



Retirees Association

Spring Newsletter 2013

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE / *Jerry Insley*

Spring seems to be with us, at least for the time being. We have, in the past, seen snow in April, and, on occasion, as late as May. Hope springs eternal, the daffodils are out, trees in flower and we look forward to the days when we can get out more and not carry an umbrella. If you have not visited the campus for a while, much has changed. Our students from the eighties and nineties would be in shock at the building going on; especially the reconfiguring of the north campus.

The winter luncheon was a success with many in attendance and our speaker, John Rachor, gave us a good background of search and rescue operations in general, as well as his involvement in many such functions in and about Southern Oregon and Northern California. We board members try to enlist a variety of speakers, as well as other entertainment when we can locate them. It has been mentioned that Ron Bolstad and his crew need to be coerced into playing for us once again. Should any member of the association like to suggest a speaker, or other manner of program, please let us know.

We do have some business to consider at the spring meeting. A minor clarification of membership qualifications need to be voted

A RETIREE'S LIFE / *By Dr. Dennis Powers*

After my retirement, I have stayed in contact with other SOU contemporaries. If not at retiree affairs, it has been at Costco, SOU athletic competitions, on the street, leaving the Ashland, and even traveling. I am struck by the diversity, yet the sameness of what we do after our retirement. As we know, the word retirement is a misnomer: We find ourselves busier than ever with less time and I've wondered why. In asking fellow retirees, I've had different answers—but with a commonality.

Medical issues and physical health considerations take up more of our time. I wondered years ago why my parents always seemed to talk with their friends about their health, or doctors, or the “nutty” medical advice they had received. Now I am there. My wife, Judy, had knee replacement surgery, and, of course, I was with her through the appointments, surgery, convalescence, honey dos, shopping, and—you know the drill. Of course, I've had my own issues, from prostate cancer (now beaten) to senior moments—which is fine, as now I have the excuse I needed years ago.

Traveling is high on the list. I ran across SOU retirees when overseas, as when Judy and I traveled to Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia two years ago. There have been other countries, Hawaii, and even Florida last year with an SOU couple who were also

upon, as well as the prospective new members to the board. Our group has had members step up and volunteer to serve. During our deliberations at the March board meeting we discussed the number of board meetings for the upcoming years and decided that five meetings per year would probably meet our needs; unless, of course, some untoward items of timely concern might need to be addressed.

Our board members were sorry to hear Sally Klein's announcement that she will be retiring in the fall. Her departure is great for her, but sad for us. She has been of inestimable assistance in keeping us abreast of things and she exhibits both competence and a genuine interest and willingness to keep us on track. She will be missed in her function as our SOU contact, but will be welcomed into the retirees group with open arms.

We do hope to see a large contingent at the Spring luncheon. Again, we need to be reminded that we no longer have funding from the University and that our annual dues of twenty-dollars represent the only financial support we have. President Cullinan will give us a review of the past year's campus progress and an overview of things to come. Come out; join us for good fellowship. We hope to see some new faces in the group. ▲

The Retirees Association Spring Luncheon

Guest Speaker

Mary Cullinan

May 17, 11:30 – 1:30 / Rogue River Room

RSVP • \$12.00

Sally Klein by May 10, 2013

Email (preferred): KleinS@sou.edu

or Telephone: 541-552-6049

searching for the winter sun. Traveling to warmer spots often happens after retirement, because we have the flexibility—and want to be warmer during the winter.

There is always the proverbial class get-together, such as my high school's 50th anniversary weekend. In the newsletter were the class pictures—fifty years later—and I couldn't believe how everyone had aged, how successful some were, and also how most hadn't left Westfield, New Jersey, once my home. As to age, a quick glimpse at my bathroom mirror later with the instant thought—“Who's that old man staring back at me?”—gave me the answer as to how my good friends were seeing me.

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MOUNT ST. HELENS: AN UNEXPECTED JOURNEY / *By Darlene Southworth*

Last summer as I was preparing to attend the annual meeting of the Ecological Society of America in Portland, I emailed a colleague from UC Riverside.

“Mike,” I said (emailwise), “are you going to be at ESA? We need to talk about our manuscript.”

“Yes,” he responded, “and afterwards, I’m taking a group of grad students to the east side of Mount St. Helens. Do you want to come along?”

Did I ever!

So I gave my talk on rare truffles in southern Oregon, went hiking in the gorge with Greg Fowler (former geneticist at SOU), and then headed north. We met at Exit 21, stocked up on food and water, and turned east, passing south of Mount St. Helens, then north up the eastern side of the Monument, and finally west up and up towards the mountain itself.

By late afternoon, from Cascade Peaks Overlook we went through a gate to the camp of the Monument ecologist. (I love it when I get inside of locked gates.) It was a dry camp, but with an established kitchen under walled tents.

We pitched our tents at 6000 feet, with

endless views of green mountains spiked at intervals with the pink peaks of Mount St. Helens, Mount Rainier, Mount Baker and sometimes Mount Hood.

On the first day we hiked down to the pumice flats below Mount St. Helens to the site where plants had appeared after the eruption 32 years ago. The first plants were lupines with their ability to fix nitrogen and their association with mycorrhizal fungi. It turned out that while the eruption was quite devastating to standing vegetation, life underground was more protected. Seeds, fungi and burrowing pocket gophers had survived and emerged through the pumice, re-establishing the vegetation. The pumice field has now been cut with gullies that are bordered by willow and alder.

All day Mount St. Helens stood over us, with tiny booms and wisps of dust from minor avalanches in the distance. Spirit Lake lay below us and we found ourselves drawn to it. Huge logs remain as they fell from the blast but the water now is home to tadpoles and trout (probably brought in by hopeful fishing people).

Our hike was about 10 miles with a descent of some 600 feet—both on trail and off—crossing braided streams through the pumice. It was a wonderful day.

When we were sitting around the fire, some of the younger grad students congratulated me on having done well. I thought, “And what did your grandmother do today?” But I didn’t say it.

On the second day, we hiked among 32-year old firs. I had billed myself as a truffer and carried my truffle fork. But my preliminary attempts at finding truffles had turned up only pumice stones. So there I was in the dry pumice demonstrating how one looks for truffles. And within half an hour, I pulled out truffles from under firs along a stream! Even I was amazed. Back at camp, the Monument ecologist thought that they were the first truffles anyone had found in the pumice zone since the eruption. So while they were not rare species and had probably been there over the years, no one had looked and there we were.

Later that day, Mike and I dragged our chairs onto a pile of pumice and discussed our manuscript. When I left the site, I felt I had undergone “electronic cleansing” and wondered which was my real life—the one with the cell phone, the Internet and hybrid car or the one in the ancient mountains open to the sky. ▲

MEMORIES OF TAYLOR HALL / *Claude Curran*

President Elmo Stevenson loved to refer to Southern Oregon State College as the Little Harvard on the Hill. I remember Taylor Hall in those years, and if there had been a geostationary drone over Taylor Hall that was able to measure intellectual activity, I believe the “Little Harvard on the Hill” (according to President Elmo Stevenson) would have a cacophony of synapses matching the quality detected over the “Big Harvard on the Flat!” Not quantity, quality.

Political Scientist Bill Meulemans, much to the consternation of some folks, invited the President of the American Nazi Party to his class on political extremism. There was concern that it was not appropriate. Bill contended he had faith in his students and they would rip the guy to shreds. They did! Man He You, a Korean National, concerned himself with International Monetary issues. He left, at the end of 1966, for a job at Parsons College, in Iowa, attendant with a salary increase of a whopping 65%! He later became a high official with the World Bank in NYC. An Ex-Marine, Frank Haines enjoyed his role as the dread DI whom History majors had to take. One first class meeting Frank barked,

“Is there anyone in here who would not be happy with a C?” After about a minute of awkward silence Frank said, “OK, no exams, no papers, everyone will receive a C!” Frank was in no way a real DI, he was a marshmallow dressed in a western cut sports jacket.

Michael Haynes was an economist with a smile as broad as the Mississippi River during the great flood of 1973. His countenance assured students of success or happy failure. He often was seen traipsing down the hall to his next class carrying a wad of colored chalk, later colored markers, to graph on the board that which economists graph—everything. My nickname for Mike was Goldfinger. Often as he and I passed in the hallway I would either call out Goldfinger or hold up my bent right index finger, either of which would elicit a huge smile. He loved to target shoot, which he did with great accuracy with his Savage .270 sporting rifle; my trigger finger was the reminder of his accuracy and our deep personal friendship.

Man He, Frank and, most recently, Michael, regrettably, are deceased. They were true professionals. The legacy of these treasured teaching professors resides in the intellect of a myriad of students, colleagues and others across this great nation and beyond. This, from the Little Harvard on the Hill! ▲



IN MEMORIAM

STEVE FLYNN / *Phil Campbell*

Steve's passing has given me pause to reflect. He was truly one of a kind. A unique personality and in many ways as big as life itself, he was fun loving, easy-going, and quick witted, and his love for a good time endeared him to everyone. As a neighbor, Steve was always the first there to help. He was a great boss, close friend and wonderful neighbor. It isn't often in life you connect with someone so special.

After graduating from high school (1961) in the Bay Area, Steve was recruited by Slats Gill and Paul Valenti to play basketball at Oregon State University. The friendships he made on campus and playing basketball for the Beavers would stay with him the rest of his life.

After graduating from OSU in 1961 Steve joined the Marine Corp. He served from 1966-67 in Vietnam as a Marine Captain and Commander of an armored tank division, earning the Bronze Star with V for Valor and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. Although Vietnam was a profound experience in his life he seldom brought it up and had little sympathy for people who felt sorry for themselves. He believed everyone should "pick up and carry their sack of rocks".

After leaving the Marine Corp Steve completed his masters degree at OSU and went on to become the Director of Financial Aid and eventually the Dean of Students at Southern Oregon University. His life experiences, quick wit, fun loving manner and 6'-6" physical presence made him a beloved figure on campus, admired by students, faculty and administrators.

Steve had a quip and nickname for everyone; "We are going to have the best time ever," "If you need me I'll be in the Christian Science Reading Room,"; nick names such as Inn Keeper of America, Sister Mary and Sister Sue, Ma Sheila, Shameless Brown and the Rail.

I have many fond memories of our time together in the work place, as neighbors and friends; rehashing the happenings of the day at the school house, attending special events at the college (New Student Registration, Parent's Day, Homecoming, Graduation, etc), special outings (night skiing at Mt Ashland, Christmas Tree Cutting with family and friends), annual golfing and fishing adventures, attending and watching sporting events, especially the Beaver/

Duck rivalry, Halloween in Ashland with Steve dressing up as the Bhagwan or wearing a tutu, marching in the annual 4th of July Parade as Dr Book and Dr Video drill teams, having a "couple of pops at the Log Cabin", attending events at the Elks, , the list could go on and on .

I can say without reservation he was the best friend, neighbor and boss a person could ever have. He was one of those special and unique individuals that few of us have the privilege of knowing. May he rest in peace after his courageous battle with Alzheimer's Disease. He will be missed but always remembered. ▲

RICHARD STRAW / *Frank Lang*

We were all saddened to learn that Dr. Richard (Dick) Straw died in Salem, Ore. on 14 October 2012 of causes related to being 86, after a long full life.

Most of you likely knew him best when he worked at the SOU Computer Center from 1981-1992, first as Associate Director of Academic Computing and finally as Director when Tim Kelly departed. I knew him as a student of the genus *Penstemon* and author of the genera *Nothochelone*, and *Keckiella*.

Dick came to us after his retirement from a distinguished career as Professor of Biology at California State College, Los Angeles, from 1956-1981 where he retired as Emeritus Professor of Biology. He was a well known, widely respected botanist whose Ph.D. dissertation topic was the flowering plant genus *Penstemon*.

During his academic years at Cal State Los Angeles, he was a Fulbright Lecturer in Peru (Genetics and Ecology) from 1963-1964 and then went to Malaysia with the Peace Corps as science and math education support staff from 1966-1968.

While in Ashland, he also continued his botanical interests by volunteering for the Oregon Flora Project and the SOU herbarium, helping a graduate student on a field project, and teaching a course in biostatics and systematic botany. He put together a Jackson County Vascular Plant list and did some contract work for the Medford District BLM.

In addition to botany, Dick had an interest in the genealogy of the Straw family and enjoyed fly fishing, travel, and visiting with family and friends. He was an active member of Trinity Episcopal Church in Ashland, Oregon. He continued these activities in his later years in spite of struggles with a badly broken elbow from a bicycle accident and dealing with a common disease of older men.

I enjoyed his company and friendship for many reasons: his intelligence, conversation, company, kindness, and grace. This served him well in his role at the computer center, where he listened carefully to what the faculty and his employees had to say. He really cared about the people who worked for him His life was long and full and well lived. ▲

"If there are no dogs in Heaven, then when I die I want to go were they went." -Will Rogers

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

A RETIREE'S LIFE / *Continued from page 1*

A third consumer of our time is our volunteering. I am proud of what SOU's retirees have been doing there, from assisting in retirement centers to everything from Goodwill and Access to United Way and homeless programs. In this regard, I have a story to tell, but this will have to wait until later.

Another big user of time is our hobbies. We now have the time—and quickly fill it up. SOU retirees jump into everything from kayaking in the summer, model railroad train building, and golfing (regardless of weather, which seems to be an oxymoron) to the weekly coffee with buddies and stamp collecting. You name it.

I have cut down on my board work (a maritime museum, the Ashland Hospital Foundation Board, the Ashland YMCA board, and the Gold Hill Historical Society) to being active with just the YMCA. This was to make room for my current passions: playing duplicate, or tournament, bridge two or three times a week, writing scripts for JPR and KMED, and hosting a weekly radio talk—show for KMED, entitled “Past and Present.” I found myself in tournament bridge doing quite well in the beginning. The reason: No one could understand my playing, not even my partner, and such confusion is always helpful—even if you are it.

I did promise to tell you a story in winding up. Dick Cottle was a School of Business law professor whose shoes I stepped into—big shoes—when he retired. Dick was a long-time teacher at SOU,

full-time from 1971–1994, and a community leader. Later we would talk now and then about teaching. But that was about it.

The years flew by. When I volunteered to help with the YMCA's monthly Sunday dance for its senior members, I was surprised to find that Dick's band, the Easy Valley Eight, would be playing. My job was to collect the \$6 door admission, make sure the coffee was hot, and help decorate for the different themes. And listen to Dick Cottle play for over 100 folks! Here I was in retirement, volunteering, helping out the SOU Professor I had taken over from, also retired and volunteering, at a YMCA seniors dance. The cycle of life. I felt a lump in my throat when Dick passed away in 2010, a short time after his last performance.

It was the same feeling I had when Don Mackin passed away so suddenly in 2011. We had worked together on different boards, yelled together at SOU wrestling matches, run into each other at the Safeway when shopping and met for coffee now and then. The announcement as to his services was a one-liner: “Funeral services in Oregon will be held at the Craterian Theatre in Medford on May 7 at 10:30 A.M.” Numbers of you were there.

When I pass away, I won't have one at the Craterian, or before a packed house. I mentioned to Judy that should I die first, “Why not just throw a party for my friends?” She laughingly answered, “Do I need to pay them first?”

I don't think I'll bring that one up again. ▲

"You can say any foolish thing to a dog, and the dog will give you a look that says, "Wow, you're right! I never would have thought of that!"—Dave Barry