



Retirees Association

Winter Newsletter 2014

COUNCIL NEWS

How we can keep our organization alive, active and something new retirees would be interested in is a question members of the SOU Retirees Association need to face in the near future. That is the question board members will address at its next meeting.

The council is concerned that new retirees are not joining the organization. This leads to it being a group dominated by much older former faculty and staff members—in numbers, and perhaps, interests.

The number of SOU employees retiring in recent years has been significantly lower than in the past, leading to a smaller pool of potential association members. Also, at least in

the minds of several council members, new retirees are likely to look at the association as just "a bunch of old-timers" with whom they have little in common.

The council is also concerned about the number of not-so-recent retirees who also choose to not take part in association activities such as the quarterly luncheons. "There's about 300 retirees from SOU out there, but only around 80 have chosen to become paid members of the association," says council secretary Tom Pyle.

Are there not enough association-sponsored activities to interest retirees?

Are the benefits (free admission to sports events, etc.) not significant enough?

Are the luncheons and speakers not appealing enough? Should we be hosting seminars, games, travel opportunities, etc.? These and other questions face the council in its deliberations about how to increase retiree interest in their organization.

The council would be very interested in hearing suggestions from association members regarding this matter. Council members and their email addresses appear on the Association website. Your suggestions would be most welcome. ▲

From the President's Desk / Ralph Fidler

Welcome to the year 2014 and I hope the newsletter finds you in good health ready to start another wonderful year in retirement. The year ended on a sad note with the passing of our friend and colleague Jerry Insley. Jerry served this past year as our association president. He was a true gentleman and friend to all who knew him. His constant smile and positive attitude will be missed. We are all indebted to Jerry for what he did for the University and the Retirees' Association.

The Retiree Association is going to have our first gathering of the New Year on the 28th of February at a luncheon in the new Residence Hall dining facility located across the street from the PE Building and football stadium. Hopefully there should be ample parking in the PE lots and on the street since this will be a Friday. The current plan is to have the socializing begin around 11am in a room inside the dining room. We will enter "The Hawk" and pay for our lunch, \$5.00, and proceed to the socialization area and about 11:30 have lunch in an area set aside for us in the dining room. We will have many choices from the various serving areas. After everyone is through with lunch we will have a short meeting to discuss any items which will have been brought up at our council meeting in January, including the final vote on the inclusion of the clause that retirees must have at least five years employment to authorize membership in the association. Then we will have a presentation by Residence Hall staff followed by a tour of the new facility. It will be exciting to see the wonderful state of the art facilities which are now a part of Southern Oregon University.

This will be the first year that we have sufficient funds in our Scholarship Account to be able to make an award to any students. However, with increasing tuition costs it is important that we continue to donate to the fund. There will be a special box for donations at the luncheon. Thank you for your continued support of this worthy cause.

Please be sure to call or email Anya Neher at nehera@sou.edu or 541-552-6049 if you will be able to attend and please call anyone who has not been attending to encourage them to join us. ▲

The Retirees Association Winter Luncheon

February 28, 2014, 11am-1pm
New Residence Hall Dining Area
"The Hawk"

\$5.00 for retirees with ID Card
\$8.50 for guests

R.S.V.P

Email (preferred): Anya Neher at
nehera@sou.edu or
Telephone: 541-552-6049

We will have a short meeting and presentation by Erik Elodi on the Residence Hall followed by a tour of the new facilities.

Directions: travel south on Siskiyou Blvd past Churchill Hall and turn left on Wightman St (past the 7-11 store). Proceed to parking lot at PE building or residence hall lot if space is available. We have made arrangements with security to waive any parking fines between 10:30am and 1:30pm. Residence Halls dining area is directly across from PE parking lot looking up toward Omars.

IN MEMORIAM

ROBERT BENNETT 1927-2013

JERRY INSLEY 1927-2013

MARY CHRISTLIEB (1924-2013)

was a dean with heart! And humor, and a relaxed attitude about so much—but never too relaxed! She taught me a great deal about student services, and she and Marythea Grebner took me with them to the Oregon Women in Higher Education meetings. I was a member of that wonderful women's group until I retired from Linfield College.

Mary was personally so helpful to me at one point in my life; it's what I truly remember her for. The last night I was in Ashland, having resigned my job, I attended a going away party with student services. I was driving by myself home after the party to prepare to depart the next day from home to La Jolla, Ca. Michael Flower had acquired a position there with Jonas Salk so I, too, resigned to go along. It was to be a three-year time commitment, at least.

Driving home I was overcome with a tremendous sense of grief and loss over leaving my job at Southern Oregon College and leaving Ashland. I knew I'd never find another place to live that I liked as well. I drove right by my home and up to Mary's house and knocked on the door. She took me in and somehow got me back on track and I was able to leave the next day.

I've never forgotten Mary's kindness.

—Gloria Flower

Gloria is retired from Linfield College and is working part time for Linfield Adult Degree Program. Email at gflower@linfield.edu.

I knew Mary enough to know that words cannot capture her. She was so lively, with great zest for life packed into a small frame. She had a smile that reached right up to her eyes. She could be tart and straightforward, but also was very much

a nurturing person—really, just what you would want in a dean of students.

Mary had a successful career at a time when it was relatively unusual to be a "working mom." Her daughter Carol, part of SOU's Continuing Education staff, remembers bicycling up and down around campus while her mom attended meetings inside one building or another. Indeed, Mary's family is deeply connected to campus, not only because of the terrific impact Carol has had over 20 years of growing a vibrant and meaningful pre-college program, but also of course because Mary's brother Don was head of Finance and Administration for a few decades!

Mary's contributions in retirement, helping to start OLLI, funding scholarships for students, deepened her impact on the University. She is part of SOU's very identity. Many will mourn her passing, and bless her for the good she did.

—Jeannie Stallman

At The Queen's University of Belfast / Bill Meulemans

Originally I went to Belfast for a one-time research trip in 1990, but I ended up staying for 11 years. One of the political science professors had some health problems so I volunteered to take over his course on American politics. When I finished the year, the chairperson asked if I would come back next year so I did for the next 11 years. I would go over in mid-September and come back to Oregon just before Christmas.

From the beginning I arranged to have all my academic responsibilities on Mondays and Tuesdays so the other five days of the week I was out on the street in the working-class neighborhoods of Belfast. After a few years of this, I knew more people in Belfast than I did back home in Oregon. Everywhere I went I had my tape recorder and reporter's pad. I wore out several pair of shoes and countless umbrellas. My one break in the day was my nightly trip to one of many pubs. But I was still doing research. I found many people were more candid after their second beer.

There were 19 members of the politics department and I was the only American. Every Monday we all had lunch together and I soon discovered that those educated in England were still a bit upset about how The American Revolutionary War went more than 200 years ago. The faculty educated in Ireland would roll their eyes as the Brits tried to put down everything American. Doug Legg would have enjoyed the dialogue.

My course on American Politics usually drew in about 180 students. One year I announced that if anyone wanted to come to Oregon I could guarantee they could work on a political campaign. I had two young women volunteer and I convinced our own Nancy Peterson to put them to work on her campaign in Ashland. There was a picture of the two of them in the Daily Tidings as they rode a float in the 4th of July Parade. They had a wonderful time. One of them stayed on and went to work with Nancy in Salem. This young woman met her husband to be, who was a Democratic campaign consultant. They were married and now live in Portland. Every time I visit them they remind their children that I am responsible for their birth. They quickly explain how I was responsible.

I finished an earlier version of my book, *Belfast: Both Sides Now*, 10 years ago, then revised it, adding more chapters. In 2004 I started teaching a course at Portland State entitled, "War and Peace in Northern Ireland." I retired last year and decided it was time to publish my book. You can find it now on Amazon.

From 2002 to 2010 I went back to Belfast, lecturing on American politics. In 2010 I explained how the American Republican Party was going to redraw legislative district boundaries so that our politics would become even more partisan. I don't think they believed me because they didn't think it could get any worse. Today I suppose they still don't think it could get any worse.

I went to Belfast 21 times (that may qualify as an obsession). I'm not sure when I will go back again. But I have a fondness for the Irish people that I will not forget. I used to tell them my body was Belgian, but my heart was Irish. My Protestant friends didn't enjoy that story as much as the Catholics.

I hope all my friends in Ashland are doing well. ▲

Do Something Challenging / Betty LaDuke

1972, the year of my first sabbatical, my husband, Peter Westigard, who was an entomologist with the Southern Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station said, "Do something challenging." I did. I went to India alone for one month, with pen and sketchbook. Peter also advised, "Look at the peoples' relationship to the land, what they eat . . ." and I have never stopped!

Thereafter, my annual summer sketchbook travels to 'third world' countries continued with Peter's domestic cooperation, grants and self-financing. The results filled many sketchbooks and notebooks, as I began to interview and document the work of other women artists. In my studio, select sketches were transformed into paintings and etchings. These adventures were also shared with drawing, design and painting students, and in the class I initiated, Women and Art and Art in the Third World.

My first cultural circulating exhibition, Impressions of India, in 1975, was followed by others, on China, Latin America and Africa. Altogether they amounted to over 300 exhibitions. I was delighted at the showing at the Smith Robinson Museum, an African American venue, as my first, prominent art teachers Charles White and Elizabeth Cattalet were African American artists, who shared their vision of art and social responsibility and encouraged my development.

I came to teach at Southern Oregon University in 1964. I will never forget Elmo Stevenson introducing me to the faculty as 'Betty LaDuck!' I remember the 1980s, as a period of academic and interdisciplinary fun and challenges shared with colleagues John Sullivan, Frank Lang, and Chela Tapp. I brought my drawing and design students to the science building to sketch their bird collections and to draw microscopic views of organic forms. Once John Sullivan had two students carry big benign boa constrictors into the art building for my students to sketch and mythologize. One summer Frank Lang and I team taught drawing. Using the same objects or landscapes, Frank emphasized realistic renditions and I a personal, mythical approach. The comparisons were enlightening for us all.

In the 1980's, a period of Latin America political repression, I visited 11 countries documenting women's art with interviews and photographs, and filling my sketchbook. The experiences in Chile, Nicaragua, Cuba, Grenada, and Mexico were especially powerful and needed to be told on paper. Chela Tapp spent many long hours, days, and months with me as I wrote and rewrote. How proud we were when *Companeras, Women Art and Social Change in Latin America* was published in 1985 by City Lights, San Francisco.

In 1992, thanks to Bill and Florence Schneider, a representative of Freedom From Hunger (FFH) knocked on my studio door and a new challenge emerged. FFH felt my sketching at their project sites in Bolivia, Thailand, Ghana and USA, would offer their contributors another project perspective. Their focus was the lending of small sums of money to groups of rural women to initiate their own business projects. The book documenting these experiences, *Women Against Hunger*, composed of my sketches and writings, was published by Africa World Press 19. They also published *Africa Through the Eyes of Women Artists*, *Africa Women's Art*, *Women's Lives*, and *Women Arts Multicultural Visions*. All these experiences prepared me for my work with Heifer International after early retirement in 1996.

Nine years after Rwanda's genocide tragedy, I signed up for the Heifer International (HI) Educational Study tour to Rwanda. I brought my sketchbook and was impressed by their program to use cows or other environmentally appropriate animals for sustainable community solutions to hunger and malnutrition. My paintings gradually evolved into *Rwanda Dreaming Cows* and *Passing on the Gift, We May Be Poor, But Our Culture Is Rich* and *Cambodia, Building Community Leaders*, and more.

Dreaming Cows, a book written by Sue Bumagin, published by HI in 2008, contained all my work and the story of each of the 30 paintings and 32 plywood mural panels which were created for the HI headquarters and education center in Little Rock Arkansas. Annually thousands of people including loads of school kids would visit the HI Education Center. They would learn about possible solutions for world hunger, and my art contributed. Before I donated the *Dreaming Cows* painting series to HI, they were seen at many college campuses, children's museums, and at the United Nations.

Beginning in 2010, during Peter's long battle with cancer, my travels were closer to home. They began when Joan Thorndike, then Steve and Angie Fry, encouraged me to visit their flower and vegetable farms in Talent, Phoenix, and Central Point. I found new sketchbook nourishment.

Another series, 26 mural panels, gradually emerged: *Celebrating Local Farms and Farmworkers*. In 2012, they were installed at the Medford Airport. After approval by Bern Case, airport director, the airport art committee and the county commissioner, and a major community effort by the Rogue Valley Community Foundation, the permanent presence of the seven airport murals is a reality and the artist will receive modest compensation!

Celebrating Life, my 80th birthday retrospective at the Schneider Museum of Art, was another rewarding, personal community experience. It brought together a 65 year sampling of my local, national, and international artwork, and over 4,000 visitors. While my work spanned many worldwide cultural experiences including war and peace, the current series of mural panels is inspired by the local pruning and harvesting of the pear orchard workers, and the harvest frenzy at our local vineyards. Peter would have been proud.

Celebrating Life will visit other communities beginning with the Portland Art Museum in 2015 and the Brauer

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Conferences/Senior Programs
Southern Oregon University
1250 Siskiyou Blvd.
Ashland, Oregon 97520

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PAID
Southern Oregon
University

Do Something Challenging / *continued from pg 3*

Art Museum in 2016, and going on to other. One more birthday wish is to have Celebrating Life have a permanent installation at Southern Oregon University.

Meanwhile, I remember all the fun and celebrations at the Schneider Museum of Art especially the events: A performance by our local Ballet Folklorica, poetry by Lawson Inada and Alma Alvarez, and Ashland's International Musicians and Dancers. I danced too and so would have Bill and Florence Schneider, the charismatic and memorable founders of the Schneider Museum of Art. I am very proud of SOU and our community for supporting all the arts. ▲

SNOW BIRDING / *Connie Battaile*

Greetings from the southern California desert to all you chilly folks. Or to be more precise, from Borrego Springs, where I'm ensconced for two months doing homage to the sun. As you may know, Borrego Springs (borrego means bighorn sheep) is a little town of some 3000 people (12,000 in the winter) spread out in the desert in the middle of Anza Borrego State Park. The park, over 50 miles long, is east of San Diego and west of the Salton Sea, a desert floor surrounded by mountains and badlands, and hosting a surprising variety of plants, critters, and history. I'm trying diligently to learn about it all, abetted by a rich array of interpretive efforts—signs, brochures, videos, books, field trips, talks, museums. I can't think of another place where there is such a richness of resources dedicated to helping people know about an area. The place is intriguing—some rocks older than any in Oregon, lots of fossils, a totally new flora to learn, the boggling idea that people somehow lived here on less than 3 inches of rain a year, and dazzling stars.

Here so far, I've hiked, attended some events, gone jeep off-roading in the dunes, visited a geothermal generating plant, and gone bird watching. The phainopepla (the bird book calls it a silky flycatcher, but people here just call it phainopepla) charms me. It's like a small Stellar's jay, but the male is a glossy black dude with a big crest. And roadrunners! Which birders attract with raw hamburger. I'm also now volunteering at the park herbarium, learning to mount specimens. Nifty!

My rental house has a window wall that looks into the desert and across at the mountains. One morning I opened the drapes to see an eager coyote right here, 20 feet away, in pursuit of the cottontail that I'd seen frequenting the neighbor's oleander hedge. The rabbit scurried from clump to clump, the coyote darting about but stymied by stems. The rabbit suddenly made a remarkably fleet dash across the neighbor's back yard. It turns out that the hedge hides a mesh fence; the rabbit had made it through but the coyote was stopped, so the coyote set off around the front of the neighbor's house to find a way in. That's a smart, problem-solving beastie. I was relieved when it presently reappeared around the back, still eagerly questing. It persisted nosing about a while longer, then all but shrugged and trotted off down the street.

It was a gripping way to start the day, but perplexing—I didn't know which one to root for.

Two mornings later five coyotes trotted past. The rabbit keeps appearing. ▲

On the back of an LAPD jacket: If you
see me running, try to keep up.