











San Francisco State University *Gater Retiree Gazette*



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Lots to see at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco!

Now is a very good time to visit the DeYoung Museum and the Legion Honor. Currently at the DeYoung in Golden Gate Park is a collection of photos taken by Paul McCartney on the occasion of the Beatles' first visit to the U.S. You can see the Beatles in all their modishness, along with many of the people in their entourage. You get to see the crowds from the perspective of the Beatles' limousine, along with many of those who associated with them.

Also at the De Young is a collection of Matisse paintings done late in his life. To quote FAMSF web site, *In the final decades of a prolific career, modern artist Henri Matisse (1869–1954) took up book illustration. This exhibition celebrates our 2024 acquisition of Jazz, Matisse's 1947 artist book on the circus and theater. Jazz includes 20 color stencil prints (pochoirs) of popular subjects on these themes, from horses to ringmasters.*

At the Palace of the Legion of Honor, there is a current exhibition of the works of Wayne Thiebaud, from his early paintings in the 1950s to his farewell painting, done when he was 100 years old! Thiebaud was an artist whose style spanned the gap between abstract expressionism and West Coast realism. Docent tours are given at 11:30 and at 1:30 each day except Mondays.

Enjoy!

Jim Kohn, Professor Emeritus at SFSU and current docent at FAMSF

May 2025

Upcoming Events

Board of Directors Meetings:

On Zoom, 10 AM – Noon

Monday, September 15, 2025

Discussion of Fall Luncheon,
Appointment of Nominating Committee

Monday, December 15, 2025

First meeting after elections;
Approve appointments to committees/
other positions; plan calendar for 2026

Other events in 2025:

Watch for a GRG Email Blast with dates and
info on the following:

**Jim Kohn, Zoom Introduction
to Current Exhibition on Wayne
Thiebaud**, June — TBA: See Below

Tour of new Science Building

Summer — TBA

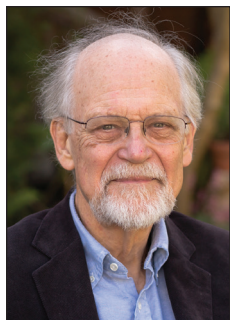
Annual Fall Luncheon and Election of Officers

November 14: Basque Cultural Center

Wayne Thiebaud:

Art Comes from Art

Watch for a GRG Blast email notice for a Zoom presentation on the current exhibition at the Legion of Honor: *Wayne Thiebaud: Art Comes from Art*, on view until August 17, 2025. Little known fact: Thiebaud was a grad of the CSU, and taught Art at UC Davis for forty years! Your presenter is Jim Kohn, Prof. Emeritus from SFSU, and Docent at the Legion since 2004. You will have lots of time for questions and answers on this Zoom, so please join in!



President's Letter

Dear SF State Retirees,

Welcome to summer! Back in the days before we retired, when the spring semester came to an end and Commencement was over, most faculty members breathed a sigh of relief and looked forward to being able to relax, refresh, and rejuvenate. Summer was also a less stressful time for many staff members. I hope you all take time this summer to relax, refresh, and rejuvenate, whether by traveling, gardening (my personal favorite), or just sitting back with a glass of something cold or a cup of something hot.

I've commented elsewhere in this GRG on some monumental issues facing universities—matters not conducive to sitting back and zoning out.

As most of you know, the Retirement Association is the SF State affiliate of the CSU Emeritus and Retired Faculty and Staff Association (CSU ERFSA), the system-wide organization for all CSU retirees and also for former employees who do not have a PERS pension. On April 30, the ERFSA council met virtually and elected officers and appointed committees for the coming year. Nathan Avani was appointed to the Health Benefits Committee, a crucial committee for keeping us all informed about those crucial aspects of our pensions. Carlos Davidson and I were reappointed to the Legislative Affairs Committee, charged with keeping track of events in Sacramento that have relevance for us, our pensions, and the university more generally.

The Retirement Association is the SF State affiliate of ERFSA, but the two organizations have different dues structures. Some SF State retirees pay dues only to the Retirement Association or only to ERFSA, and many pay dues to both. To join ERFSA, go to:

<https://www.csuerfsa.org/index.php/membership>.

To join the Retirement Association, go to:

<https://commerce.cashnet.com/ucorp?itemcode=UCORP-47284B>.

Or, if you'd like to take advantage of our standing offer to join but pay no dues for the first year, go to:

<https://retire.sfsu.edu/sites/default/files/documents/Join%20SFSURA.12.2022.pdf>.

Faculty Trustee Darlene Yee-Melichar has recently confirmed for us that the CSU system will likely take a very large cut when the state budget is adopted next month. SF State will take an even larger cut because of declining enrollment. The University needs our support now more than ever. Many of you have good pensions because of your service to the University. To donate to your own department or college or to the University as a whole, go to:

<https://develop.sfsu.edu/WaysToGive>.

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Publications & Special Events Coordinator

Zelinda Zingaro

GRG Design & Layout

Nancy Noble

SFSURA c/o Advancement Office
1600 Holloway Avenue, ADM153
San Francisco, CA 94132

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Bob Cherny,
President

St. Patrick's Day Luncheon

A good turnout, delicious lunch, gorgeous weather and a poignant, important talk by SFSU President Lynn Mahoney highlighted our annual St. Patrick's Day Luncheon on Friday, March 14, 2025 at the Basque Cultural Center.



Bob Cherny introducing keynote speaker: President Mahoney



President Lynn Mahoney addressing the budget issues.



Jim Van Ness with President Mahoney

Sue Rosser, Sheldon Axler, Jeff Jackanicz



Mitch Turitz, Russell Kilday-Hicks, and President Mahoney



John O'Shaughnessy, Kay and Dan McGough



A Free Society Depends on Free Universities

By Bob Cherny

The past few months have been an unusual time for higher education. I cannot recall a time when a president spent so much time telling universities how to run their internal affairs and threatening to take away their research funding if they didn't comply.

In 1957, in his concurring opinion in *Sweezy v. New Hampshire*, Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter, a graduate of the City College of NY and a former law professor at Harvard, specified that a *free society* depends on *free universities*. He went on to say: *For society's good . . . inquiries into . . . [university research] problems, speculations about them, stimulation in others of reflection upon them, must be left as unfettered as possible. Political power must abstain from intrusion into this activity of freedom, pursued in the interest of wise government and the people's wellbeing. . . . This means the exclusion of governmental intervention in the intellectual life of a university.*

In the twentieth century and since, authoritarian regimes have usually tried to control universities, their faculties, and their students. In the Soviet Union in the 1930s, Joseph Stalin's government mandated an official way to teach and research biology, one that worked to the disadvantage of teaching and research in that field. In Nazi Germany, Adolph Hitler's regime ordered universities to dismiss Jewish faculty members and remove banned books from their libraries. The Nazis held public book burnings at universities. In 2009, when I visited the magnificent old library at Göttingen University, I learned that, when the librarians there were given the list of

banned books, they resisted by hiding most of them in plain sight, by putting them out of order—for example, placing a philosophy book in the chemistry section.



Göttingen University Library, Main Hall

Score one for the librarians, who have always been at the forefront of opposing book bans. Parenthetically, in 2024, the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked 821 attempts to censor library materials and services, involving challenges to 2,452 unique titles.

However, that won't work today, when so much information is online rather on a shelf. A recent estimate is that more than 50,000 federal webpages have been removed in the past few months. One of them was by a former student of mine, a study done to upgrade medals issued during World War II for soldiers of Asian parentage who had apparently been discriminated against at the time. The study found that some twenty-two individuals should have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, and those medals were awarded by President Bill Clinton in 2000. But that article and others like it have now disappeared from Defense Department websites.

In China in the 1960s, Mao Zedong simply shut down all universities for ten years. In 2006, when I was Interim Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Yenbo Wo, who was then head of International Programs, took me with him to visit several Chinese universities as part of an effort to bring more Chinese students to SF State. In all

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You Could Be Teaching At SF State OLLI



OLLI: the Osher Life-Long Learning Institute at San Francisco State offers a variety of learning experiences and activities that are for seniors, and are often led by seniors. SF State OLLI is a membership organization, open to anyone over the age of 50; dues are \$55 per year.

SF State OLLI activities include hiking, poetry and art groups, book and film discussion groups, and conversation groups in German, French, and Italian. SF State OLLI also offers a wide variety of courses, but these are courses with no assigned readings, no tests or papers to be graded, no academic credit—just learning for the joy of learning.

SF State OLLI is always looking for new instructors. OLLI courses come in a variety of formats. Some are in person, either at the OLLI section of the SF State Downtown Center at Mission and Spear streets or on campus. Some are by Zoom. A few are hybrid, with some students attending in person and others on Zoom. Courses come in a variety of time-blocks: a one-time, two-hour class; or a two-hour class once a week for six weeks or three weeks or two weeks. Courses should combine lecture with opportunity for interaction with the class members: comments, Q&A, guided discussion, etc. Because there are no tests nor papers to grade, it is just teaching for the joy of sharing what you know and the joy of stimulating others to share what you have learned.

Although it is teaching for the joy of teaching, SF State OLLI also pays its instructors: \$135 per instructional hour.

SF State OLLI members are interested in a wide variety of learning experiences. The median educational level among SF State

OLLI members is the master's degree, so many of them are open to learning at a high level.

Many of the more popular OLLI courses are in history, art, and current events, but OLLI has many courses on other topics. You can review the current courses on the OLLI website: <https://olli.sfsu.edu>. Click on "courses." The website also has full information on how to apply to offer a course, also under "courses."

Several of your colleagues are already offering courses through SF State OLLI. You can join them.



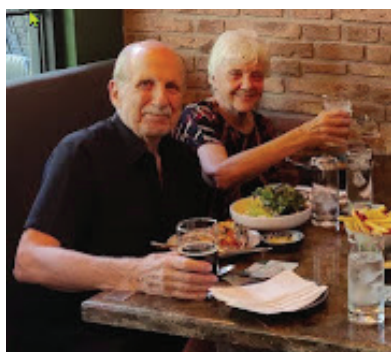
What Have YOU Been Up To?

Now it's your opportunity to share some news of your travels and activities with our members. Please send your account to Irene Donner at:

iredonner@gmail.com.

If you have photos, please send them as separate jpg files. We eagerly look forward to your participation. It will appear in the next GRG.

Keep Traveling While We Can



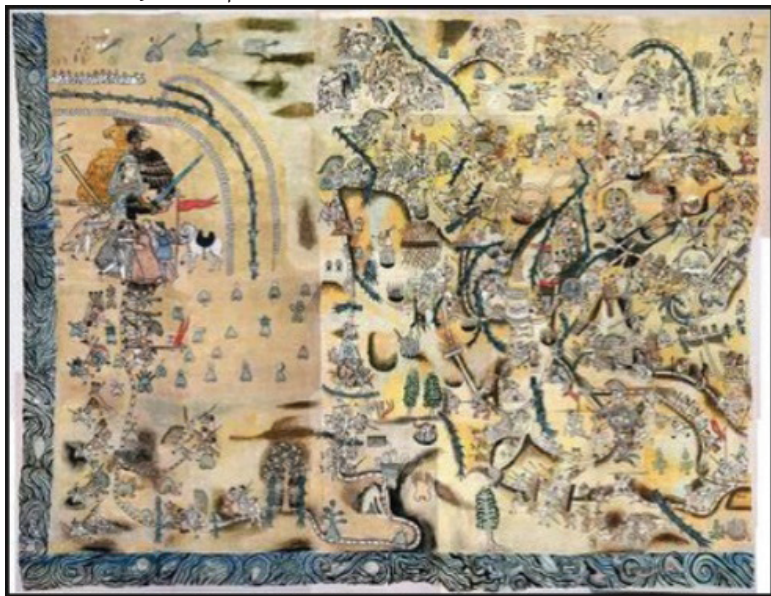
Greetings from the high and lately too-dry mountains of Northern New Mexico. Living in one of America's major tourist destinations – Santa Fe, NM – has unexpected attractions. We've had a house here for 30 years and here full time for 20. This city has proven to be a perfect destination for Dorothy Bracey and me. It attracts retirees who have worked, lived and traveled worldwide: scholars, journalists, international business folks, Peace Corps volunteers and foreign service officers. We may be retired, but we still want to be in the game. Consequently, there are 1,200 non-profits registered in our county of only 175,000 people, organizations focusing on everything from health care to childhood education, every genre of music and all the arts. Over the years, Dorothy and I have each served on a half dozen boards of directors. For me, KSFR Public Radio, the NM Foundation for Open Government, the Council on International Relations, the NM Society of Professional Journalists and now New Mexico Writers.

Dorothy and I have been internationalistas for all of our academic and professional careers, so we count ourselves very fortunate to still – in our 80s – to have the physical and mental wherewithal to keep hitting the road.

While we keep busy, we try to head out anytime that's not June through September, the perfect season here. We are still engaged in Journalism and Dorothy's Anthropology and cross-cultural legal systems, so exploring cultural communications and legal practice are driving motivations. That said, we have recently discovered advantages to small-ship cruises (ships with no more than 50 passengers) and the benefits of courtesy golf carts in major airports. Recently, we've been able to visit Madeira, the Azores and West Africa, along with the Balkans from Zagreb to Athens.

At 7,200 feet elevation, the winters here can get cold. Most of our travels tend to be into all of Latin America during the winter. Going south minimizes time zone changes, hence fewer days of jet lag recovery when turning home. We're in Mexico at least once a year where I'm doing research on pre-contact communications and record keeping among the Nahua peoples of central Mexico. Turns out saying the Spanish conquered Mexico is not quite correct. In December, I gave a lecture on the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* (Google it) at the Merida English Library <https://ytubl.ink/3EAc> before we moved on for more research in Puebla and Mexico City in December until the end of January.

Over all these years, I have appreciated the Gater Retiree Gazette. I thank all of you who have given your time and talents to keeping the organization and the newsletter going. If you come to Santa Fe, give me a holler. There are some secret places to see and we have this drink called a Margarita that you might enjoy. Saludos.



Tom Johnson
Prof. Emeritus Journalism
tom@jtjohnson.com

An Untypical Vacation

By Russell Kilday-Hicks

Living as we do in California — how often do we think about the 1862 Homestead Act? Seems like too long ago and far away. But what if you needed to, as our history, including: genocide, the Indian and Civil wars—and as an exploration in deciding what to do with a homestead still in the family?

My wife Sara, son Liam, and I took this trip, and along the way, uncovered some of our nation's dark history and the original sins of the land. It always comes back to the land.

Sara's mother holds title to some prime farmland in northeast North Dakota, near the town of Neche. It came through her husband, William, who grew up in Detroit, Michigan. His grandfather worked the land but not his patent-lawyer father. The land is rented to a local farmer, who wants to purchase it. We've never seen it, so decided to do that at least once.

We flew into Bismarck and headed north. We had few scant details, family history, names of a few cousins, and the address for the plot that's in the family, but we don't know how.

On the way there we stayed on the Spirit Lake Tribe reservation, a former native school, originally built as frontier Fort Totten. Although historic and full of 1800 charm, it was like sleeping in a haunted museum. Through exhibits in the rooms and hallways, and the officer's quarters where we slept, we learned that a third of the troops from the Little Big Horn battle were from here and coupled with the horrific history of native assimilation in government-sponsored schools, you could feel the unsettled ghosts hanging around.

Before the settlers were the Chippewa. Later the Dakotah/Lakota: Sisseton, Wahpeton, and Yanktonai tribes, displaced from Wisconsin. The settlers called it Devil's Lake. The natives renamed it to what it was before.

Proceeding north and east we found our farmer and the plot. This quarter mile square is why I suspected the Homestead Act. The farmer told us who lives there and my wife recognized the name but did not know then they were actually related.

In the next plot over was a small graveyard. We found her great-grandfather and maybe 50 graves, she was likely related to the entire plot. We headed to the Pembina County Court House and stepping into the record vault, hauled off the shelves these gigantic books that recorded the history of the land, in the western sense. These were neatly written in fountain-pen script, which the clerk helping us could not read.

The first white settlers were the Forbes. The deal was, you signed up for your 160 acres, *determined to be large enough to support one family*, and you had to survive for five years and then the land was yours. The Forbes made it and in 1887, under President Cleveland, Frederic Forbes paid a \$4 administration fee. In 1896, after Frederic's death, the Forbes sold it for \$2,800 — \$105,000 in today's money, to the Hicks from nearby Manitoba, Canada.

The Homestead Act was clever. President Lincoln needed troops to fight the south. So, why not send out homesteaders to continue the *Indian Wars*? Attempts were made to pass a similar law before succession but the conflict between slave and *free* labor stopped it. As for the fighting, in some places there were laws that required a homesteader to have a gun and a bible with you at all times. I'm not sure a native was going to be convinced you deserved the land because you were obviously from a superior civilization, but everyone knew what the guns were for.

We drove on to Denver, about 1,000 miles, to catch a flight home. This is when you realize the size of this place, with stretches where you can drive a whole day and not see another car. We had with us books telling the land story from the native perspective, primarily by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz. We got to visit sites mentioned: Sitting Bull's grave, the White Hills, aka Badlands, Pine Ridge, the Black Hills, etc. It's interesting to see firsthand that historic markers get the story wrong, as James Lowen's: *Lies Across America* documents.

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Former SFSU **President Chia-Wei Woo** passed away on March 2 in San Francisco. He was 87. He served as SFSU president from 1983 to 1988.

Born in Shanghai in 1937, and raised in Hong Kong, Woo earned his Ph.D. in Physics from Washington University in St. Louis. After a postdoctoral fellowship at UC San Diego, he began his academic career in 1966 at Northwestern University where he rose to chair of Physics and Astronomy, before returning to UC San Diego in 1979 to serve as provost of its Revelle College.



When appointed to lead SFSU, Woo became the first Chinese American to be president of a major university. He left SFSU to become the founding president of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST). Woo is survived by his wife of 65 years Yvonne.

Larry L. Foster, PhD, Emeritus Professor of Geography, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, and Dean of Graduate Studies; appointed 1963, retired 1998, emeritus 2003; died January 22.

Hollis Nan Matson, Lecturer in Health Education, passed away in Oakland on April 28 at 85. Hollis earned a Masters Degree in Public Health in 1962 from Mankato State University in Minnesota. She taught at Winona High School in Minnesota, Ohio State University in Columbus, and in the state of New York University system. She retired in 2000 from San Francisco State University where she taught and served in Capital Planning. She was also author or co-author of articles and books in health education. She is survived by Deborah Royal, her wife of 40 years; together they traveled the world.

Virginia Ann Greer Shadwick, Librarian Emerita, died at home on February 9, 2025, of natural causes. She had just returned from one of her many cruises and international trips. Nothing made her happier than traveling and she had a great time transiting through the Panama Canal. Ann was born in Danville, KY, studied at the University of Kentucky, and was hired by the San Francisco State Library in 1968. As the University and the Library changed over time, her roles adapted with it and she enjoyed being a research librarian for Ethnic Studies in her later years. Ann also worked tirelessly for the faculty unions and was celebrated for her achievements in gaining parity for librarians. For a more detailed account of her career, see the announcement in Campuismo: <https://campuismo.sfsu.edu/2025/March-3-2025>.

I was fortunate to be one of her good friends and saw the many facets of Ann. She was tough and gentle, generous, persistent, hard-working and supremely well organized. In her home, her office was filled with annual detailed loose-leaf binders with photos and notes about each and every year. After the death of her daughter Laila, she established a scholarship at the high school to help students facing family or academic issues; most years she added to the fund in order to help four or five students instead of one.

After retirement, she continued extensive travel and volunteered for the Friends of the Library and the RA Board contributing to the Travel Grant Committee. I had the pleasure of joining her on a few trips and saw how plucky she was, never giving up even when the situation was challenging. Every holiday letter was full of travel challenges—swooning in heat, rafting in rivers, hard climbing in tropical forests. I saw how much Ann loved and embraced all people and cultures and her home was filled with art and objects from all seven continents. One of our last trips together was to Zambia and Namibia. At our ages, it was not easy to climb into tall safari trucks or navigate around tents and camp areas in the desert but she loved it all. A remarkable life well-lived in spite of tragedies and challenges.

By LaVonne Jacobsen



Retirement – Lifelong Learning – Field Trips – New Friends

By Zelinda Zingaro

What do these words bring to mind?

Immediately, I think of OLLI – the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

We moved to Roseville, CA four years ago and immediately signed up for OLLI classes. These have included a study group on the Internment of Japanese Americans during WWII, field trips to railroad and gold rush sites, and theatre productions in Sacramento. Most of us are aware of OLLI at SF State, but no matter where you live, there is likely an OLLI near you! These institutes offer non-credit courses and educational programs for adults generally over 50. Check out this link for a list of Institutes around the country.

https://www.osherfoundation.org/olli_list.html

The evolution of OLLI is interesting. In 2005 the Northwestern University's Institute for Learning in Retirement was renamed to OLLI after a generous grant from the Bernard Osher Foundation. According to their web site, the Foundation supports 125 lifelong learning programs on university and college campuses nationwide. Currently there are 125 Institutes in 339 cities and towns, serving 131,067 individuals.

Each semester, OLLI offers more than 100 diverse study groups that cover a wide range of topics. The groups range in size from 10 to 25 members.

If you are ready to try something different and local – check out OLLI.



*Additional images from the
St. Patrick's Day Luncheon:*

*Left: Judah Rosenwald,
Zelinda Zingaro & Sheila
McClear*

*Bottom Left: John Kohn and
Bob Cherny*

*Right: John O'Shaughnessy
& additional attendees*



Continued from Page 4 — Bob Cherny

those discussions, I met only one university administrator who was as old I was—I was then 63. Most were young, reflecting the missing generation of university students from the late 1960s and early 1970s.

So if you read or hear that a president of a country is demanding that universities remove staff members or change academic policies, please be alert to the danger that was laid out by Justice Felix Frankfurter when he stated that a *free society* depends on *free universities*.

Continued from Page 7 — Russell Kilday-Hicks

In Boulder, Colorado, we attended a commemoration of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre, where 230 children, women, and elders of the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes — there because they were promised a safe winter — were slaughtered. This felt like coming full circle, hearing from the decedents, that they still feel the pain. These people are owed so much.

Considering again the land, with farming abuse a part of climate disruption, commercial value versus a home, the politics of time, *how far back should you go to establish ownership?*, and the way humans have wandered, voluntarily or by force, where is justice found?

Recently we started paying a monthly land tax to the Sogorea Te' Land Trust in Alameda County. Seems like the least we can do.

Professional Travel Grants

The San Francisco State University Retirement Association is pleased to announce our annual Travel Awards. Every year, the Retirement Association offers grants to current faculty and staff members for travel related to professional development. The maximum grant is \$1,000 per person. This year, the committee has awarded seven grants totaling \$7,183.45:

Cristina Azocar, Journalism:

Conference presentation in Oklahoma City.

Colin Johnson, Hospitality, Tourism, & Event Management:

Delivering two papers at a conference in Portugal.

David Landy, Philosophy:

Presenting a paper at a conference in San Diego .

Mihaela Mihailova, Cinema:

Presenting a research talk at a conference in London.

Laura Moorehead, Journalism:

Presenting two papers at a conference in Denver.

Amy Skonieczny, International Relations:

Two-week appointment as visiting scholar/lecturer in Italy.

Olivia Walters, Philosophy:

Presenting a paper at a conference in Newfoundland.

Mary Weigel, Philosophy:

Presenting a paper at a conference in Portugal.

Congratulations to all!

This year, the Travel Grants Committee consisted of Elogeanne Grossman, Dan McGough, Nathan Avani, and Jim Kohn, who returned to his long-time position as chair.

Donate to the SFSU Retirement Association

The San Francisco State University Retirement Association welcomes contributions to support the Travel Grants program. We invite donations to this very worthwhile program. Donations are tax deductible.

NEW! Donations can now be made online by debit and credit cards or by check.

Online payments here:

<https://give.sfsu.edu/SFSURET>

If donating by check, make a check payable to the SFSU Retirement Association and on the memo line indicate it is for the Travel Grants Endowment Fund. Send your check to our treasurer at the address below:

John O'Shaughnessy • 11 Hillsdale Place • San Mateo, CA 94403

Remembrances

Note: We encourage members to submit Remembrances, up to 200 words, for their colleagues.

If you want to know how old a woman is, ask her sister-in-law. — *Eva Gabor*

Old age comes at a bad time. — *Ed Sullivan*

Old age is like a plane flying through a storm. Once you are aboard, there is nothing you can do about it. — *Golda Meir*

First you forget names, then you forget faces, then you forget to pull your zipper up; then, you forget to pull your zipper down. — *Rob Reiner*

Old people shouldn't eat healthy foods, they need all the preservatives they can get. — *Bob Hope*

At my age, flowers scare me. — *George Burns*

It's like you trade the virility of the body for the agility of the spirit. — *Ed Sullivan*

The years between 55 and 75 are the hardest. You are always being asked to do things, and yet you are not decrepit enough to turn them down. — *T.S. Elliot*

At age 20, we worry about what others think of us, at age 40, we don't care what they think of us, at age 60, we discover they haven't been thinking of us at all. — *Ann Landers*

When I was young, I was called a rugged individualist. When I was in my fifties, I was considered eccentric. Here I am doing and saying the same things I did then, and I'm labeled senile. — *Milton Berle*

The important thing to remember is that I'm probably going to forget. — *Martin Scorsese*

We don't grow older, we grow riper. — *Pablo Picasso*

It's paradoxical that the idea of living a long life appeals to everyone, but the idea of getting old doesn't appeal to anyone. — *Andy Rooney*

The older I get, the better I used to be. — *Lee Trevino*

I was thinking about how people seem to read the Bible a lot more as they get older, and then it dawned on me — they're cramming for their final exam. — *George Carlin*

Everything seems to slow down with age, except the time it takes cake and ice cream to reach your hips. — *Elizabeth Taylor*

You know you are getting old when everything either dries up or leaks. — *Dennis Quaid*

Looking fifty is great, if you're sixty. — *Joan Rivers*

Time may be a great Healer, but it's a lousy beautician. — *Zsa Zsa Gabor*



SFSU Retirement Association
c/o Development Office
1600 Holloway Avenue, ADM 153
San Francisco, CA 94132
www.sfsu.edu/~retire
email: retire@sfsu.edu



Please Send Us Your Email Address

If you've received this GRG through the US Postal Service, that means we don't know your email address. If you have one, please let us know. We sometimes have information to share that we'd like to get to you quickly. If we don't have your email address, we won't be able to share such information as, for example, an upcoming event with a short timeline to reserve a spot.



What's the Blast?

When the SFSU Retirement Association has timely information between the Gator Retiree Gazette mailings, you will receive a GRG Blast email. Keep an eye out for these from time to time.

