moderately well off, and the under-privileged. I have no compunctions about traveling on to the after life, may the trip be easy. But I would like to hang around long enough to see if the resiliency of our great country can once again pull us up out of the mire, and make the American Dream a reality for us and a model and inspiration for the world.♦

**ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON,
MAY 19, 2011**

Joan F. Curry, Teacher Education

The month of May brings many delightful activities: the end of the semester, graduation, the beginning of the summer recess and the Retirement Association's Annual Spring Luncheon.

Once again, the luncheon was held at Tom Ham's Lighthouse. As in the past at this restaurant, there was a sumptuous buffet luncheon preceded by a social hour.

Following the luncheon, President Patricia S. Koppman welcomed everyone and then began the following program of the afternoon.

Election of Director-at-Large: Henry Jansen retired from the Board. The nominee for the position, Paul Erickson, was presented by the Vice President, Helen Savage. He was elected unanimously to the position of Director-at-Large.

Annual Award Honorees: Cheryl Trtan, Awards Chair, presented the Annual Service Award to Patricia and Lewis Moulton.

Scholarship Awards: Joan Curry, Chair of the Scholarship Committee introduced the four students who were receiving awards. The process of selecting the students included the following: they must be related to a member of the SDSU Faculty, Staff, or Auxiliaries; they must have a GPA of at least 2.75 (the GPA's of our recipients ranged from 3.69 to 3.86); they must write an essay of 500 words telling us about themselves, their scholastic endeavors, their community service, their hopes for the future; they have an interview with the Scholarship Committee.

The recipients:

Samantha Afetian, majoring in Public Relations, Niece of Lester Tenny, Finance and Accounting, Retired.

Katie Martin, majoring in International Security/Conflict Resolution, Granddaughter of Barry Jones, Communicative Disorders, Retired/Deceased.

Megan Muks, majoring in Nursing/Pediatrics, Granddaughter of Bill Phillips, Physical Education, Retired.

Brynn Vigneux, majoring in Child Development/Psychology, Niece of Richard Servey, Education, Retired/Deceased.



**EXCERPT FROM SERVICE
AWARDEE'S REMARKS
AT THE RETIREMENT
ASSOCIATION LUNCHEON**
*Patricia Moulton, University
Relations and Development*

You know, the Retirement Association is really something special. It is the most active service and social organization on campus, more so than Alumni, but there's something more. As a fundraiser for SDSU, I happen to oversee the Heritage Society, a gift recognition club for those who have included the University in their estate plans. Out of over 600 members in the Heritage Society, retired faculty and staff make up the largest single group, and I think that speaks volumes. You've given your professional lives, you've given of your personal lives in numerous volunteer hours, and you've given your monetary support. SDSU touched your lives, and you are Paying It Forward—in either your time or your donations or both. The retired faculty and staff are to be congratulated on all counts. ♦

Each student had the opportunity to tell the attendees about herself. After the short presentations, all agreed that the Committee had, indeed, made the right choices.

The students each received an award of \$2500.00. ♦

*Happiness is not a matter
of intensity but of balance
and order and rhythm
and harmony.*

Thomas Merton

**TWENTIETH ANNUAL
BORREGO DESERT ESCAPE
"MOSTEST FUN EVER!"**

*Jerry W. Koppman, Psychology,
Lucille Wendling, Sociology, and
Patricia S. Koppman, Education*

It had to be the most fun. Otherwise the fact that it was the coldest and wettest we can remember would have gotten us down. It was also the largest attendance ever so we were determined not to let the weather get to us.

Activities offered were exploring the always fascinating desert scene on foot or by car, visiting the renowned Visitors' Center where educational films are shown, desert dioramas are on display and outdoor landscaping brings desert flora to your doorstep.

Bill and Ellen Phillips were among those who headed for the more vigorous hiking trails. The Stewarts, the Wendlings and Judy Mills enjoyed a round of golf at "The Springs at Borrego."

Cooler weather encouraged more indoor participation in our reserved meeting room. Friends old and new visited and conversed together near the crackling fireplace. Evening events were fully attended with such fun activities as sing-a-longs accompanied by ukulele players Pat Coffey and Sandy Gaudur. Bingo was another big hit enhanced by the amusing white elephant prizes.

The much appreciated breakfasts and dinners worked out smoothly thanks to the fact that all did their share by signing up for 'K.P. duty.' Lucille Wendling turned 90, so we added her to the 90 year old attendee list!

Our newbies for this year were Jack and Linda DeLora, Jack's sister-in-law, Judy Mills and Gordon and Janis Shackelford.

Even with the inclement weather, the stars came out and sure enough, there was Harry Meyer with his eight-inch telescope showing us the rings around Saturn and pointing out our flag out there on the moon!

All in all, despite the less than ideal weather, everyone had the 'mostest' fun ever and will be looking forward to next year's Desert Escape immediately following the Circle of Art show and sale down on Christmas Circle. Save the dates: March 18-22, 2012. ♦



OUR BENEFITS

Tom Donahue, *Linguistics*

Those persons receiving CalPERS pensions who are looking for allies elsewhere will find one in Jack Ehnes, the Chief Executive Officer of the California State Teachers' Retirement System. In a letter of March 8, 2011 to Daniel W. Hancock, Chair of the Little Hoover Commission, Mr. Ehnes spoke at length of the legal support system for state pensions. I will quote at length from Mr. Ehnes letter in what follows [those wishing to examine the entire letter on the Web will find it at http://blogs.sacbee.com/the_state_worker/110310%20CalSTRS%20Response_to_Little_Hoover_Commission_report%5B1%5D.pdf.] Many of the cases discussed will be familiar to readers of the Benefits column in earlier issues of *PostScript*.

Mr. Ehnes speaks of these issues as they pertain to CalSTRS, but the remarks apply to us as well. He begins his defense as follows:

California judicial decisions consistently demonstrate that public employee pensions "are a government obligation of great importance" (*Carman v. Alvord* (1982)) and serve as an inducement "to enter and continue in public service." (*Phillipson v. Board of Administration* (1970).) The public employee's pension "constitutes an element of compensation" and the right to the pension is contractual and "accrues upon acceptance of employment." (*Betts v. Board of Administration* (1978).) Once the inducement is accepted, the pension promises become "obligations which are protected by the contracts clause of the Constitution." (*Kern v. City of Long Beach* (1947).) Therefore, the state "may not deny or impair the contingent liability any more than it can refuse to make the salary payments which are immediately due." (*Miller v. State of California* (1977) [citing *Kern v. City of Long Beach*, *supra*, at p. 855]; see also *United Firefighters of Los Angeles City v. City of Los Angeles* (1989) [law that capped annual cost of living increases was an unlawful impairment for employees who worked before the cap was established].)

Moreover, a public employee has a vested right "to earn a pension on terms substantially equivalent to those then offered by the employer." (*Carman*, *supra*, at p. 325.) In other words, "the employee has a vested right not merely to preservation of benefits already earned *pro rata*, but also, by continuing to work until retirement eligibility, to earn the

benefits or their substantial equivalent, promised during . . . prior service." (*Pasadena Police Officers Assn v. City of Pasadena* (1983).) Improvement to pension benefits during the tenure of employment also become "vested rights of the employees when conferred." (*Betts v. Board of Administration*, *supra*, [quoting *Abbott v. City of San Diego* (1958)].) It is indisputable, therefore, that a public employee has a vested right to prospectively accrue the pension benefits promised at the time of employment, as well as any subsequent improvement.

Declining the current system's ability to meet its future liabilities does not constitute legally sufficient grounds to impair the vested rights of current employees. In limited legal situations, the state may argue that such a change is necessary and reasonable. However, courts give little deference to a "legislative assessment of reasonableness and necessity," because "the State's self-interest is at stake... [and a] governmental entity can always find a use for extra money, especially when taxes do not have to be raised." (*Valdes v. Cory* (1983) [quoting *United States Trust Co. v. New Jersey* (1977)]; see *Board of Administration v. Wilson* (1997) ["fiscal emergency" did not justify failing to pay required contributions to CalPERS].) Instead, the courts look to any legislative enactment impairing pension rights to determine whether (1) it serves to protect the "basic interests of society;" (2) there is an "emergency justification for the enactment;" (3) the enactment is "appropriate for the emergency;" and finally (4) any such enactment is "designed as a temporary measure [emphasis added], during which time the vested contract rights are not lost but merely deferred for a brief period, interest running during the temporary deferment." (*Valdes*, *supra*, at p. 790; see also *Sonoma County Organization of Public Employees v. County of Sonoma* (1979) 23 Cal.3d 296 [substantial budget shortfalls in the immediate aftermath of Proposition 13 was not a valid reason to limit cost-of-living increases promised to public employees].) The only thing that would be temporary about freezing benefit accruals related to future service performed by current employees is the period of time such an action would be allowed by the courts. . . .

Six decades of California case law have dealt with proposed modifications of vested pension rights. California courts have looked to such adjustments and explained that vested pension rights may be amended on a limited basis to

the disadvantage of current employees, but only if that change is accompanied by "comparable new advantages" to the employees affected by the change. (*International Assn. of Firefighters v. City of San Diego* (1983).) "However, there is a strict limitation on the conditions which may modify the pension system in effect during employment." (*Betts v. Board of Administration*, *supra*.) The adjustment must have a "material relation to the theory of a pension system and its successful operation." While the courts have recognized that "changes made to effect economies and save the employer money do 'bear some material relation to the theory of a pension system and its successful operation,'" such a reason by itself is not "sufficient justification for change." (*Claypool v. Wilson* (1992).) The type of adjustment suggested by the report's recommendation would be scrutinized first to see what has been taken from and provided to the affected employees. "The comparative analysis of disadvantages and compensating advantages must focus on the particular employee whose own vested pension rights are involved." (*Betts v. Board of Administration*, *supra*.) "[T]he offsetting improvement must also 'relate generally to the benefit that has been diminished.'" (*Id.* at pp. 864-865 [quoting *Frank v. Board of Administration* (1976)].)

Mr. Ehnes' letter, with full citations included, can be found through the Sacramento Bee site. This is a significant and nicely detailed statement in support of our pension rights. Please look at the complete letter offered there. ♦



Windmills before the invention of The Level...

OUR MISSION

To serve the mutual benefits and interests of retired and near retired faculty and staff. To facilitate continuing contributions by members to the furtherance of the scholarly and other professional objectives of San Diego State University.

**REPORT FROM THE
TREASURER**

Reported below are balances of accounts as of June 30, 2011. During the last twelve months, our accounts have remained stable. During that period, we saw a net investment gain of \$23,630 in our scholarship endowment account. The scholarship account remained virtually unchanged, with the \$10,000 in scholarships for the year offset by contributions (\$4,101) and earnings (\$5,950).

Activities and operations accounts remain adequately funded. Activities are funded by your payments to participate in various social activities and operations costs are funded by your dues.

As we approach the time for collecting dues for the coming year, with our hope that you add something to your payment for our scholarship or endowment accounts, I am taking the liberty to repeat myself with the following important information.

If you are over 70 ½ and you direct your IRA distribution directly to a qualifying charity such as our scholarship and endowment accounts, you can bypass the income tax on the distributions. The 2010 Tax Relief Act extended this provision for 2011. This is a very efficient way to make a painless contribution to a very worthy cause.

CalPERS now allows retirees to have amounts for gifts deducted from their monthly pay warrants. The minimum

is \$5 a month (\$60 a year). So if you are interested in contributing to our scholarship or endowment accounts on a monthly basis, visit the SDSU site and download the form needed to begin the deduction. Completed forms may be returned to the Retirement Office. Here is how to find the form:

Go to SDSU Home Page. Click on About → Departments & Offices → Human Resources, Center for (MAIN) Documents/Forms → Payroll & Compensation → CALPERS Retiree Deduction Authorization (Pdf form you can fill in and print)

Or, contact me and I will be glad to mail you a form!

The summer months are a time to enjoy our wonderful city! Enjoy yourselves and I look forward, as always, to seeing you at the many fun events over the coming months.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan M. Gilbreath
Treasurer

Retirement Association Accounts	As of June 30, 2011
Endowment Fund	\$162,106.75
Scholarship Fund	17,953.23
Operating Fund	27,488.18
Activities Account	7,794.30
Total Assets	\$215,342.46

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2011-2012**

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Patricia S. Koppman, Education

Welcome to 2011-2012! Your SDSU RA Board is already busy making plans for an exciting year. We hope you will help us reach our goals. The goals are:

- 1) increase our membership
- 2) increase our scholarship funds

Our membership is aging (each of us understands that!) so our goal is to bring in new members, new retirees and continue our existing membership by your renewal. We believe that we can help retired faculty and staff stay in touch and enjoy their retirement years with friends. Why not give 'gift' memberships to your retiring friends!

In our 25 years, we have given over 127 scholarships to deserving students. This coming year the students will have their fees increased, making paying for their education more difficult. Thus, we would like to make more scholarships available and increase the amount of our scholarships. These scholarships are reserved for students whose relatives have served this university during their careers. So, we hope our members will step up and contribute to our scholarships. Why not donate in honor of a friend or relative's birthday, anniversary or death?

I look forward to working with each of you in 2011-2012. ♦



"THAT WHICH WE CALL A ROSE . . ."

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Ramon Royal Ross, Teacher Education

You may—or may not—have noticed that in the last couple of *PostScripts* I've taken to calling myself Ramon Royal Ross. "What a name!" You may say to yourself. "Where did *that* come from, and who does he think he is?"

The family account, validated by my birth certificate, is that when my mother, Wanda Josephine McCarty Ross, and my father, Royal Chester Ross, just getting started in life together, brought me home from Saint Mary's Hospital, swaddled in newborn blankets, to the big old farm house where they lived temporarily—they hoped—with my father's mother, Florence Louise Ross, she asked my name. "Royal Lowell Ross," my mother replied, "We'll call him Lowell."

Grandmother Ross was one of those women who valued her own opinion and did not hesitate to express it. "Lowell!" she said, "I hate that name. Never have liked it! Sounds like some kind of fancy poet or something! And besides, he's ugly!"

It was true that I didn't present well. My head was pointed—it still is—and at that moment I was, as my father remembered, "...red as a beet and already colicky."

During those years there was a famous movie star from Mexico, Ramón Novarro, who in 1929, the year before I was born, made his first talking film, "Devil-May-Care," in Hollywood, starring as a singing French soldier. I like to imagine my mother and father, sitting together in the stately Liberty Theater in Walla Walla, (now part of Macy's Department Store, alas, but still maintaining its tilted floor and gilded ceiling and imposing front lobby) holding hands—I'm embroidering a little here, I fear—and that film making such an impact on them that they tucked the name *Ramon*—without the accent over the *o*—they weren't sophisticated enough to notice a nuance like that—deep into their subconscious.

"No problem"—or something to that effect—Mother said, dredging up the name at the exact moment when she needed it, "We'll call him Ramon. Ramon Royal Ross."

And that's how a Walla Walla farm boy, born of a Pennsylvania Dutch and Scotch father and a Pennsylvania Dutch and Irish mother got stuck with the name which, over the years, I've come to love.

Royal, of course, reminds me every time I say it of my father, for it was my

early and appropriately placed ambition to be just like him; a farmer with a big orchard out back and a creek running behind the house, an amateur painter and builder—although, admittedly, his execution left something to be desired, he never understood the need for a level, lining up most things with a distant telephone pole—a trout fisherman, a loyal friend, a proud father, and a good neighbor, who placed decency above politics and religion.

So, what's your name? Where did you get it? What are its family roots? What does it mean to you? Lyanda Lynn Haupt, in her book "Crow Planet," writes about the joys of getting acquainted with the natural world of one's own neighborhood, and says, regarding the importance of learning the names of the denizens where she lives, "Names have meaning beyond themselves, carrying, curiously, more weight than other words do. It is like the difference between knowing and not knowing our neighbor's names." She concludes, "But of course the name... is just the first thing we know and hopefully not, ultimately, the only thing."

That's the topic for this next issue. Names. Where our names came from. What changes in them occurred over the years and across continents and international boundaries. What stories we attach to our names and what those stories mean to us. What names we chose for our children...

Tell us. ♦

JUST A REMINDER...

The Editorial Staff

As you must know, we are always looking forward to hearing from you, whether what you want to write about has to do with the topic at hand, or is something circling your orb you think might be of interest to the rest of us. A good book you've read...A movie worth seeing...a piece of research you're engaged in...A new or favorite restaurant (Kalina--a new Ukrainian Restaurant on Jackson and Parkway Drive is terrific! Hint: Bring your own wine. No corkage fee.) Whatever it is you want to report, you're enriching our lives by dropping a note.

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*Above:
Scholarship Awardees (left to right):
Samantha Afetian, Katie Martin,
Megan Mucks, and Brynn Vigneux*



*Save the Date
Friday, August 26, All-University
Convocation
Thursday, September 15th, Tour of
Vintage Car/Veteran's Museum
Saturday, September 24th, Women's
Association Scholarship Luncheon
Friday, October 7, Oktoberfest
Sunday, December 4, Holiday Party*

See "Notes from the Editor" for what's coming in the next *PostScript*

DEADLINE: November 10, 2011

Please e-mail your double-spaced article to ramon.r.ross@gmail.com. If you have no access to a computer, mail your typed or clearly printed article to 9227 Virginian Lane, La Mesa, CA 91941. Scanned photos may be sent as an attachment or mail photos to Ramon Royal Ross at the above address. Photos are appreciated and will be returned.

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