



# San Francisco State University *Retirement Association* Off Campus Bulletin

## Winter 2016

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## President's Corner

By: LaVonne Jacobsen

When I think about what brings me “comfort and joy” throughout the year, I think in terms of my “villages.” A village could be a group of long time college friends, a religious group, regulars in a local cafe or bar, or a volunteer organization. I have come to increasingly value the Retirement Association as one of my most important villages – a group where we enjoy doing things together (those of us who can get out and about) and, more importantly, a group with shared experiences, shared values about education, and memories of San Francisco State. I would be the first to say that not all of our memories are good! However, it is the glue that binds us together and there are many wonderful memories.

The association exists to keep us in touch with each other and the University as we scatter to our retirement locations and activities. I see that as our core mission. Our social activities draw participation from the local area, naturally, but a lot of members either cannot come to these activities or live too far away. How can we provide you with connection? Please let us know if you have an idea.

The newsletter is scheduled for three times a year as a practical matter in terms of time and money. What could

we add that interests you? Contribute a brief note to it! Travel, philosophy, history, reminiscences and photos – all of it is more than welcome. Is there any other form of connection you have wished for? Speak up – contact information is in this newsletter.

As you know, we also provide support to working faculty and staff by awarding the travel grants and individual members continue to provide numerous services to their departments and programs. As your Board works to urge the University administration to provide recognition and benefits to long-time retired staff, we have been gathering examples of our contributions to the University, just as has the statewide retirement organization, ERFA, *Emeritus & Retired Faculty Association*. I believe that we have a good chance of gaining approval for an Emeritus Staff policy. We also continue to pursue other parallels to the benefits of retired Emeritus faculty.

Best wishes for 2016 and keep in touch!

*LaVonne Jacobsen, President*



## Where We've Been & Plan to Go

### Cuba October 2015

Cigar stores and sugar mill plantations; organic farms and neighborhood betterment associations; print-making collectives and art galleries; revolutionary museums and museums of bellas artes; five-star high-rise hotels with wrap-around swimming pools and Las Vegas-style music and dance extravaganzas with scantily-clad men and women; Catholic churches and Santeria priestesses; Havana buildings reduced to rubble and beautiful cobble-stoned colonial towns; yacht club lunches and fantastic choral group and street band music. A glorious week in Cuba with SFSU retirees Al Willard, Gail Whitaker, Jan Andreasen, partners and spouses, and a gaggle of other tour group members—all professionals and mostly all from the Bay Area—21 in all—including five days in Havana and two days in Cienfuegos, Trinidad, and the Bay of Pigs.

The tour was sponsored by San Francisco's California Institute of Integral Studies [on whose Board of Trustees I sit] and organized by the Cross-Cultural Journeys Foundation, using a full-to-the-brim chartered American Airlines plane for the 45-minute and 60 years back in time flight from Miami to Havana and back. Ultra-modern Chinese tour buses and [for our trip from our luxury hotel to downtown Havana for our last-evening's farewell dinner] a fleet of five absolutely beautiful 1950's Buicks, Cadillacs, Chevys, Oldsmobiles, and Pontiacs—with horns blaring!

It was a delightful, packed, too-short seven days; but I would not have traded a moment. And now's the time to go, before Carnival begins its cavalcade of cruise ships in May or June of 2016. Viva Cuba Libre [at least for now]!

...Richard Giardina



Richard Giardina standing in front of a classic yellow car!

Gail Whitaker, on the left and to the right is Jan Andreasen.

In the center are Marilyn and Al Willard





Well, since you asked about pets and pet pix, I'm attaching two of Bernie, our 7-year-old poodle. In these shots, Bernie and I are in Santa Fe, NM, enjoying the scenery. Since he is a shaggy dog, I couldn't resist taking him into a frontier bar, to re-enact the famous set of jokes that begin, "Guy walks into a bar with a shaggy dog . . ."

Bernie is pure poodle, son of a national champ. He is named after Tony Curtis, the actor, whose real name was Bernie Schwartz, since they both share the same personality: good-looking but a scamp. Bernie likes to chase puppies above all other activities, which is why I always say he is 7 going on 2. He's a great joy for my wife Elaine and me.

By Jim Kohn

## *Donations*

We appreciate the donations made by the following contributors to the Retirement Association Travel Grants Endowment Fund to help fund travel/professional development for current faculty and staff.

*Sheila McClear  
Anita Antler  
Dan and Kay McGough*

# Fall Meeting of Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association State Council

By Bob Cherny

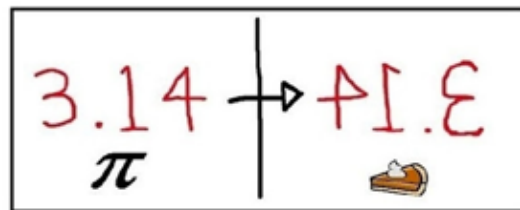
The ERFA state council met at CSU Fullerton on October 17, 2015. The two matters most likely of interest to SF State retirees were a discussion with Chancellor White and a discussion of the name and membership requirements for ERFA.

Chancellor White was a first generation college student at Diablo Valley, Fresno State, and UC Berkeley. Unlike his immediate predecessors, White was a faculty member and department chair for eighteen years before becoming a dean; he cited that experience as important to his decision-making.

Also unlike his immediate predecessor, White was entirely comfortable talking with us, took many questions, and was never defensive or belligerent. He prioritizes building relations in Sacramento. He has made campus presidents responsible for hiring more t/t faculty members and reducing reliance on lecturers. Where previous chancellors focused on centralization, White wants to encourage campus innovation.

The council held a meaty discussion on changing the name and membership definition to be more inclusive. ERFA admits only emeritus and retired faculty members, but retired staff members who belong to a campus affiliate can also belong to ERFA. Some argue that admitting other than emeritus faculty members diminishes the status of the emeritus faculty and changes the nature of the organization. The San Diego representative and I argued strongly that our experience has been that recruiting retired staff members has been very healthy for our organizations; others said much the same. There was consensus, although not unanimity, to broaden the name and definition of membership. The executive committee is to bring a proposal to the council.

The spring council meeting will be at San Jose State. Any of you can attend. If you are interested, let me know and I'll tell you where and when.



*Did you know...*

That Walter Coppock, retired from Psychology Department, and his wife Ruth, have been working on behalf of the *Farnley Tyas Foundation* in Ashland, Oregon. It is a three-generation family non-profit corporation, formed in 2008 for the purpose of giving that extra bit of financial help needed by an individual wishing to explore new terrain, new ideas, different cultures, fresh ways of resolving old problems. Anyone interested in learning more about the foundation can contact Walter at 541.488.1778.

## San Francisco State's History Corner

### *Faculty Space To Reopen After 10-Year Hiatus*

SF State President Leslie E. Wong donated \$100,000 this year to bring back the University Club on campus, according to the *Campus Memo*. The University Club was a restaurant and lounge for SF State employees designed to increase collaboration and foster a greater sense of community, according to senior assistant librarian Meredith Eliassen, who said it was a private organization owned by approximately 500 members, including faculty and staff. It was established in 1977 and located in the Franciscan Building next to the old library, she said.

The new UClub is set to open August 2016, and the new location will be in the Mezzanine level of the Cesar Chavez Student Center, where the bookstore's offices previously resided, according to Jonathan Morales, director of news media.

"Since the prior club ceased operations, there has been a desire to identify a new space to provide to members of the faculty and staff community," Morales said. "Only recently has a space been identified. Additionally, the University Corporation and the Academic Senate have collaborated to develop a funding and operations model to support the club's activities."

The club offered faculty and staff light meals, alcoholic beverages and was preferred because it was cheaper than the (Cesar Chavez Student Center), Eliassen said.

"(At the original UClub,) there were sofas and a coffee table with a chess set and New Yorkers near the fireplace that gave it a homey feel," Eliassen said "Holiday parties and, towards the end, events like 'Are You Being Served?' (luncheon) were held there."

UClub could accommodate up to 150 people and had two private dining rooms that could be reserved for parties or events, Eliassen said. "The University Club also exhibited artwork by faculty, staff and invited artists that was sometimes for sale," Eliassen said.

The Franciscan Building, where the club operated, was the first building on campus to be designed by a private architect in 1961 and cost the University \$286,000, according to Eliassen. Issues arose for UClub when plans for a new library were created, University librarian Deborah Masters said.



## In Memoriam

**Alfred L. (Al) Leidy**, Comptroller and Vice President for Administration and Finance from 1966 to 1986, died in Gold River, California, at 92.

**Urban Whitaker**, Emeritus Professor of International Relations, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, and acting Dean of the then new School of Ethnic Studies, died in Palo Alto at 91.

## Life After Retirement

By: Manfred Wolf

While I knew that when I retired I'd miss my job, my colleagues, and the whole environment of San Francisco State, I didn't realize how much. Perhaps most of all, I missed being needed. The very thing that had made the job occasionally difficult turned out to be what I apparently, unwittingly, craved the most.

But I was lucky. Shortly after my retirement, I was appointed Visiting Professor of Dutch Studies at Berkeley, a position I held for almost three years. It was very much a part-time teaching job, with a more than full-time commute, but enormously gratifying, mainly because I was able to teach courses I couldn't have in the English Department at State. Suddenly I was 'needed' again, and how! Anything remotely Dutch that came up required my participation. Towards the end of my years at Berkeley I got a nice letter from the Chancellor, calling me one of Berkeley's "Unsung Heroes."

Well, unsung, yes. I enjoyed my Berkeley students, but had little sense of membership in the German Department (where Dutch Studies was housed). So a mixed blessing, but still a blessing. And a further blessing was to have a teaching position at the Fromm Institute, located on the beautiful USF campus, where I still teach a short course every year.

After Berkeley came the next phase, my life as a writer. Throughout my career I had published translations, articles, essays in magazines and newspapers. Now I took it on myself to write a book. My first effort was to collect many of the articles and columns I had written over the years and shape them into a somewhat coherent narrative, creating a kind of autobiography in opinions. That book, called *Almost a Foreign Country* [2008] — the title signifies the estrangement older people feel from their surroundings — got a certain amount of gratifying response, in part resulting from my appearance on Michael Krasny's hugely popular KQED program "Forum."

Next, I collected and enlarged stories I had published in magazines, about my growing up in the Netherlands West Indies, then still a Dutch colony. My colleagues George Leonard, Jim Kohn and Dean Nancy McDermid encouraged publication of some of them in the School of Humanities Magazine, and my book, *Survival in Paradise: Sketches from a Refugee Life in Curacao*, came out in 2014. Among many others noting this publication was a former student, Vernon Kerr, who took my Critical Writing class in 1963, and who is now writing a screenplay of my book. Can any author ask for anything more?

The writing life is and isn't ideal during retirement. Yes, there's time for writing, but that in itself causes a certain pressure. Stories abound of writers doing everything possible to avoid writing — dishes, laundry, taking the dog to the vet. . .

Also, we live in a time and a place where probably more books are published than read. I'm frequently reminded of a New Yorker cartoon, in which one cocktail party guest asks another, "When did you first get the idea NOT to write a book?"

Fortunately, I manage to forget that cartoon from time to time!



# Manfred Wolf's New Book

By: Glenn Gullmes

Manfred Wolf is one of several authors among us and we are hoping he'll continue with contributions to our OCB. Here's more about him by Glenn Gullmes, *Publisher of the West Portal Monthly*.

For almost two decades, columnist Manfred Wolf has had the last word in the *West Portal Monthly*, holding down the inside back page with his insightful observations on interpersonal relationships, changing language and the cultural contradictions that define our society.

A longtime resident of The Parkside, the soft-spoken, thoughtful and thoroughly engaging professor taught at SF State from 1956 to 1995, with additional teaching stints over the years ranging from UC Berkeley and the University of Helsinki to his current position at the Fromm Institute at USF.

Wolf's latest book, *Survival in Paradise*, looks back at his childhood refugee experience in escaping an ever-encroaching Nazi regime. The riveting 271-page book details his family's perseverance amidst tragedy and serves as a 21st century reminder of the unspeakable horrors of The Holocaust, the after-effects of which continue to reverberate across the ocean, decades later.

Wolf's page-turning, thrill-a-minute first chapter, *1942*, reads like an outline for a big-screen Hollywood thriller.

"Navigating a dangerous maze of figurative (and literal) minefields, secret hiding places, bribes, corrupt officials, forged papers, incomplete documents, interrogations and detentions, the Wolf family somehow managed multiple border crossings, staying barely a step ahead of Nazi capture.

The family uprooted their lives in Germany and moved to The Netherlands before World War II engulfed Europe, eventually making their way across France and Spain to reach a Portuguese ship that would set sail for safe haven in the Dutch Caribbean island colony of Curacao, off the coast of Venezuela. The terrifying childhood memories are as vivid as ever.

"Crossing at night from occupied to unoccupied France, falling down when dogs started barking, being captured in Nice and being released – for all sort of inscrutable reasons – by the Vichy French whose job was to deport Jews..."

His voice trails off as he recalls friends and family members who were lost in Nazi concentration camps.

From his care-free childhood in Holland to his family's dangerous trek across Europe to his coming of age in the New World, the refugee experience had a major impact on the trajectory of his life.

He was raised by a charming mother who made friends easily (and proved invaluable when dealing with reluctant officials) and an ever-brooding, nervous and distant father, who lost six brothers during World War II and was constantly making plans to flee to another country.

Caught in between cultures and yearning to return to his days in the Dutch countryside, young Manny was somewhat of an outsider, just trying to "fit in." He honed his observational skills while making friends from different cultures and gaining respect from his teachers, classmates and locals. With an attention to detail that bring his recollections to life, the well-rounded characters he encountered during his journeys jump off the page.

Seemingly calm and somewhat detached, his low-key manner masked the sadness, anxieties and frustrations experienced by the self-described "serious, bookish," displaced child. It is only when he comes to America and enrolls in Brandeis University that he begins to come to terms with the tragedy he **spent** his childhood trying to avoid.

"I was never at home anywhere. Even here in San Francisco, there are things that strike me as very odd. America is a wonderful, but slightly strange place," he observed recently.

Fortunately for his friends, students and readers, he is no longer on the run, however.

*"Survival in Paradise"* is currently available at Bookshop West Portal, Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

# SFSURA Annual Meeting



*SFSURA  
Annual Meeting &  
Luncheon at the  
Basque Cultural  
Center*

*November 17, 2015*





# Adventures in Cryptology

By: Newman Fisher

*Based on a recent talk to the Friends of the Library.*

The word “cryptology” stems from the Greek and means *Hidden, secret writing for study*, i.e., the practice and study of techniques for secret communication between two parties in the presence of a third party.

Some examples:

1. During the Greek-Trojan Wars the Greeks sent messages across Trojan lines by having a soldier have his head shaved and a message written on the bare head. The soldier waited till the hair grew back, donned civilian clothes and crossed Trojan lines to the Greek side. Again, the head was shaved, the message read. The whole process was repeated and the soldier returned home with a response to the original message. Funny, eh?
2. Time goes by and we learn how Caesar communicated with his Generals, the so-called *Code of Caesar*. Simply write your message and then shift each letter by three letters, thus A goes to D, B goes to E, etc. The resulting message is decoded by shifting the letters back by three letters. Thus the message *Attack at dawn* is sent as **DWWDFN DW GDZQ** and decoded by shifting the letters back by three.

Well, if the message is intercepted early enough, the enemy can figure it out pretty easy. New changes were made over the years and instead of using letters to letters, letters were encrypted as symbols, e.g., **A goes to \***, **B goes to #**, etc. This system was used by Mary, Queen of Scots, in her efforts to kill Queen Elizabeth; however, Elizabeth employed a code breaker who employed frequency analysis (count the frequency of each symbol in a message and relate to letters; i.e., the letter E appears most often) and thus Elizabeth knew what was going on. Mary, Queen of Scots, was beheaded.

Through time many systems were developed to send “secret” messages and the literature is full of them. However, over time, they have all been figured out! One of the most profound efforts to decode messages took place during the early years of World War II and resulted in great triumph and tragedy. We speak here of the work by the brilliant British mathematician, Alan Turing. You may have seen the movie *The Imitation Game* or the play *Breaking the Code* to learn of his work.

Turing broke the code of the German Enigma machine, used to transmit orders to the German submarine fleet that was destroying British shipping and saved England during those dark days (Triumph); however, after the war Turing was arrested for being gay (a felony in England at the time) and tried for indecent exposure. He committed suicide (Tragedy). Today he is known as the Father of Computer Science and honored world-wide.

Now, how about a code system that works! There is one that has worked since 1977 and reflects the change in cryptography with the advent of the computer. It is called RSA, named after its founders, Leonard Rivelt, Adi Shamir and Leonard Adelman, who were all graduate students at MIT at the time. The details involved the subject of Mathematics, that we all love, and some brief details follow.

You need to know what a prime number is (divisible only by 1 and itself, e.g., **2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19**, and more to come). Now we send a message or bank data, University records, etc. between parties A and B.

**A** and **B** pick two prime numbers, **p** and **q**. They don't care if others know **p** but they keep **q** a secret.

Calculate  $N = p \times q$

Pick a number  $e$  between 1 and  $(p-1) \times (q-1)$

Calculate a number  $d$  so that  $d$  times  $e$  leaves a remainder of 1 when divided by  $(p-1) \times (q-1)$

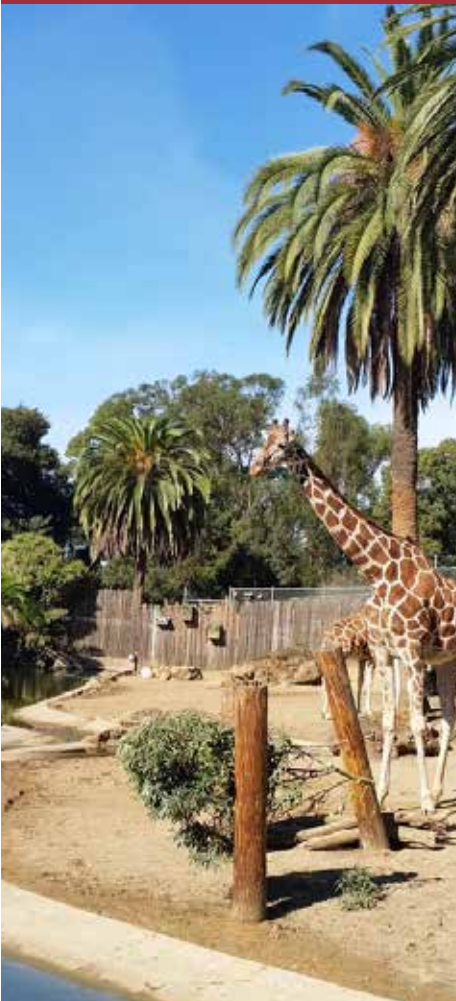
Using  $N$ ,  $d$  and  $e$ , A sends a public message to B. B decodes the message with a knowledge of  $p$ ,  $q$  and  $N$ . Everybody knows the value of  $N$  and  $p$ . Only A and B know the value of  $q$ .

It appears that if you want to find  $q$ , the key, all you have to do is divide  $N$  by  $p$ , or "factor"  $N$ , do you remember factoring? And there is the rub. In practice  $p$  and  $q$  will be numbers of more than 2,000 digits while  $N$  will have even more. The job is for a Super Computer.

So far the RSA method works. How do we verify it? The actual verification rests on a theorem in the *Theory of Numbers* first stated by Pierre de Fermat in 1640 and given a formal proof by Leonhardt Euler in 1736.

Who says prime numbers are passé?

## Oakland Zoo Tour, November



On November 5th a group of us gathered at the Oakland Zoo. Our tour was led by our own esteemed colleague, Elogeanne Grossman. Congratulations to Elogeanne as she has been named "Docent of the Year" by the Oakland Zoo! We could easily see why she was selected as she shared her pride and commitment to the work of the Zoo in everything we saw. We had a most informative tour, which barely scratched the surface of this East Bay jewel. We had a unique "behind the scenes" opportunity to meet some of the educational collection up close and personal! We were able to pet a python and meet some of the other traveling animals. Thanks to Jim and Arline VanNess, Dan McGough and his sister, Judy, Jim Bolinger, Shanna Yonanaka, Nancy Catena, Irene Spang, Samira Morelli for making this a memorable event!

*“Watch for announcements of other events we will be doing in 2016, including some ‘behind the scenes’ campus tours, a SF fire engine tour and more.*”

**SFSU Retirement Association  
St. Patrick’s Day Annual Luncheon**

**Thursday, March 17, 2016  
11:30 Reception — 12 Noon Luncheon**

**Basque Cultural Center  
599 Railroad Avenue  
South San Francisco CA 94080**



**Visit with friends!  
Laugh!  
Celebrate each other!**

**SELECT YOUR ENTRÉE**  
Entrée, coffee and dessert included.

- ◆ Corned Beef & Cabbage
- ◆ Grilled Prawns with Basil & Garlic Sauce
- ◆ Yummy Cobb Salad

\*\*\*\*\*

Indicate a meal choice for each guest - \$35 per person

NAME _____	ENTRÉE _____
NAME _____	ENTRÉE _____
NAME _____	ENTRÉE _____

Mail by **March 11<sup>th</sup>** with your check payable to “SFSURA” to:  
Zelinda Zingaro  
19164 Christensen Court  
Castro Valley CA 94546  
Questions? Email [zeezingaro@gmail.com](mailto:zeezingaro@gmail.com)

# 2016 Dues Reminder

## 2016 DUES REMINDER

..... and Other Information

Unless you are a life member, or have already paid your \$30.00 annual dues for 2016, your dues payment is now due. Your dues paying status is shown on the top line of the mailing label. "Life" indicates you are a lifetime member; a number indicates the last calendar year you paid annual dues (e.g. "13" means 2013). We are very much in need of your support to make our programs and activities a success. If you have any questions about your dues status, you may contact Membership Director Jim Kohn at 415.821.7475 or by email at: [jjkohn@comcast.net](mailto:jjkohn@comcast.net). In accordance with our By-Laws, those who have not paid for two years will be dropped from our membership rolls.

If you have recently changed your address, phone number, or email address, please provide the new information on the below form and mail to Membership Director Jim Kohn, address below, or send an email to [jjkohn@comcast.net](mailto:jjkohn@comcast.net), so we can keep our membership records current. If you would like to receive SFSU's weekly Campus Memo by email, please complete the form below and provide your email address to Jim Kohn. We now distribute our newsletter, the Off-Campus Bulletin, by email to those for whom we have an email address. If you would prefer an email instead of the printed version, please complete the form below and provide your email address to Jim Kohn. If you wish to make a donation to our Travel Grants Endowment Fund, to fund future travel/professional development grants to faculty and staff, please write a separate check and mail with the below form.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to receive SFSU's weekly CampusMemo by email? Yes  No

Would you prefer to receive the Off-Campus Bulletin by email? Yes  No

I would be willing to help organize functions and/or serve on the Board of Directors  
Yes  No

Amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ \$30 Annual dues for 2016  \$200 Life Membership

Contribution to Travel Grants Endowment Fund: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ *Please write separate check*

Please make check/s payable to: SFSU Retirement Association

Mail to: Jim Kohn, 23 Topaz Way, San Francisco, CA 94131



SFSU Retirement Association  
c/o Development Office  
1600 Holloway Avenue, ADM153  
San Francisco, CA 94132  
www.sfsu.edu/~retire  
email: retire@sfsu.edu



# What Are We Up To

Now it's your opportunity to share some news of your travels and plans with our members. Please complete the form and send to Kay McGough, 3742 Brunswick Court, South San Francisco, CA 94080 or email her at [krmcgough@comcast.net](mailto:krmcgough@comcast.net). You can also FAX her at 650.878.4728. We eagerly look forward to your participation. It will appear in the next OCB. See pages 2, 3 and 6 of this bulletin for examples.

• Name: \_\_\_\_\_

• Department retired from and when: \_\_\_\_\_

• Brief description of your adventures: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- A photo as a jpeg.
- Refer to Page 3 to see what "others" have been up to.

